

marry, and young Coulson seemed a rather genteel, well-made young man. He was studying law in the evenings, too, and might make his way in the world some day. But Auntie Jinit Johnstone, who lived on the next farm, and knew the minute family history of everyone in the county of Simcoe, had informed the last quilting-bee that a certain Coulson—and no distant relative of the young schoolmaster either—had kept a tavern in the early days down by the lake shore. Miss Gordon had made no remark. She never took part in gossip. But she had mentally resolved that she would inquire carefully just how distant this relative was, and then she would take means to place their Annie at a distance from the young man in an inverse ratio to the space between him and the tavern-keeper.

She peered through the tangle of alder and sumach that bordered the lane and saw her suspicions confirmed. Annie was at the gate, her blue dress set against the white background of some blossom-laden cherry-boughs, while down the road, the long limbs of this probable descendant of the tavern-keeper were bearing him swiftly towards her.

Miss Gordon's needle flashed in and out of Malcolm's sock, in a disapproving manner. She tried to look severe, but in spite of herself, her face showed something of pleasant excitement, for Miss Gordon was very much of a woman and could not but find a love affair interesting.

She had been a handsome girl once, and her fine,