

It was a neat and commodious two-storied cottage, partially shaded by a row of lofty poplars in front. Being painted a clear white, it presented too glaring a contrast with the surrounding foliage; otherwise everything looked temptingly comfortable, and Frank wondered that any one could speak slightly of a country which afforded them a home such as this.

As there was not a knocker upon the door, Frank used his knuckles instead. In a very short time the rap was answered, and lo! there stood the fair vocalist herself, looking, he thought, even more charming than when he met her before. She extended her hand in a most cordial manner, and smilingly welcomed him to the house. Frank was ushered into the parlor and requested to take a seat, and then the young lady excused herself and left the room in search of Mr. Mutch. In a few minutes she returned with the old gentleman, who appeared to be very happy to meet Falconer again. On the whole, our hero's reception was all that he could desire. The bluff, honest hospitality of Mr. Mutch, seconded by the quiet, though not less kind, attention of Sarah, caused him to feel perfectly at home with them from the first.

To Frank at least that afternoon was one of real enjoyment. The first part of it was spent in rambling over the farm with Sarah and her papa, and though Frank did not know much about such matters, he could not help noticing the air of snugness which was displayed in every department.

When they had walked pretty well over the farm, they returned to the house, and then, at Frank's request, Sarah seated herself at the piano to fulfil the promise made to him on board the boat, and certainly Frank had no just reason to complain of the manner in which she did this. Songs and pieces in endless variety were performed with both taste and precision. Strange to say, many of those which Falconer had formerly considered very tame and flat, were now listened to with as much delight as though they were the rarest gems of musical art.

And so those happy moments sped swiftly by until six o'clock, when tea was announced, and Sarah arose from the piano and showed Frank into the adjoining room, where they found Mr. Mutch already seated at the table. Sarah took her place behind the tea-tray, with her guest at her right hand, and her papa at her left. At the other end of the table a chair was placed as if a fourth party was expected. While Frank was conjecturing who that party might be, Sarah looked towards Mr. Mutch and said,—

"I wonder what is keeping John so late. Do you think we had better wait for him?"

"Oh, no; I guess not,—it may be sometime before he is here."

Sarah commenced pouring out the tea. As she handed Falconer a cup she observed,—

"I hope John will be here soon, Mr. Falconer; I should like him to see you."

"You refer to your brother, I presume,"

said Frank, taking the cup from her hand.

"Oh, no, sir, not exactly," replied Sarah, with a smile, "I refer to my husband."

Frank's cup and saucer fell from his hand and came down upon the table with a crash, while the contents flooded the table cloth in front of him. But he heeded it not, for his eyes were fixed upon the face of Sarah Mutch, who sat looking at him with a startled expression upon her pretty face. This did not last very long, however, for presently the hot tea began to drip down upon his knees, which caused him to push back his chair and rise from the table with considerable alacrity.

At this moment John Mutch, Jr., Sarah's husband, entered the room, and stood looking with surprise at the strange scene which met his view. Every one appeared to be utterly bewildered, and Falconer, seemingly unconscious of what he was about, drew out his handkerchief and commenced to wipe the wet table cloth. Mrs. Mutch was the first to recover her self possession, and assuring him that it was of no consequence about the cloth, she called the girl to take away the fallen crockery ware, and to relieve Frank of his dripping handkerchief. How the meal was got through with, Frank would afterwards have found it very difficult to describe. He had a vague idea of being requested to sit down at another part of the table, of having a second cup of tea passed to him, and of being introduced to John Mutch. One thing, however, was clear enough to his mind—that he had made a complete fool of himself, and he had no doubt that this was the opinion of all present. As may be supposed, under these circumstances he felt anything but comfortable, and it was a relief when they arose from the table and adjourned to the parlor.

Frank did not stay very long after that. His appointment with Mr. Filmour was pleaded as an excuse for leaving so early. No doubt it would have been better in every way had he remained awhile longer and taken his departure more gracefully, but such things are apt to be thought of only when too late, and so it was in this instance.

When Falconer arrived at the store at which he was to meet Mr. Filmour, he found that gentleman already there, he having got through with his business somewhat sooner than he expected to. This being the case, Frank proposed that they should leave Bedeque immediately. His friend having no objection, they went to the stable for their horse, and in ten minutes more they were upon the road to Summerside, where they arrived shortly after dark.

The next steamer from Summerside took Frank and Mr. Filmour as passengers to Point du Chene, from whence they continued their journey home by the morning train. Falconer returned to the office next day and resumed his studies with a resolution, not only to make up for lost time, but also by a vigorous pursuit of legal knowledge to leave no time for any useless reflections upon the unpleasant termination of his visit to Prince Edward Island.