

indeed, but then he is so clever at languages. He worked at French and German with all his might when he was cramming for Sandhurst. But I am clever at nothing, and though I boast of my French descent I can scarcely speak a dozen words of what should be my native language."

"London affords plenty of facilities for most studies," said the Duke, "if I were you I should lose not a moment, but begin at once whilst I had so much time on my hands. I noticed yesterday you were fond of music. Can you play?"

"Not a note."

"I'm afraid I'm rather glad! It is so much better not to play at all than to play a little," said the Duke, whimsically.

"But you can sing?"

"Oh yes, I can sing; but not like the lady who sang at your concert."

"Heaven forbid," said the Duke, with great fervour. "Still, as I played to you at *my* party, I hope you will sing to me at yours."

"I know more hymns than songs," said Jeanne, "but I can sing *Rock Me to Sleep, Mother*, and *We are coming, Sister Mary*, and one or two songs like that, if you don't mind my singing without an accompaniment?"

"I hope you will let me accompany you."

"But I have no music."

"I think I can manage to improvise, if you sing nothing very difficult," he said smiling.

She looked at him respectfully, now feeling sure that he must be a genius.

"It is very easy to sing in an empty room, I find," said Jeanne, when the last echoes of her clear soprano voice had died away.

The Duke sprang from the music seat, and took her hand impetuously.

"Cousin Jeanne, promise me you will never take any singing lessons."