

just like Swiss chalets. The dairywoman saw him go by, and called to him to come and take a cup of new milk. She was very fond of little Paul; as indeed were all the people about the place. Then Paul came to a great sheet of grass, not exactly a lawn, nor yet a field, where a couple of men were mowing the August after-crop, — they told him to get out of the way of their scythes; and he went on, always eating his bread and jam, till he came to where a little boy of his own age, or a little older, was pulling up weeds. One of the gardeners was there too; but apparently he did not think little Jean very necessary, for he made no objection to the two little boys running off together, because Paul said he wanted to play at horses.

Now Jean, I should tell you, was a year and a half older than Paul. He was the son of a drunken cobbler in the village, whose family were all in dirt and rags, and very ill brought up. Usually none but very respectable people were employed at the château, but Paul's mother, who was a kind-hearted woman, had taken pity on the wretched vagabond, and had got the gardener to give him some work.

The hours went on that hot August morning; M. le Comte de X. sat in his study, in a great wide dressing-gown, drinking chocolate out of a fine china cup; the Intendant put out all the silver for the great dinner; his wife looked up her maids all over the house, and took the covers off the blue satin chairs of the best drawing-room. The dairy-woman potted among her sweet-smelling pans; the two men finished their mowing and made little cocks of hay on the shorn grass; the gardener tidied up his walk and carried all his tools off in his *brouette* or wheelbarrow and put them into a tool-house. Just as he shut the door, the great breakfast bell rang in the courtyard for the servants' meal. It was eleven o'clock, and fifteen indoor and outdoor servants came flocking together to eat eggs, and *bouilli*, and salad made of cold vegetables chopped up with oil and vinegar, and to drink thin red wine out of long black bottles.

"Where's Paul?" said the Intendant's wife, settling her capeline straight, and hanging a great bunch of keys on a nail in her own sitting-room.

"I gave him a piece of bread and jam, and told him to go and play in the park," said the Intendant.

"It's very odd the child does not come," said the mother. Whereat the father went to the garden front and called as loudly as he dared, being afraid of disturbing his master. Five minutes passed, and no Paul made his appearance, and as, like most little boys, he

was generally hungry, everybody wondered where he could be. The dairy-woman said she had given him a cup of new milk at half past eight, and the two mowers told of having sent him away eating his bread and jam, and one of them said he thought he had seen little Paul talking to Etienne the gardener.

Now Etienne was a married man, who lived in the village and went home to all his meals; and as it was agreed by all present that Paul must have gone home with him, the stable-boy was sent round to fetch him; but the stable-boy came back in ten minutes, and Etienne with him, who said that, so far from having taken Paul home, he had not been with him for any time at all; but had run off with little Jean the cobbler's son to play at horses. At this, Paul's mother, looking uneasy, said the boys must have gone farther than they intended, down to the very bottom of the park; and his father, laying down his knife and fork, left the head of the table, and taking his hat went round to the garden front. The park is not very large; it took Paul's father about twenty minutes to walk round it. The ground slopes from the château into a deep wooded valley; once upon a time the trees were all planted in double semicircles, just as they were at the king's palace at Marly. But M. le Comte de X.'s father had had a great fancy for English planting and gardening, and so during the last fifty years many thick tufts of shrubs and quick-growing trees had been interspersed among the stately old rows of limes and chestnuts. Paul's father, getting more and more uneasy, shouted as he went along, "Paul! Jean! Jean! Paul!" But no answer came. He went up to several of the thickets and struck at them with his stick, thinking that the children might be purposely hiding. So he made the round till he came up again near the house, when he crossed the lawn near the Long Pond. Now hard by the Long Pond (there were two others in the grounds, all of them near the château) was a great tuft of pampas grass, its feathering spikes towering up above the leaves, and as he came near it he thought he saw these feathery spikes trembling more than they need; for the day was very calm and hot. Paul's father, struck with a sudden hope, hurried up and struck his stick vigorously into the tuft, saying somewhat angrily, "Paul, come out this instant; you are frightening your mother and behaving very badly. You shall not have any breakfast, sir." As the stick went poking into the pampas grass, a little voice gave a yell of dismay; and Paul's father, plunging into the middle, pulled out, not Paul, but Jean! A sickening fear came