SEIGNEUR D'HABERVILLE

Phillipe Aubert de Gaspé

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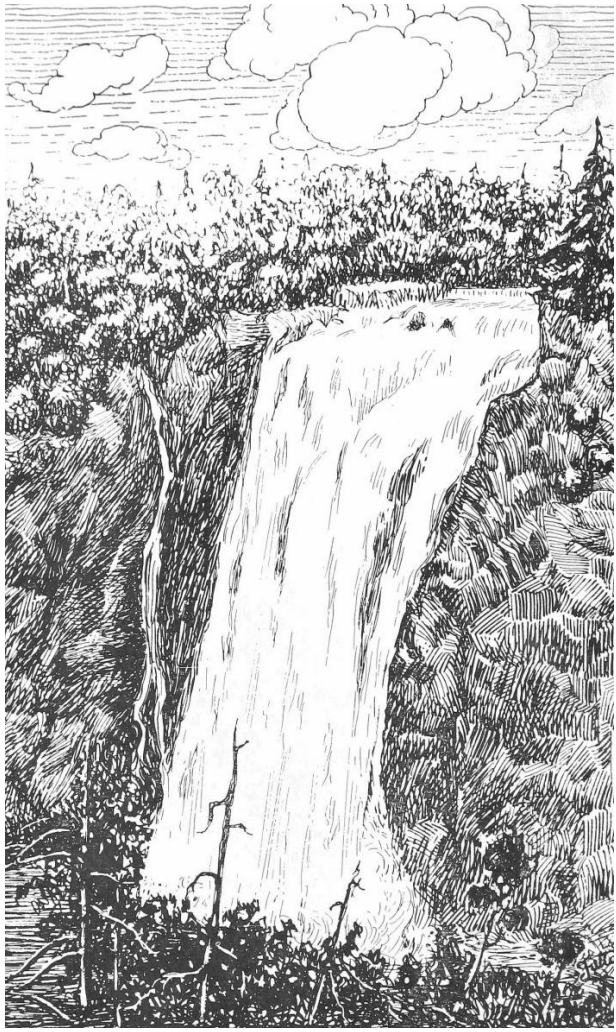

Montmorenci Falls

Seigneur D'Haberville

(The Canadians of Old)

A Romance of the Fall of New France

By

PHILLIPPE AUBERT de GASPÉ

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, in his historical romance, which he entitled *Les Anciens Canadiens* (The Canadians of Old), has as centres the Seigneur d'Haberville and his seigniorial manor house. The book is essentially an intimate account of the d'Habervilles and their friends and retainers. It has therefore been thought best, in publishing a new edition of this invaluable Canadian story, to give as its title "Seigneur d'Haberville."

In 1864, Mrs. Georgiana M. Pennée published an excellent translation of de Gaspé's masterpiece. Mrs. Pennée was thoroughly familiar with seigniorial and habitant life and her translation admirably reproduces the spirit of the original. Unfortunately it abounds in printers' errors, and occasionally a too literal translation has left certain passages obscure to the modern reader. In this edition the errors have been corrected, and some alterations made in the translation. In every case, where the latter has been done, Mrs. Pennée's translation has been carefully compared with de Gaspé's original.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature had late development in the Province of Quebec. Before the conquest the inhabitants depended almost entirely on Old France for their reading matter, and after the cession of Canada the French, mainly farmers and laborers, were too busy reconstructing the country, devastated by war, to turn their attention to creative work. A new and powerful impulse was given to the intellectual life of French Canada by the publication of François-Xavier Garneau's *History of Canada* in 1845, 1846 and 1848. By this monumental work, a labor of love, young and old were roused to enthusiasm regarding their country's past, and as they read it "felt the soul of their country throb."

At this time there was in Quebec a group of intellectuals, men like the Abbé Casgrain, Octave Crémazie, and Antoine Gérin-Lajoie. As a result of their efforts *Les Soirées Canadiennes* was founded. On this publication was the motto: "Let us make haste to relate the delightful tales of the people before they are forgotten." Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, a man seventy-four years old, was attracted by these words and set himself to work to produce a story that would preserve the manners, customs, and traditions of the people of New France during the critical period of the fight for Canada and the period of reconstruction after the cession.

De Gaspé was born in the city of Quebec, October 30th, 1786, and was the son of the Hon. Pierre Ignace Aubert de Gaspé, member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada, and of Catherine Tarieu de Lanaudière. He was a descendant of Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye, a noted fur-trader, who came to Canada in 1655 and who later prepared an important memoir on the commerce of the country and who, in 1693, was granted a patent of nobility by Louis XIV.

At the time de Gaspé began the writing of the story of Seigneur d'Haberville, his family, friends and retainers, he was living in his charming ancestral home, the seigniory of St.-Jean-Port-Joli. This seigniory had originally been granted by Frontenac, on May 25th, 1677, to one Noël l'Anglois, a very excellent carpenter who became such an indolent and unbusinesslike seigneur that his seigniory slipped from his hands and came into the possession of the de Gaspés.

Philippe Aubert de Gaspé was educated, like the two heroes of his romance, at the Quebec Seminary. He studied law under Jonathan Sewell, one of the ablest legal minds of his time, was admitted to the Bar and for a number of years was high sheriff of the district of Quebec. A student and a dreamer,

generous to a fault, de Gaspé lacked business sagacity. He was forced to resign his office and for a time was a prisoner for debt. Much of what he writes about Monsieur d'Egmont, "the good gentleman" of his story, is taken from his own experiences, but he had in his character nothing of the misanthropy of d'Egmont. In 1811 he married a daughter of Captain Thomas Allison, of the 6th Regiment, infantry, and of Thérèse Baby. One of his sons, Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, in 1838, published a novel entitled *Le Chercheur de trésors, ou l'influence d'un livre*. This son died, March 7th, 1841, in Halifax, N.S., where he was employed as a reporter in the Legislative Assembly. In 1893, another son, Alfred Aubert, made a collection of sketches written by his father and brought them out under the title *Divers*. After his release from prison de Gaspé retired to his manor, St.-Jean-Port-Joli, and amid beautiful surroundings and among his beloved books spent the remaining years of his life. On January 29th, 1871, in Quebec, the most representative of the romantic writers of French Canada passed to his rest.

Amazement is frequently expressed that an untried writer of seventy-four could have produced a literary masterpiece. De Gaspé was not a literary beginner. For years he had been delving into the history and traditions of his native land, and his copious notes to his novel and his volume, *Mémoires* (1866), show that he was in reality a somewhat prolific writer. Again, he was a close student and an omnivorous reader. He shows scholarly familiarity with the ancient classics and with such writers as Shakespeare, Scott, Goldsmith, Burns, and corresponding writers in Spain, France and Germany. He thus tackled his great story with an experienced hand and a well-stored mind. He did his work in a leisurely manner, his main object being as he says: "To note down some episodes of the good old times" (*les bon vieux temps*). So well has he done his work that no other Canadian romance so exhaustively and powerfully reproduces the past. The information is first hand. In the story a seigneur details the life of seigneur and censitaire. The book abounds in genial humour, powerful character drawing, and sober judgment on national questions.

There is in the story but one discordant note, one touch of bitterness. De Gaspé apparently accepted the stories passed from lip to lip regarding General Murray, and the reader is apt to infer that Murray was a brutal, overbearing, selfish tyrant. Garneau saw otherwise. He says of Murray: "If General Murray were a stern, he was also an honorable and good-natured man; he loved such Canadians as were docile under his sway, with the affection that a veteran bears to his faithfullest soldiers." But Garneau adds: "The Governor-General, however, was trammelled in his tendencies by a knot of resident functionaries, some of whose acts made him often ashamed of the administration he was

understood to guide. A crowd of adventurers, veteran intriguers, great men's menials turned adrift, etc., came in the train of the British soldiers."

It would be well to keep those words of Garneau in mind when reading de Gaspé's estimate of Murray.

T. G. MARQUIS.

SEIGNEUR D'HABERVILLE

(The Canadians of Old)

CHAPTER I

LEAVING COLLEGE

LET those who are acquainted with our good city of Quebec transport themselves, either bodily or in the spirit, to the Upper Town market-place, so as to judge of the changes that have taken place in this locality since the year of grace 1757, the date when this story commences.

The cathedral was then the same as now with regard to the edifice, but minus the modern tower, which seems as if seeking some charitable soul, either to raise it higher, or to cut off the head of its giant sister, who is so scornfully gazing on it from the height of her greatness.

The Jesuit College, now metamorphosed into a barrack, appeared much the same as it does at present; but what has become of the church which formerly stood in the spot now occupied by the butcher's market? Where is the grove of venerable trees, behind the church, which then adorned the court, now bare and desolate, of the house consecrated to the education of Canadian youth? The axe and time, alas! have done their work of destruction. To the merry games, the witty sallies of the young students, to the grave steps of the professors who walked there for relaxation from deep study, to the discourses on the highest philosophy, have succeeded the clang of arms, and the talk of the guard-room, too often free and senseless.

Instead of the present market-place, a small market-house, containing at the most seven or eight stalls, occupied a part of the ground lying between the cathedral and the college. Between this market-house and the college flowed a rivulet, which, descending from Louis street, went down the middle of Fabrique street, and crossed Couillard street and the garden of the Hotel-Dieu on its way to the river St. Charles. It was the end of April; the rivulet had overflowed, and children were amusing themselves by breaking off and throwing in icicles, which, getting smaller and smaller and surmounting many obstructions, finished by disappearing from sight and losing themselves in the immense river St. Lawrence.

The houses which bordered the market-place, unlike our modern edifices, were mostly of one story.

It was noon; the Angelus was sounding from the cathedral belfry, and all the bells in the town were announcing the salutation borne by an angel to the

mother of Christ, the beloved protectress of Canada. The habitants, whose carts surrounded the market-house, uncovered their heads and devoutly recited the Angelus.

The students of the Jesuits' College, generally so noisy during recreation, came silently out of the church where they had been praying. Whence came this unwonted sadness? It was because they were about to lose two beloved companions, two sincere friends. The younger of the two, and the nearer to their own age, was the one who oftener shared their boyish games, and, protecting the weak against the strong, equitably decided their little differences.

The great entrance to the college was opened, and two young men, dressed for travelling, appeared in the midst of their schoolfellows. At their feet lay two leather portmanteaus, about five feet long, and furnished with rings, chains, and padlocks, apparently strong enough to moor a vessel. The younger of the two travellers, slight and of small stature, might be about eighteen. His dark complexion, large black eyes, and restless movements showed his French origin; it was Jules d'Haberville, the son of a seigneur, captain of a naval detachment in the colony.[1]

The second traveller, some two or three years older than the other, was of a larger and stronger build. His fine blue eyes, chestnut hair, fair and slightly florid complexion, a few freckles on his face and hands, and a somewhat prominent chin betrayed a foreign origin. He was Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, commonly called Archy Lochiel, a young Highlander, who had been completing his studies at the Jesuits' College at Quebec. But how came he, a foreigner, in a French colony? The sequel will show.

The young men were both remarkably good-looking. Their dress was alike —a sort of great-coat with a hood (called a *capot*), scarlet cloth leggings bound with green, blue knitted garters, a large sash of bright and variegated colors, ornamented with beads, moccasins or shoes of cariboo skin, adorned with porcupine quills; and last, caps of real beaver, brought down over the ears by means of a red silk handkerchief tied round the neck.

The younger one betrayed a feverish agitation, and kept looking down Buade street.

"You are then in a great hurry to leave us, Jules," said one of his friends, reproachfully.

"Ah, no, Laronde," answered d'Haberville, "I assure you, no; but since this painful parting must take place, I am in a hurry to have done with it; it unnerves me; besides it is but natural that I should be in haste to see my relations again."

“That is but right,” replied Laronde, “and besides, you being a Canadian, we may live in hopes of seeing you again soon.”

“It is not so with you, Archy,” said another. “I much fear we part from you forever, if you return to your country. Promise us to come back,” sounded on all sides.

During this conversation, Jules had darted like an arrow towards two men who were walking fast along by the side of the cathedral, each with an oar on his right shoulder. One of them wore the dress of a habitant; *capot* of black home-made cloth, a grey woollen cap, leggings and garters of the same color, a belt of variegated colors, and large moccasins of untanned leather. The costume of the other one was much the same as that of the young travellers, but not so rich. The former, a tall rough-mannered man, was a Pointe-Lévis boatman; the latter, of middling height and powerful frame, was in the service of Captain d’Haberville, Jules’ father; a soldier in time of war, he had taken up his quarters with the captain during peace. He was of the same age as his captain, and was also his foster-brother. He was the family’s confidential servant, had rocked the cradle of Jules, and often put him to sleep in his arms, singing the lively airs sung by travellers in the upper country.

“How are you, José? and how have you left them all at home?” said Jules, throwing himself into his arms.

"How are you, José? and how have you left them all at home?" said Jules, throwing himself into his arms.

"All well, thank God," replied José; "they send you many messages, and are in great haste to see you. But how you have grown since I saw you last, eight months ago! My faith! Monsieur Jules, it is a pleasure to see you."

José, although treated with the most familiar kindness by all the d'Haberville family, never failed in respect to them.

Question followed question; Jules asked about the servants, the neighbors, the old dog which, when in the lower class, he had named *Niger*, to show his knowledge of Latin. He did not even bear a spite to the greedy cat which, the year before, had munched up alive a young pet nightingale, for which he had a great affection, and which he intended taking with him to college. It is true that

in his first transport of rage, he had chased the cat with a thick stick under tables, sheds, and even to the roof of the house, where the wicked animal took refuge as in an impregnable fortress. But now he had forgiven her, her misdeeds, and even asked about her.

“Now then!” said Baron, the boatman, who was not much interested in the scene, “now then!” said he in a rough tone, “when you have done talking of the dogs and cats, perhaps you will be kind enough to start. Tide waits for nobody.”

Notwithstanding Baron’s impatience and crustiness, the farewells of the young men were long and sad. The masters embraced them affectionately.

“Each of you is going to follow the career of arms,” said the superior to them, “and will be perpetually exposed to losing your life on the battlefield; therefore should you doubly love and serve God. If Providence decrees that you should fall, be ready at any moment to present yourself with a pure conscience before His tribunal. Let your war-cry be: ‘For my God, my king, and my country.’ ”

Archy’s last words were: “Farewell, you who have opened your arms and your hearts to an outlawed child; farewell, my noble-hearted friends, whose constant efforts have been to make the poor exile forget that he came of a race alien to your own! Farewell, farewell! perhaps forever.”

Jules was much affected.

“This separation would be a very painful one to me,” said he, “were it not that I have hopes of soon seeing Canada again, with the regiment in which I am going to serve in France.” Then addressing himself to the masters of the college, he said:

“I have abused your kindness, gentlemen, but you all know that my heart has always been more dependable than my head; so excuse the one for the sake of the other, I beg of you. As for you, my dear fellow-students,” he added in a voice that he vainly endeavored to make gay, “I acknowledge that, though I have tormented you terribly with my tricks during my ten years of college life, I have made you ample amends by causing many a hearty laugh.” And taking Archy’s arm, he hurried him away to conceal his emotion.

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[1] These detachments served also by land in the colony.

CHAPTER II

ARCHIBALD CAMERON OF LOCHIEL

JULES D'HABERVILLE

ARCHIBALD CAMERON of Lochiel, the son of a Highland chieftain and of a French lady, was but four years old when he had the misfortune of losing his mother. Brought up by his father, a true son of Nimrod, who, according to the beautiful Scripture expression, "was a mighty hunter before God," he, from ten years of age, followed him in his adventurous expeditions in pursuit of the roebuck and other wild animals, climbing the steepest mountains, often swimming across the icy torrents, and sleeping frequently on the damp ground with no other covering than his plaid, no other shelter than the vault of heaven. The child, thus brought up like a Spartan, seemed to delight in this wild and roving life.

Archy was but twelve years old in the year 1745, when his father joined the standard of the young and unfortunate prince, who came like a hero of romance, to throw himself into the arms of his Scotch fellow-countrymen, hoping, with their assistance, to regain the crown which he ought to have renounced forever after the disastrous battle of Culloden. In spite of the rashness of the enterprise, in spite of the numberless difficulties they met with in their unequal struggle against the powerful army of England, none of these brave mountaineers failed him in his hour of need; on the contrary, all responded to his appeal with the enthusiasm of noble, generous, and devoted men, whose hearts were touched by Charles Edward's confidence in their loyalty, and at the sight of the unfortunate prince as a suppliant.

At the beginning of this sanguinary struggle, courage triumphed over numbers and discipline; and the mountains echoed from afar songs of triumph and victory. Enthusiasm was then at its height; success no longer seemed doubtful. Alas! it was a vain hope; they had to yield, even after the most brilliant feats of arms. Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, the father, shared the fate of so many other brave soldiers who crimsoned the battlefield of Culloden with their blood.

One long groan of rage and despair was heard from the mountains and valleys of old Caledonia. Her children were forced to renounce forever all hopes of obtaining that liberty for which they had desperately and bravely

fought for so many centuries. It was the last sob of agony from a heroic nation which is obliged to succumb.

An uncle of Archy's, who had also followed the standard and the fortunes of the unhappy prince, succeeded, after the disastrous battle of Culloden, in saving his head from the scaffold, and, in spite of a thousand obstacles and dangers, contrived to take refuge in France, taking with him the young orphan.

The old gentleman, proscribed and ruined, was with much difficulty providing for his own and his nephew's necessities, when a Jesuit, a maternal uncle of the young man's, relieved him of one part of the heavy burden. Archy, having been received into the Jesuit's College at Quebec, was just leaving it after completing his studies, when the reader is introduced to him.

Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, precociously matured by the heavy hand of misfortune, did not know, on first entering college, what opinion to form of a roguish, wild boy, an endless lover of practical jokes, who seemed to be the torment of both masters and boys. It is true that this child often got more than he wanted; out of twenty canings or impositions administered to the class by the teacher at least nineteen were pocketed by Jules d'Haberville as his share.

It must also be confessed that the big boys, often quite out of patience, gave him more than his share of cuffs; but one would have thought he rather liked them than otherwise, to judge from his readiness to recommence his tricks. Without being spiteful, he never forgave an injury, always revenging himself in some way or other. His sarcasms, keen darts which just wounded skin-deep, always struck home either to the masters themselves, or to the bigger boys whom he could not reach in any other way.

His maxim was never to allow that he was beaten, and, for the sake of peace and quietness, his foes had at last to beg for peace.

One would certainly think that this child would be universally detested; but, on the contrary, every one was fond of him, and he was the pet of the college. It was because he had such a heart as rarely beats in man's breast. To say that he was generous even to prodigality, that he was always ready to defend the absent, to sacrifice himself that he might shield others, would hardly give so true an idea of his disposition, as the following anecdote. When he was about twelve years of age, a big boy, losing patience, gave him a good kick, without, however, having any intention of doing him harm. Jules, on principle, never told tales of his schoolfellows to the masters, as he thought it ungentlemanly to do so; he therefore only said to him; "You are too thick-headed, you ferocious animal, for me to pay you out with sarcasms; you would not understand them, but that hide of yours must be drilled through, and, don't be alarmed, you shall lose nothing by waiting."

Jules, after having rejected several means of revenge which were tolerably ingenious, fixed upon that of shaving off the boy's eyebrows whilst he was asleep,—a punishment the more easily inflicted from the fact that Dubuc slept so heavily that even of a morning he had to be roughly shaken to awaken him. Besides it was attacking him at the vulnerable point, as he was a good-looking boy, and took pride in his appearance.

Jules had then decided on this punishment, when he heard Dubuc say to one of his friends who taxed him with being out of spirits:

"I have good reason to be so, for I expect my father to-morrow. In spite of his prohibition, I have run in debt at several stores, and with my tailor, hoping that my mother would come to Quebec and would get me out of trouble unknown to him. My father is stingy, quick-tempered, and violent, and on the impulse of the moment might strike me; I am at a loss to know what to do. I feel almost inclined to run away till the storm is over."

"But why on earth," said Jules, who had overheard this, "did you not have recourse to me?"

"Well, I don't know," said Dubuc, shaking his head.

"Do you think," said Jules, "that for the sake of a kick or so, I would let a school-fellow be in trouble and at the mercy of his amiable father? You certainly nearly broke my back, but that is an affair to be settled in the proper time and place. How much do you want?"

"Ah! my dear Jules," replied Dubuc, "it would be abusing your generosity. It is a good large sum that I am in need of, and I know that just at present you are not in funds, for you emptied your purse to relieve that poor widow whose husband met with an accident and was killed."

"Did you ever hear such a fellow!" answered Jules, "as if one could not always find money to save one's friend from a cross, stingy father, who might break his neck for him! How much do you want?"

"Fifty francs!"

"You shall have them this evening," said the child.

Jules, the only son of a rich family, indulged by everybody, always had his pockets full of money; father, mother, uncles, aunts, and god-parents, even whilst proclaiming aloud the maxim, "that it is very dangerous to let children have too much money at their disposal," vied with one another in giving it to him unknown to each other. Nevertheless Dubuc had said what was true; at that moment his purse was empty. Besides, fifty francs was a good round sum. The French king only paid his Indian allies fifty francs for each English scalp; the English monarch, richer or more generous, gave a hundred for a French one.

Jules had too much delicacy to apply to his uncles and aunts, the only relations he had in Quebec. His first idea was to borrow fifty francs on his gold watch, which was worth twenty-five pounds. But on reconsidering the matter he thought of an old woman, formerly a servant in his family, to whom his father had given a marriage portion, and to whom he had afterwards advanced a small sum to enable her to establish herself in a business, which had since prospered in her hands. She was well off, and a widow without children.

There were many difficulties in the way; the old lady was stingy and cross, and besides she and Jules had not parted on the best of terms at his last visit to her; indeed, she had chased him into the street with her broomstick. However, the little rogue was only guilty of a peccadillo; he had made her favorite spaniel take a pinch of snuff, and whilst the old lady was flying to the rescue of her dog, he had emptied the rest of the snuff into a dandelion salad which she had been carefully preparing for her supper and called out to her, "See, mammy, here is the seasoning." No matter; Jules thought it urgent to make peace with the old lady, and so now for the preliminaries. He took her round the neck on entering, notwithstanding the old lady's efforts to extricate herself from demonstrations that were far too tender, after the affronts he had offered her.

"Come Madeleine," he exclaimed, " '*faluron dondaine*,' as the old song says, I have come to forgive you your offences, as you ought to forgive all who have offended you. Every one says you are stingy and revengeful, but that is nothing to me. You will have to atone for it by broiling in the next world, but I wash my hands of all that."

Madeleine did not know whether to laugh or be vexed at this beautiful preamble; but as she had a weakness for the child, in spite of his tricks, she took the wisest course and began to laugh.

"Now we are in a good humor again," pursued Jules, "I want to have a serious conversation with you. I have been playing the fool you see, and have got into debt; I am afraid of being blamed by my father, and still more so of annoying him. I want fifty francs to hush up this business,—can you lend them to me?"

"Yes, indeed, Monsieur d'Haberville," said the old woman, "if that was all I had in the world, I would give it with my whole heart to save your good father the slightest annoyance, I am under so many obligations to your family."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Jules, "I will have nothing to say to you if you begin to talk of that; but listen, my good Madeleine, as I may break my neck just at the moment it is least or most to be expected, whilst climbing on the college roof and the various spires in Quebec City, I am going to give you a little word in writing, by way of acknowledgment; however, I hope to discharge my debt

to you in a week's time, at the latest."

Madeleine became downright angry, refused the acknowledgment, and counted him out the fifty francs. Jules nearly strangled her, whilst embracing her, and jumping out of the window started off towards the college.

At the evening hour of recreation Dubuc was freed from all uneasiness as regarded his amiable father. "But remember," said d'Haberville, "I still owe you one for that kick."

"Stop, my dear friend," said Dubuc, quite overcome, "pay me out at once; break my head or my back with the poker if you will, but put an end to the matter; it would be too painful to me to think you owed me a grudge, after the service you have just rendered me."

"There you are again," answered the child; "the idea of my bearing a grudge against any fellow, just because I owe him one of my little rewards! Is that your way? Come, give me your hand and think no more of the matter. At all events you can boast of being the only one who ever scratched me without my drawing blood in return."

So saying, he sprang on his shoulders like a monkey, pulled his hair a little, just as a relief to his conscience, and ran to rejoin the merry band, who were waiting for him.

Archibald Lochiel, matured by severe trials, and starting with a colder and more reserved disposition than is usual with children of his age, did not quite know on first entering college whether to laugh at or resent the tricks of the little imp, who seemed to have selected him as his butt, and to give him no peace. He did not know that this was Jules' manner of showing his affection for those he liked best. At last Archy, quite out of patience, said to him one day: "You really are enough to provoke a saint; I am quite in despair about you."

"The remedy for your woes is in your own hands, however," said Jules; "just give me a good thrashing and I will leave you alone. It would be easy for you, who are as strong as Hercules."

In fact Lochiel, accustomed from childhood to the boisterous games of his Highland countrymen, was at fourteen remarkably strong for his age.

"Do you think me cowardly enough to strike a boy younger and smaller than myself?"

"Why! you are like me then," said Jules, "never even a fillip to a little fellow, but a good wrestle with those of my own age, or even older, and then shake hands and think no more about the matter. You know that fellow Chavigny," continued Jules, "he is older than I am, but he is so weak and sickly that I have never had the heart to strike him, although he played me one

of those tricks that one can hardly forgive, if one is not a second St. Francis de Sales. Only imagine his running up to me once quite out of breath, saying:

" 'I have just filched an egg from that greedy fellow Letourneau, who had stolen it in the large dining-room. Quick! hide it, for he is after me.'

" 'And where shall I hide it,' said I to him.

" 'In your hat,' he answered, 'he'll never think of looking there for it.'

"I was fool enough to believe him; I ought to have distrusted him, because he entreated me so. Letourneau came running up, and without warning, hit me a blow on the head. The devil of an egg nearly blinded me, and I assure you there was a perfume by no means like that of the rose: it was an addled egg, taken from the nest of a hen who must have left it at least a month. I escaped with the spoiling of my hat, waistcoat and other clothes. Well, my first feeling of anger over, I ended by laughing at it; and if I have a little spite against him, it is because he forestalled me with the trick, which I should have enjoyed playing off on Derome, on account of his powdered head. As for Letourneau, he being far too much of a fool to have invented the trick, I only said to him, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' and he went away quite proud of the compliment, and well pleased to be quit of me at so little cost.

"Now, my dear Archy," continued Jules, "let us come to an agreement; I am a merciful potentate, and my terms shall be liberal. I undertake, on my honor as a gentleman, to retrench one-third of the jokes and tricks that you have the bad taste not to appreciate. Come, you ought to be satisfied, if you are not excessively unreasonable! For you see, Archy, I like you; to no one but yourself would I grant such advantageous terms."

Lochiel could not help laughing, whilst he gave the incorrigible young rascal a shaking.

It was after this conversation that the two boys began their friendship; Archy, at first, with true Scotch cautiousness, but Jules with all the warmth of his French temperament.

A short time afterwards, about a month before the holidays, which then began on the 15th of August, Jules, taking his friend's arm, said to him: "Come into my room; I have a letter from father which concerns you."

"Concerns me!" said the other, much surprised.

"What are you astonished at?" replied d'Haberville; "do you think you are not a sufficiently important personage for any one to trouble his head about? All over New France, every one speaks of the handsome Scotchman. It is said that the mothers' fearing you may quickly set their daughters' hearts on fire, are intending to present a petition to the superior of the college, in order that you may only go out in the streets when covered with a veil, like the Eastern

women.”

“A truce to your nonsense, and let me go on reading.”

“But I am quite in earnest,” said Jules. And dragging away his friend, he read him a passage from his father’s letter, which ran thus:

“What you write to me about your young friend Monsieur Lochiel, interests me exceedingly. It is with the greatest pleasure that I grant your request. Present my compliments to him and beg him to come and pass with us, not only his approaching holidays, but all his others, during his stay at college. If this unceremonious invitation is not sufficient from a man of my age, I will write more formally to him. His father lies low on a nobly-contested field of battle; honor to the grave of a brave soldier. All soldiers are brothers; their children should be so also. Let him come under my roof, and we will receive him with open arms, as one of our own family.”

Archy was so affected by this pressing invitation, that he was some time without answering.

“Well, you proud Scotchman,” continued his friend, “will you do us the honor of accepting? Or, must my father send his majordomo, José Dubé, as ambassador, with a bagpipe across his shoulder,—as I believe is the custom among the chiefs of the mountain clans,—and bearing an epistle in due form?”

“As, happily for me, I am no longer among the mountains of Scotland,” said Archy, laughing, “we may dispense with that formality. I will immediately write Captain d’Haberville, thanking him for his invitation, which is so noble, so handsome, so gratifying to me, an orphan and in a strange land.”

“Then let us talk sensibly,” said Jules, “were it only for the novelty of the thing as regards myself. You think me very frivolous, very foolish, and very hare-brained. I confess I am somewhat of all three; however, that does not prevent my sometimes reflecting more deeply than you give me credit for. For a long time I have been seeking a friend, a real friend, a friend with a noble and generous heart! I have watched you narrowly; you possess all these qualities. Now, Archy Lochiel, will you be that friend?”

“Certainly, my dear Jules, for I have always felt myself attracted to you.”

“Then,” exclaimed Jules, pressing his hand with much emotion, “it is in life and until death with us two, Lochiel!”

Thus, between a child of twelve and another of fourteen, was sealed a friendship which was afterwards exposed to severe trials.

“Here is a letter from my mother,” said Jules, “in which there is a word for you.”

“I hope your friend, Monsieur de Lochiel, will do us the pleasure of accepting your father’s invitation. We are all looking forward to the pleasure of making his acquaintance. His room is ready, next to yours. In the box that José will give you there is a little package addressed to him, which he would pain me much by refusing. Whilst doing it up, I was thinking of the mother he has lost!”

The box contained a similar provision of cakes, sweetmeats, preserves, and other eatables for each boy.

The friendship between the two boys increased daily. The new friends became inseparable, and were commonly called at college, Damon and Pythias, Orestes and Pylades, Nisus and Euryalus; they ended by calling themselves brothers. All the time that Lochiel was at college he passed his holidays in the country, at the d’Habervilles, who seemed to make no difference between the two boys, except that they showed more marked attention to the young Scotchman, who had now become one of the family; it was therefore quite natural that Archy before leaving for England, should accompany Jules in the farewell visit he was to pay his family.

The friendship of the young men was afterwards to be put to cruel tests, when that code of honor, which civilization substituted for the more truthful impulses of nature, forced on them the inexorable duties of men who are fighting under hostile banners. But what avails the dark future! For the ten years that their studies lasted, did they not enjoy that friendship of early manhood, which, like the love of woman, has its passing griefs, its bitter jealousies, its delirious joys, its quarrels and delicious reconciliations?

CHAPTER III

A NIGHT WITH THE GOBLINS

AS soon as the young travellers had arrived at Pointe-Lévis, after crossing the St. Lawrence, opposite the City of Quebec, José hastened to harness a handsome and powerful horse to a sleigh without runners, the only means of transport at that time of year, when there was as much bare ground as snow and ice, and when numerous rivulets had overflowed their banks, thus intercepting the road by which our travellers had to pass. Whenever they met with one of these obstacles, José took the horse out, and all three mounting it, they soon got across. Jules, who held on to José, could not refrain from occasionally making vigorous efforts to unseat him, at the risk of sharing with him the exquisite luxury of a cold bath; however, it was labor in vain, he might as well have tried to throw Cape Tourmente into the St. Lawrence. José, who, though only middle-sized, was as strong as an elephant, laughed to himself and pretended not to notice it. When clear of the impediment, José returned alone for the sleigh, and putting the horse to again, mounted it with the baggage in front of him, for fear of its getting wet, and soon overtook his travelling companions who had not slackened their pace for a moment. Thanks to Jules, conversation did not flag during the journey. Archy was perpetually laughing at the jokes at his own expense.

"Let us make haste," said d'Haberville, "we have twelve leagues to travel from here to St. Thomas.[2] My uncle de Beaumont sups at seven o'clock, and, if we arrive there too late, we run the risk of making but a poor meal, the best will have been gobbled up, you know the proverb, '*tarde venientibus ossa*.' "

"Scotch hospitality is proverbial," replied Archy, "with us there is the same welcome by night as by day. It is the cook's business."

"*Credo*," answered Jules; "I believe it as firmly as if I had seen it with my own eyes; otherwise, you see, your man cooks in petticoats would be wanting in skilfulness and good will. Scotch cooking is delightfully primitive! With a few handfuls of oatmeal mixed in the icy water of a brook in wintertime—for in your country there is neither coal nor wood—one can, at small cost, and without needing any great culinary skill, make an excellent ragout, and feast all comers by day and by night. It is true that when some noble personage claims your hospitality—and this frequently happens, as every Scotchman has a load of armorial bearings, enough to break down a camel,—it is true, I say, that

then you add to the usual dish a sheep's head, feet, and nice juicy tail dressed with salt; the rest of the animal is wanting in Scotland."

Lochiel only looked over his shoulders at Jules, saying:

" '*Quis talia fando Myrmidonum, Dolopumve. . .*' "

"Now, then," broke in the latter, pretending to be angry, "do you call me a Myrmidon and a Dolopian[3]—I who am a great philosopher! And besides, you great pedant, you insult me in Latin, a language whose quantities you murder so cruelly with your Scotch accent that the shade of Virgil must tremble in its tomb! You call me a Myrmidon, I, the best geometrician of my class!—in proof of which my mathematical tutor predicted I should be a Vauban,[4] or perhaps even—"

"Yes!" interrupted Archy, "on purpose to laugh at you on account of that famous perpendicular line of yours which leaned to the left so much that the rest of the class trembled for the fate of the base it threatened to overwhelm; our tutor, perceiving this, tried to console you by predicting that if ever the tower of Pisa should be rebuilt, the rule and compass would be entrusted to you."

Jules assumed a mock tragic attitude, and exclaimed:

" '*Tu t'en souviens, Cinna! et veux m'assassiner.*' You want to assassinate me here on the highroad by the side of the river St. Lawrence, without being touched by the beauties of nature which surround us on all sides; in sight, to the north, of that beautiful Montmorency fall, which the habitants call '*la vache*' (the cow), a name, not too poetical, perhaps, but describing well the whiteness of the stream which it continually pours down, like a milch-cow giving forth the milk in which consists the riches of the husbandman. You would assassinate me here before the Isle of Orleans, which, as we advance, is beginning partly to obscure the view of that beautiful fall, which I have described in such glowing colors. Ungrateful man! can nothing soften your heart? not even the sight of poor José, who is highly edified at hearing so much wisdom and eloquence from the lips of such tender youth, as Fénelon would have said, had he written my life and adventures."

"Do you know," interrupted Archy, "that you are at least as great a poet as a geometrician?"

"Who doubts it?" said Jules. "No matter, my perpendicular line made you all laugh, and me the first of all. Besides you knew it was a trick of that fellow Chavigny, who had stolen my exercise and substituted one of his own, which I presented to the tutor. You all pretended not to believe me, as you were too glad to see me hoaxed, who am always hoaxing others."

José, who generally took but little part in the conversation of the young

men, and who, besides, had understood nothing at all of the last part of it, muttered to himself: “That must be a funny kind of a country anyhow, where the sheep have only heads, tails, and feet, and no more body than my hand! After all, it is no business of mine, the men, being the masters, can always manage to live well, but the poor horses!”

José, who was a great judge of horse-flesh, had a tender regard for the noble quadruped. Addressing himself to Archy, and touching his hat to him, he said:

“With all respect to you, sir, as all the nobles even eat oats in your country, which I suppose must be for want of something better, what becomes of the poor horses? They must suffer a good deal if they work hard.”

The two young men burst out laughing at this original idea. A little put out by their mirth at his expense, José resumed:

“You must excuse me if I have said anything foolish; one may make a mistake without drinking, like Monsieur Jules, who has just told us that the habitants call the Montmorency Falls ‘*la vache*,’ because its foam is white like milk; now I believe it is because during certain winds it roars like a cow bellowing; that is what the old people say when they are talking of it.”

“Don’t distress yourself, my good man,” said Jules, “you are probably right. What made us laugh was your inquiring if there were horses in Scotland; it is an animal quite unknown in that country.”

“No horses, sir! How do the poor folks manage to travel?”

“When I say *no* horses,” said d’Haberville, “you must not take it quite literally. There is certainly an animal which resembles our horses,—an animal a little larger than my big dog Niger, and which lives wild among the mountains like our cariboo, to which, indeed, it also bears a slight resemblance. When a mountaineer wishes to travel, he blows the bagpipe till all the villagers being assembled, he imparts his project to them. The people start off into the woods, or rather among the heather, and after a day or two’s trouble and unheard of efforts, they generally succeed in catching one of these charming animals. Then after another day’s work, or even longer, if the animal is not too headstrong and the mountaineer has sufficient patience, he starts on his journey and sometimes arrives safely at the end of it.”

“Well,” said Lochiel, “it is fine for you to laugh at our Highlanders! You ought to be proud indeed of your princely equipage! Posterity will find it difficult of belief that the high and powerful Seigneur d’Haberville has sent a sleigh used for carting manure to fetch home the presumptive heir of his vast domains! Of course he will send outriders to meet us, that nothing may be wanting to our triumphal entry into the manor of St. Jean-Port-Joli!”[5]

“Well done, Lochiel!” said Jules, “well answered; you have got out of that well! ‘Tit for tat,’ as a saint of your country or somewhere thereabouts said, when he came to blows with his satanic majesty.”

During this colloquy, José was scratching his head with a piteous look. Like Caleb Balderstone in Sir Walter Scott’s “The Bride of Lammermoor,” he was very sensitive about everything affecting the honor of his master’s family. He therefore exclaimed in a doleful voice.

“What a fool I was; it is all my fault! The master has four carriages in the coach-house, and two of them, brand new, are varnished as bright as fiddles; so bright that Sunday last having broken my looking-glass, I shaved myself in the panels of the brightest of them. So when the master said to me the day before yesterday morning, ‘make yourself smart José, for you are going to Quebec to fetch my son and his friend Mr. Lochiel; mind you take care and have a suitable carriage for them;’ I, fool that I was, said to myself, seeing the state of the roads, the only suitable carriage is a sleigh without runners. Ah, indeed I shall catch it finely! I shall be well out of it if I have only my allowance of brandy stopped for a month. At three glasses a day,” added José, shaking his head, “that would make ninety glasses stopped without counting the ‘a-dons’ (occasional extra glasses). But it is all right, I shall have well deserved the punishment.”

The young men were much amused at José’s ingenious lie to shield his master’s honor.

“Now,” said Archy, “that you seem to have emptied your budget of all the nonsense that a French head, destitute of brains, is able to contain, will you please speak rationally, if you possibly can, and tell me the reason why the Island of Orleans is called the Sorcerer’s Island.”

“Why, for the simplest of all reasons,” said Jules; “it is because it is inhabited by a great number of sorcerers.”

“Now there you are again at your nonsense,” said Lochiel.

“Indeed I am in earnest,” answered Jules. “Really the pride of you Scotch is unbearable! You will allow nothing to any other nation! Do you really think you have a monopoly in sorcerers? What pretension! Know, my dear fellow, that we, too, have sorcerers; and two hours ago only, between Pointe-Lévis and Beaumont I could easily have introduced you to a very presentable sorceress. Know, further, that at my honored father’s seigniory, you will see a sorceress of the highest order. My dear fellow, the great difference is that in Scotland you burn them, but here we treat them with all the respect due to their high social position. Now just ask José, if I am telling you lies.”

José was not backward in confirming his statement; the witch of Beaumont

and that of St. Jean-Port-Joli, being in his eyes *bona fide* sorceresses.

"If you would allow me, young gentlemen, I could easily put you right by telling you what happened to my defunct father, who is dead."

"Oh! do tell us, José; do tell us what happened to your defunct father who is dead," exclaimed Jules, laying particular stress on the last three words.

"Oh, my good José," said Lochiel, "I beg of you to do us the pleasure."

"Well, one day my defunct father, who is dead, had left town a little latish to return home; he had even stopped at Pointe-Lévis a little while to amuse himself—in fact to be pretty jolly with his friends. The good man liked a drop of comfort, and that was why, when he travelled, he always carried a small bottle of brandy in his seal-skin bag. He used to say it was old men's milk."

"*Lac dulce*," said Lochiel, drily.

"With all due respect, Master Archy," replied José, a little put out, "it was not *soft* (douce) water; nor *lake* water, but good wholesome brandy, that my defunct father carried in his bag."

"Upon my word, that is excellent!" exclaimed Jules. "You were paid out there for your eternal Latin quotations."

"Forgive me, José," said Lochiel, quite seriously; "I had no intention of treating the memory of your defunct father with disrespect."

"You are excused," said José, his wrath suddenly appeased. "It happened that, when my father wanted to set out, it was quite dark. His friends did all they could to keep him all night, telling him he would have to pass alone before the iron cage where La Corriveau underwent her punishment for having killed her husband.[6] You have seen her yourselves, gentlemen, when we left Pointe-Lévis at one o'clock; the wicked thing was then quiet enough in her cage, with her skull without eyes; but don't trust her, she is sly enough, and if she can't see by day, she knows well enough how to find her way about at night and torment people. Well, my defunct father, who was as brave as his captain's sword, told them he cared nothing about it and that he owed nothing to La Corriveau, and a heap of other things which I have forgotten. He touched his horse with the whip and away went the swift beast like the wind.

"When he came near the skeleton, he thought he heard a noise like some one groaning; but as a strong southwester was blowing, he thought it must be the wind among the bones of the corpse. Still it bothered him, and he took a good drop to cheer himself up. All things considered, he said to himself, Christians should help one another; perhaps the poor creature wants some prayers. So he took off his cap and devoutly said a *dépréfundi* (*de profundis*) in her behalf, thinking, if it did not do her any good, it could not do her any harm, and besides, anyway, he himself would be the better of it.

“Then he went on quite fast, but this did not prevent his hearing behind him ‘tic, tac; tic, tac;’ like a piece of iron striking on stones. He therefore got out, but found everything in its place. He thought it was the tire of his wheel, or some of the iron of his *cabriolet* which had become unnailed. He whipped his horse to make up for lost time, but he soon again heard the ‘tic, tac; tic, tac,’ on the stones; still, as he was a brave man, he did not pay much attention to it.

“Arrived at the top of St. Michel’s hill, which we passed just now, he felt very sleepy. After all, said my defunct father to himself, a man is not a dog! we will take a nap; both my horse and I will be better for it. So he unharnessed his horse, and tying its forelegs with the reins, said to it: ‘There, pet, there is good grass, and you can hear the brook flow, good night.’

“As my defunct father was going to get into his *cabriolet* to shelter himself from the dew, he took a notion to find out the hour, so he looked at the Three Kings to the south and the Wain to the north, and concluded it must be midnight. It is the hour when all honest people should be in bed.

“All at once, it appeared to him that the Isle of Orleans was all on fire. He jumped over the ditch and climbing on a fence stared with amazed eyes. At last he saw that the flames were running along the shore, as if all the *feux-follets* (will-o’-the-wisps) in Canada, the cursed goblins, had come there by appointment to hold their Sabbath. By dint of looking steadily, his sight, which had been confused, became quite clear, and he saw a strange spectacle. There were a number of things shaped like men, but of some extraordinary species, for they had heads as big as a half-bushel measure, dressed up in sugar-loaf caps a yard long; then they had arms, legs, feet, and hands armed with claws, but no *body* worth speaking of; in fact, their bodies were split up to their ears. They had hardly any flesh, just all bones like skeletons. All these handsome fellows had their upper lip cloven like a hare’s, and there stuck out a *rhinosferos* (rhinoceros) tooth a good foot long, like what we see, Mr. Archy, in your book of supernatural history. Their nose was hardly worth speaking of; it was neither more nor less than a long, pig-like snout, which they worked round and round at their will, sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left of the big tooth. I suppose it was to whet it. I was nearly forgetting a long tail, twice as long as a cow’s, which hung down their back, and I think they used it to whisk off the mosquitoes.

“The funniest thing was that they had but three eyes between every two phantoms. Those who had only one eye in the middle of their forehead, like the *cyroclops* (cyclops) which your uncle the chevalier, Monsieur Jules, who is a learned man, read about to us from a big book all Latin, like a priest’s breviary, which he called his *Vigil* (Virgil); well, those who had but one eye

held tight on to two acolytes, who, the cursed things, had all their eyes. From all these eyes there came out flames of fire which lighted the Isle of Orleans like day. These last seemed to have great consideration for their neighbors, who were, as one might say, one-eyed. They saluted them by approaching them and flourishing their arms and legs about like Christians dancing the minuet. The eyes of my defunct father were starting out of his head. It was much worse when they began to skip and dance about, however, without moving from their places, and to sing, in a voice as gruff as that of a choking ox, the following song:—

‘Come, be gay, gossip goblin!
Come, be gay, my neighbor dear.
Come, be gay! gossip pokenose—
Gossip, little idiot, foolish frog.
Of those Christians, of those Christians,
We will make a glorious feast.’

“ ‘Oh, the miserable *carnivals*’ (cannibals), said my defunct father, ‘only see; an honest fellow cannot be a moment sure of his own property. Not content with stealing my very best song, which I always keep for the last at weddings and junketings, see how they have altered it! It can hardly be recognized. It is on Christians instead of good wine that they want to feast, the wretches!’ And then after that the bogies went on with their infernal song, looking straight at my defunct father and pointing at him with their great *rhinosferos* teeth.

‘Ah! come hither, gossip François;
Ah! come hither, gossip piggy;
Come, make haste, gossip sausage—
Come, hither, gossip pumpkin pie.
Of the Frenchman, of the Frenchman,
We will make a salting-tub.’

“ ‘All I can tell you, my darlings,’ cried out my defunct father, ‘is, that if you eat no other salt pork than what I shall carry for you, you will not need to skim your soup.’

“However, the bogies seemed in the meantime to be waiting for something, and as they often turned their heads round to look behind, my defunct father looked also. What did he perceive on the hill! A great devil, shaped like the others, but as tall as St. Michel’s steeple, which we passed just now. Instead of a sugar-loaf cap, he wore a cocked hat, surmounted by a spruce-tree by way of a plume of feathers. He had but one eye, the blackguard, but it was worth a dozen; he must have been drum-major to the regiment, for he held in one hand a big pot, twice as large as our sugar caldrons, which hold twenty gallons each; and in the other hand the clapper of a bell, which he had stolen, I believe, the dog of a heretic, from some church before the ceremony of baptising the bell

had been performed. He struck one blow on the pot, and all the *insecrable* (execrable) creatures began to laugh, to jump, and to flutter about, nodding their heads towards my defunct father, as if they were inviting him to come and dance with them.

" 'You will have a long time to wait, my sweet creatures,' thought my defunct father to himself, whilst his teeth chattered in his head as if he had the ague; 'you will have a long time to wait, my darlings, before you catch me leaving God's earth for the land of bogies.' All at once the giant devil struck up an infernal song and dance tune, accompanying himself on the pot, which he kept thumping harder and faster, whilst all the other devils started off like lightning, so that they were not a minute in making a complete tour of the island. My poor defunct father was so bewildered by the uproar that he could only catch three verses of this fine song; here they are:

'Of Orleans this is our domain,
The country where fine fellows reign.
Tour loure,
Dance around;
Tour loure,
Dance around.

'All who come we welcome make,—
Witches, lizard, toad, or snake.
Tour loure, etc.

'Hasten hither all who list.
Infidel or atheist.
Tour loure, etc.'

My defunct father was in a bath of perspiration, and yet he was not at the worst of his adventures.

"But," added José, "I have a longing to smoke; and with your permission, gentlemen, I will strike a light."

"All right, José," said d'Haberville, "but for my part, I have a different longing. By my appetite it must be four o'clock, the time for collation at college. We must eat a morsel."

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[2] Later the village of Montmagny.

[3] Slighting names given by the boys in the upper classes to those not yet in the fourth.

[4] Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban (1633-1707). A distinguished French military engineer, created a marshal of France, 1703.—*T.G.M.*

[5] On May 25th, 1677, this seigniory was granted to Noël l'Anglois. It was later acquired by the de Gaspé family.—*T.G.M.*

[6] See Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV

LA CORRIVEAU

JOSÉ, having taken the bridle from the horse and given him what he called a mouthful of hay, made haste to open a box which, with his usual busy ingenuity, he had fastened on the sleigh so as to serve, at need, as either a seat or a larder. He drew out a table-cloth, in which were wrapped a couple of chickens, a tongue, some ham, a little flask of brandy, and a good bottle of wine. He was withdrawing to a distance when Jules said to him: “Come and eat with us, my good man.”

“Yes, yes,” said Archy, “come and sit down near me.”

“Oh! gentlemen, I know too well the respect I owe you.”

“Come, no ceremony,” said Jules; “we are bivouacking, all three being soldiers or very nearly so. Will you come, you obstinate one.”

“It is with your permission, gentlemen, and to obey you, my superior officers, that I do so.”

The two young men seated themselves on the box, which also served as table; José seated himself very comfortably on a heap of hay that was still remaining, and all three began to eat and drink with good appetite.

Archy, who was naturally abstemious, had soon finished his collation. Having nothing better to do, he began to philosophize. Lochiel, on the days he felt gay, liked to advance paradoxes for the pleasure of provoking discussion.

“Do you know what interested me most in our friend’s legend?”

“No,” said Jules, attacking another leg of a chicken, “and I shan’t much care for the next quarter of an hour; a hungry stomach has no ears.”

“No matter,” replied Archy, “it was these devils, imps, goblins, whatever you like to call them, who had only one eye. I would like that fashion to increase among human beings, there would be fewer hypocrites, fewer rogues, and consequently fewer dupes. It is certainly consoling to find that virtue is honored even among goblins! Did you notice the high consideration in which the cyclops were held by the other bogies? With what respect they saluted them before approaching them?”

“Oh, yes!” said Jules, “but what does that prove?”

“That proves,” replied Lochiel, “that these cyclops deserve the

consideration they meet with, they are the very cream of the goblins. In the first place, they are not hypocrites."

"Stuff," said Jules, "I am beginning to fear for your brain."

"I am not such a fool as you think," replied Archy. "Here is proof of it. Look at a hypocrite with some one he wants to take in; he has always one eye half shut on himself, whilst his other is wide open noticing the effect which his discourse produces on his interlocutor. If he had but one eye, he would lose this immense advantage, and be obliged to give up playing the hypocrite, which he finds so profitable. There would be one bad man less. Probably my goblin cyclops has many other vices, but he is certainly exempt from that of hypocrisy; hence arises the respect which is felt for him by a class of beings sullied with all the vices that are attributed to them."

"Your health! Scottish philosopher," said Jules, swallowing a glass of wine. "Hang me if I understand one word of your arguments.

"Do you know," continued Jules, "that you are a terrible logician, and bid fair to eclipse some day, even if that day has not already come, such twaddlers as Socrates, Zenon, Montaigne, and other logicians of the same stamp. The only fear is that the logic may carry the logician up to the moon."

"You may laugh!" said Archy. "Well! let only one pedant, with his pen behind his ear, take the trouble of seriously refuting my theory, and you will see a hundred scribblers rush to the rescue, who will take part for and against, till oceans of ink flow. Oceans of blood have often flowed on account of arguments about as sensible as mine, and that is how many a great man's reputation has been made!"

"In the meantime," answered Jules, "your theory may serve as a pendant to the tale that Sancho related to put Don Quixote to sleep. As for me, I very much prefer our friend José's legend."

"You shew your good taste!" answered the latter, who had taken a nap.

"Let us hear it," said Archy.

" '*Conticuêre omnes, intentique ora tenebant.*' "

" '*Conticuêre!*' incorrigible pedant!" exclaimed d'Haberville.

"It is not the *conte* (tale) of a curé (curate)," answered José quickly, "but it is as true as when he speaks to us from the pulpit, for my defunct father never told lies."

"We believe you, my dear José," said Lochiel, "but please go on with your charming story."

"Well, then," said José, "brave as my defunct father was, he still could not help feeling so decidedly frightened that the perspiration trickled from the end

of his nose in a stream as thick as an oat-straw. There he was, the poor dear man, his eyes starting out of his head, and not daring to budge an inch. He fancied, indeed, that he heard behind him the same tic, tac; tic, tac, which he had before heard several times on the road, but he had too much going on before him to be able to trouble himself about what was passing behind him. All at once, just when he least expected it, he felt two great hands as lean as a bear's paws, laying hold of his shoulders. He turned round, quite scared, and found himself face to face with La Corriveau. She had slipped her hands through the bars of her iron cage and was trying to climb on to his back, but the cage being heavy, at each spring that she took, she fell back to the ground with a clanging sound, but still without letting go of my poor defunct father's shoulder, who bent under the burden. If he had not held tight to the fence with both his hands, he would have been crushed with the weight. My poor defunct father was so struck with horror, that you might have heard the perspiration drop from his face on to the fence like duckshot!

" 'My dear François,' said La Corriveau, 'do me the pleasure of conducting me to dance with my friends on the Isle of Orleans.'

" 'You limb of the old boy,' said my defunct father, 'is it by way of thanking me for my *dépréfundi* (*de profundis*) and other good prayers that you want me to take you across to the witches' sabbath? I was thinking you must be having at least three or four thousand years of purgatory for your pranks. You had only killed two husbands; that was a trifle, so it pained me to think of it, and I, who have a tender heart, said to myself; I must give her a helping hand. And all the thanks I get is, that you want to jump on my shoulders and drag me to hell like a heretic.'

" 'My dear François,' said La Corriveau, 'do please take me to dance with my dear friends,' and she knocked her head against my defunct father's till his skull rattled like a bladder full of flint-stones.

" 'That is a fine idea of yours,' said my defunct father, 'you limb of Judas Iscariot, that I am going to make a beast of burden of myself to carry you across to dance at the witches' sabbath with your beloved cronies.'

" 'My dear François,' answered the witch, 'it is impossible for me to cross the St. Lawrence without the help of a Christian, for the river is blessed.'

" 'Get across as you can, you confounded gallows' bird,' said my defunct father to her, 'every one must look after his own affairs. Oh, yes! indeed, a fine idea that I am to carry you across to dance with your crew; but you may just travel as you have been doing already, though *how*, I can't make out, and drag after you that fine cage, which must have rooted up all the stones and pebbles on the highway, which will make a fine row some of these days when the overseer comes and sees the wretched state of the roads! Of course it will be

the poor habitant who will have to suffer for your pranks, by paying a fine for not having kept the road in proper order.'

"Just then the drum-major left off thumping time on his big pot. All the goblins left off dancing and uttered three cries, or rather three yells, like those given by the Indians when they perform their 'war dance,' that terrible dance and song with which they prelude their martial expeditions. The isle trembled to its very foundations. The wolves, the bears, all the wild beasts and the goblins of the northern mountains took up the cry, and the echoes repeated it till it died away in the forests on the shores of the Saguenay.

"My poor defunct father thought that, at the very least, it was the end of the world and the day of judgment. The giant with the spruce-plume struck three loud blows, and the deepest silence succeeded to the infernal din. He raised his arm towards my defunct father, and called out to him in a voice of thunder: 'Will you make haste, you idle dog, will you make haste, you dog of a Christian, and bring our friend across? We have only fourteen thousand four hundred times more to dance around the island before cock-crow; would you have her lose the best of the fun?'

" 'Go to the devil, whence you came, you and yours!' exclaimed my defunct father, at last losing all patience.

" 'Come, my dear François,' said La Corriveau, 'be more polite! You are acting foolishly about a mere trifle, and yet you see time presses. Come, my son, just one attempt!'

" 'No, no, you hag!' said my defunct father, 'I wish you had still that fine necklace which the hangman put about your neck two years ago; you would not then be quite so ready with your tongue.'

"During this dialogue the goblins on the island recommenced their chorus:

'Dance around.
Tour loure.'

" 'My dear François,' said the witch, 'if you refuse to take me in flesh and blood, I will strangle you, and fly across to the feast mounted on your soul.'

"So saying, she seized him by the throat, and strangled him."

"What!" exclaimed the young men, "she strangled your poor defunct father?"

"When I say strangled, it was hardly any better for the poor dear man," replied José, "for he quite lost his consciousness. When he came to himself, he heard a little bird calling out, *que-tu*[7]—who are you?"

" 'Ah, well,' said my defunct father, 'I cannot be in hell, since I hear one of God's birds.' So first he opened one eye, and then the other, and saw it was broad daylight; the sun was shining in his face; the little bird perched on a

neighboring tree still kept on calling, who are you?

" 'My dear child,' said my defunct father, 'it is rather hard for me to answer that question, for I really do not know very well myself this morning who I am; yesterday I was a good respectable man who feared God, but I have had so many adventures through the night, that I can hardly be sure it is myself, François Dubé, that is here present in the flesh,' and then the dear man began to sing:

'Dance around.
Tour loure.'

He was still half bewitched. However, at last he found that he was lying at full length in a ditch, where, fortunately, there was more mud than water, for otherwise my poor defunct father, who died like a saint, surrounded by all his relations and friends, and furnished with all the sacraments of the Church, without missing one, would have died without confession, like a brute beast in the midst of the woods. When he had dragged himself out of the ditch, in which he was squeezed like a vice, the first thing he saw was his flask on the edge of the ditch, which brought back his courage a little. He stretched out his hand to take a drink of it, but it was empty! The witch had drunk it all!"

"My dear José," said Lochiel, "I am not particularly cowardly, but if such an adventure had happened to me, I should never have travelled alone again at night."

"Nor I either," put in d'Haberville.

"To tell you the truth, gentlemen, since you understand so well, I will tell you in confidence, that my defunct father, who before this adventure would have gone into a graveyard at midnight, was never so courageous afterwards, for he did not dare go alone into the stable to do his work after sunset."

"He was very right," said Jules, "but finish your story."

"It is done already," answered José. "My defunct father yoked his horse, which appeared to have had no knowledge of anything, the poor beast, and got home as quickly as he could. It was only a fortnight afterwards that he related his adventure to us."

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[7] The author has to acknowledge his ignorance of ornithology. Our excellent ornithologist, M. Le Moine,[A] will perhaps come to our assistance in rightly classifying the little bird whose cry sounds like the two syllables, *que-tu* (*que-es-tu*; who are you). This recalls the anecdote of an old man who was *non compos mentis* and who lived about sixty years ago. Thinking the question addressed to himself when he heard these denizens of the

woods, he did not fail to answer, at first very politely, “Père Chamberland, my little children,” but at length losing patience, “Père Chamberland, you little pests.”

[A] Sir James MacPherson Le Moine (1825-1912): A charter member and later President of the Royal Society of Canada; author of numerous books on Quebec and its environment; knighted in 1897.—*T.G.M.*

CHAPTER V

THE BREAKING UP OF THE ICE

THE travellers went merrily on their way till, the daylight fading, they proceeded for a time by the light of the stars. Soon, however, the moon rose, throwing her beams far over the calm beauty of the majestic St. Lawrence. At this sight, Jules could not refrain from giving expression to a poetical ebullition, and exclaimed:

"I feel myself inspired, not by the waters of Hippocrene (of which, indeed, I have never drunk, nor have I any wish to drink) but by the juice of Bacchus, which is far more agreeable than all the fountains in the world, even than the limpid wave of Parnassus. All hail to thee, then O beautiful moon! All hail to thee, thou silvery lamp, that now lightest the steps of two mortals who are as free as the denizens of our boundless forests, two mortals but recently escaped from the trammels of college life! How often, O moon, at the sight of thy pale rays, penetrating to my solitary couch, how often, O moon, have I longed to break my chains asunder and join the joyful throngs which were hastening to balls and parties, at the very moment that cruel and barbarous regulations were condemning me to the slumber, which I was doing my utmost to banish! Ah! how many times, O moon, have I not wished to mount on thy disk, and thus even at the risk of breaking my neck, travel over the regions which thou lightest in thy majestic career, even if I had been obliged to pay a visit to another hemisphere. Ah, how many times—"

"Ah, how many times hast thou talked nonsense in thy life," said Archy, "for folly is contagious. Listen to a true poet, and let your pride be humbled: O moon! thou triple essence that the poets formerly hailed as Diana the huntress, how must thou not delight to leave the gloomy domain of Pluto, as well as the forests, where, preceded by thy barking pack, thou makest row enough to stun all the goblins in Canada; dost thou not delight, O moon! to sail majestically, like a peaceful queen, through the ethereal regions of the sky, in the stillness of a lovely night. Have pity, I pray thee, on thy own work; give back his senses to a poor afflicted mortal, my dearest friend, who—"

"O Phoebe! patroness of madmen!" interrupted Jules, "I address thee no prayer for my friend; thou art innocent of his infirmity; the harm was done—"

"Now then, you gentlemen," said José, "when you have finished gossiping with the lady moon, whom I did not know one could talk such a lot to, would

you be so good as to listen a little to the noise that is going on at the village of St. Thomas."

All listened attentively; the church-bell was indeed ringing loudly.

"It is the Angelus," said Jules d'Haberville.

"Of course!" replied José, "the Angelus at half-past eight o'clock in the evening!"

"Then it must be fire," said Archy.

"Still one cannot see any flames," replied José; "but anyway, let us make haste: something uncommon must be going on down there."

By means of urging on the horse full speed, they entered the village of St. Thomas in about half an hour. The deepest silence reigned there; the place appeared deserted, except by several dogs that were shut up in some of the houses, and were barking furiously. Except for the noise of these curs, one might have imagined one's self transported to the town spoken of in the "Arabian Nights," where all the inhabitants were turned into marble.

Our travellers were about to enter the church, whose bell was still ringing, when they perceived a light, and distinctly heard noises in the direction of the falls, near the seigniorial manor. To hasten thither was the work of a few minutes only. The pen of a Cooper, or a Chateaubriand, could alone do justice to the sight which they beheld on the banks of the South River.

Captain Marcheterre, an old sea captain of athletic form, still hale and hearty in spite of his age, had been returning home to the village towards dusk, when he heard a sound from the river, like some heavy body falling into the water; and immediately afterwards, the groans, and piteous cries of a man who was calling for help. They came from a foolhardy habitant, Dumais by name, who, thinking the ice which he had passed the evening before (and even then found somewhat bad) was still safe, had again ventured on it with a horse and sleigh, a few hundred yards to the south-east of the village. The ice had given way so suddenly that the horse had disappeared completely under the water. The unfortunate Dumais, who was a man of unusual agility, had just time to spring from the sleigh on to stronger ice; but the tremendous leap which he took to escape from inevitable death was fatal to him. His foot caught in a crack of the ice and he had the misfortune of breaking his leg, which snapped like a glass tube just above the ankle.

Marcheterre, knowing the dangerous state of the ice, which was cracked in many places, called out to him not to stir, even if he had the strength to do so, and that he would soon come back with help. He ran immediately to the sexton, begging him to ring the alarm-bell, whilst he himself summoned his nearest neighbors.

Soon all was hurry and confusion. Men were running to and fro, without any order or definite object; women and children were crying and lamenting; dogs were barking and howling, on every note of the canine gamut; so that the captain, whose experience pointed him out as the fittest person to direct the means of rescue, had much difficulty in making himself heard.

In the meantime, under Marcheterre's directions, some ran for cables, ropes, planks, and pieces of timber; whilst others robbed the fences and wood piles of cedar and birch-bark to make torches. The scene became more and more animated, and by the light of fifty torches, throwing afar their bright and sparkling refulgence, the crowd spread itself along the shore of the river as far as the spot indicated by the old captain.

Dumais, who had patiently enough awaited the arrival of help, called out to them, as soon as he was able to make himself heard, that they must make haste, as he heard dull sounds which seemed to come from towards the mouth of the river.

"There is not a moment to lose, my friends," said the old captain, "for everything looks as if the ice would soon break up."

Men less experienced than he was, wanted at once to push the materials they had brought on to the ice, without fastening them together; but to this, Marcheterre would not consent, as the river was full of cracks, and, besides, the piece of ice on which Dumais was seated, was on the one side separated by the fragments which the horse had broken off in its struggle before disappearing, and on the other by a large pool of water which prevented all approach to it. Marcheterre, knowing that the breaking up of the ice was not only inevitable, but also that it threatened them every moment, did not wish to expose the lives of so many people without taking every precaution that his long experience dictated to him.

Some therefore began to hammer together the planks and pieces of timber with their axes; others bound them fast together; others again, with the captain at their head, hauled them on to the ice, whilst the rest thrust them from the shore. This impromptu bridge hardly reached fifty feet from the bank, when the old sailor called out to them: "Now boys, let the quickest and strongest of you follow me at the distance of ten feet apart, and then let all push the bridge forward."

Marcheterre was closely followed by his son, a powerful youth, who, knowing his father's rashness, held himself in readiness to give him help in case of need; for from under the water were heard lugubrious sounds, the sinister harbingers of an inundation. Still, every one remained at his post, and all was going well; those who got out of their depth, hung on to the raft, and, when once more upon the solid ice, set to work again with fresh energy. A few

minutes more and Dumais would have been saved.

The two Marcheterres, the father in front, had arrived within a hundred feet of the unhappy victim of his own imprudence, when a subterraneous rumbling, similar to the dull sound which precedes a strong shock of earthquake, seemed to run along the whole extent of the South River. To this rumbling there immediately succeeded an explosion like a distant clap of thunder, or the discharge of a piece of artillery of the largest calibre. There arose from the spectators on the shore, a terrible cry: “The ice is breaking up! run! save yourselves!” In fact, the ice was giving way in every direction under the pressure of the water, which rushing onwards in torrents, already overflowed both banks. Then ensued a terrific scene of commotion; large pieces of ice driven against one another with an awful noise, heaped themselves up, till after reaching a considerable height, they floated away or disappeared under the waters. The planks and timber were tossed about like the playthings of an ocean stirred by the tempest. The cables and ropes threatened to break every moment.

The spectators, struck with fear at the sight of their relations and friends exposed to certain death, kept continually calling from the shore: “Run! run! save yourselves!” It was, in fact, tempting Providence to continue any longer the rash and unequal combat with the terrible element against whose fury they had to contend.

Marcheterre, however, whom this overpowering spectacle seemed to excite to renewed effort rather than to daunt, kept calling out: “Forward boys! forward, for God’s sake!”

This old sea-dog, who had been always cool and collected on the deck of his vessel, when, during a hurricane, he gave orders for a manœuvre on which the safety of his ship depended, was still the same in the face of a danger which struck with horror, even the most intrepid men. He perceived, on looking back, that with the exception of his son and Joncas, one of his sailors, all were seeking safety in precipitate flight. “Ah, cowards!” he exclaimed, “pack of cowards!”

These exclamations were interrupted by his son, who seeing him about to rush to inevitable death, darted on him, and, seizing him in his arms, threw him down on a plank, where he kept him for some moments in spite of the formidable resistance of the old man. Then ensued a terrible struggle between the father and son! It was filial love opposed to that sublime impulse, the love of humanity!

The old man, by a violent effort, managed to get himself off the only safe place that remained, and he and his son rolled over on to the ice, where the obstinate struggle continued. It was at this critical moment that Joncas,

springing from plank to plank, from timber to timber, came to help the young man in getting his father on the floating bridge again. The spectators, who, from the shore lost nothing of this heart-rending scene, made haste in spite of the water, which already overran the banks of the river, to haul in the cables; and the efforts of a hundred strong arms were successful in saving three generous, noble-hearted men from impending death. In fact, they were hardly in a place of safety before the immense sheet of ice, which had till then remained stationary in spite of the furious attacks of the enemy which assailed it from all quarters, began, with a groaning sound, to move majestically downwards towards the falls.

All eyes were fixed on Dumais. He was naturally a brave man; of this he had given proof on many occasions against the enemies of his country. He had even faced death, and that a frightful and cruel death, when, tied to a stake and about to be burnt alive by the Iroquois Indians, he was rescued by his friends. He remained seated in the same spot, on his precarious resting-place, but calm and immovable as a statue of death, only that he made some signs towards the shore, that were understood to be his last adieu to his friends. Then, with his arms sometimes folded, sometimes raised towards heaven, he appeared to be perfectly detached from all worldly ties and ready to cross the fearful gulf which separates time from eternity.

Once on the bank of the river, the captain showed no sign of resentment; on the contrary, resuming his usual *sang froid*, he issued orders with calmness and precision.

“Let us follow the ice down,” said he, “carrying with us the means of escape.”

“But what good will it be,” exclaimed those who appeared the most experienced; “the poor unhappy man is irretrievably lost.”

“There is still one chance left, just one little chance of safety for him,” said the old sailor, listening attentively to a certain noise which he heard far away to the south, “and we must be prepared for it. The ice may break up any moment on the St. Nicholas branch of the river, which, as you know, runs very rapidly. This sudden rush may perhaps drive back the ice to our shore; besides, we shall not then have to blame ourselves for anything that happens.”

What Captain Marcheterre predicted, came to pass. A report like a clap of thunder was heard, and the waters from the St. Nicholas,[8] bursting furiously from the bed of that river, rushed against the enormous mass of ice which, not having as yet met with any obstacle, was pursuing its triumphant course. For a moment they thought that this sudden, rapid check and unexpected pressure would drive a large portion of the ice to the north, as the captain had hoped. There was even a momentary change which sent it across towards the

spectators, but this state of things, apparently so favorable to the deliverance of Dumais, lasted but a short time. The bed of the river being too narrow to allow free passage to the torrent, it came to a standstill, and the ice, heaping itself up, formed an embankment of prodigious height. The large body of water, which for a time had been arrested by the impassable barrier of ice, now spread itself far over both shores of the river and inundated even the greater part of the village. This unexpected inundation forced the spectators to seek a place of refuge on the steep banks of the river, and thus extinguished the last hope of helping the unfortunate Dumais.

It was a long and obstinate struggle between the powerful element, and the obstacle which impeded its course; but at length this immense lake, which was continually being fed by the principal river and its affluents, rose to the level of the bank of ice whose foundations it undermined at the same time. Under the pressure of this enormous weight, the embankment gave way with a crash that shook both shores. As the South River suddenly widens below the St. Nicholas, this compact mass of ice, now freed from all hindrance, moved down as swiftly as an arrow, hurrying headlong towards the falls, which it had to pass over before tumbling into the basin of the St. Lawrence. Dumais had accepted his death with resignation; calm amidst the turmoil, his eyes raised to heaven and his hands folded on his breast, he appeared to be absorbed in deep meditation, as if he had already broken every tie that bound him to the material world.

The spectators rushed in crowds to the falls to see the end of this wonderful drama. A great number of people on the other side of the river, hearing the alarm bell had run to the shore, and had also stripped bark from their cedar fences, in order to make torches. All these lights, crossing one another, shed a vivid brightness on the sad scene. At a little distance was seen the seigniorial manor[9], a long and imposing edifice to the south-east of the river, standing on the highest point of a promontory which overlooked the basin and ran parallel with the cataract. About two hundred feet from the manor rose the roof of a saw-mill, whose sluice adjoined the fall itself. Two hundred feet from the mill, on the summit of the falls, there were visible the remains of an islet on which, from time immemorial, the passage of the ice each spring had done its work of destruction. Fallen from its primitive grandeur, it now only presented a surface of about a dozen square feet.

Of all the trees that had formerly given it so picturesque an air, there now remained only one venerable cedar. This veteran, which for so many years had braved the fury of the winds and attacks of the ice from the South River, had ended by at last half succumbing in the formidable struggle. Broken high up, the top of the tree swung mournfully over the abyss, towards which the trunk

also leaned, threatening to disappear completely into it, and thus deprive the islet of its only ornament. Several hundred feet separated this islet from a flour-mill situated on the north-east of the cataract.

Through an irregularity in the ground, the prodigious mass of ice, which, attracted by the fall, descended the river with ever-increasing speed, became jammed between the islet and the mill, of which it demolished the dam in a few seconds; then heaping itself up at the foot of the heights, as high as the top of the mill, it finished by demolishing the mill itself. The ice having taken this direction, the channel between the islet and the saw-mill found itself comparatively unencumbered.

The crowd were still running along the shore, watching with anxiety, mixed with horror, the man whom a miracle alone could save from a horrible and premature death. In fact, when he had arrived at about thirty feet from the islet, the piece of ice on which he was, was evidently bearing him away from the only chance of escape that Providence seemed to offer him, when a thick mass of ice, that was descending with a rapidity which its enormous bulk increased, coming in contact with one of its corners, gave it a contrary direction. Thus hurled forward with a fresh impetus, it cleared that part of the islet which was already encroached on by the water, and attacked the old cedar, the only obstacle it met with on the summit of the cataract. The tree, shaken by the unforeseen collision, quivered in every limb; its top, which was already broken, separated itself from the trunk and disappeared in the foaming waves. Relieved from this weight, the old tree suddenly straightened itself, and, like a still formidable wrestler, prepared to sustain a fresh combat with the old enemies it had so often triumphed over.

In the meantime, Dumais, jerked forward by the unexpected collision, laid hold of the trunk of the old cedar, which he clasped in his arms with a convulsive embrace; and raising himself on one leg, the only support that remained to him, he clung to it with the tenacity of a dying man, whilst the piece of ice on which his sound foot rested whirled about by the water, which was increasing every moment, and attracted by two contrary currents, oscillated from right to left, threatening every moment to deprive him of even that frail support.

Nothing was wanting to complete this imposing scene of horror. The flickering torches, on both shores, threw a sinister light on the ghostly features and fixed and straining eyes of this unhappy victim, thus suspended on the verge of death. Dumais was certainly a brave man! He had already, on different occasions, given proofs of his heroic courage, but in this exceptional and unheard of position, he may be pardoned if his presence of mind failed him.

In the meantime, Marcheterre and his friends had still some hopes of saving him.

On the shore near the saw-mill they perceived two large square pieces of wood. With these they hastened to a rock which advanced into the river about two hundred feet above the fall. To each of these they attached a rope, and, launching them one after the other, they hoped the stream might carry them on to the islet! Alas! vain hope! useless effort! The impetus they gave them was not sufficient, and the pieces of wood, encumbered with the weight of the rope, kept drifting between the shore and the island.

It would seem impossible to add one darker shade to the appalling sublimity of this scene, or to increase the sorrowful emotion of the onlookers, who were struck with horror at the sight of a fellow-being, who, any moment, might disappear in the yawning gulf of the cataract.

Nevertheless a scene equally sublime and imposing was passing on the shore! It was religion reassuring the Christian, who was preparing to appear before the tribunal of his Supreme Judge! It was religion offering its consolations to the Christian, about to cross the terrible gulf which divides life from death!

The old curé of the parish, whose sacred office had, just before the accident, called him to the bedside of a sick man, had hastened to the scene of distress. He was an old man of ninety, of immense stature; the weight of years had not bent the form of this modern Nestor, who had baptised and married all his parishioners, and buried three generations of them. His long hair, white as snow, stirred by the night-breeze, gave him the inspired look of a prophet. He stood there, on the shore, his hands stretched out towards the unhappy Dumais. He loved him; it was he who had baptised him; it was he who had made him perform that touching act of Catholic worship which suddenly changes the nature of the child and makes it partake of the nature of angels. He loved Dumais, also, because he had married him to a young orphan that he himself had tenderly reared, and who was made happy by this union; he loved him, too, because he had baptised his two children who were the joy of his old age. There he stood, on the shore, like an angel of mercy, giving him not only all the consolations that his sacred office dictated, but also addressing him in that touching language which can only be inspired by a tender and compassionate heart. He reassured him as to the fate of his little family, of whom the Seigneur de Beaumont would take charge, when he, an old man, on the brink of the grave, should be no more. But seeing that the danger became more and more imminent every moment, as each new shock to the tree seemed to paralyse the strength of the unhappy Dumais, he controlled himself by a powerful effort, and called to him in a voice that he tried to steady, but which was broken by

his sobs: “My son, make an act of contrition; I am going to give you absolution from all your sins.”

The pious pastor, having paid this tribute to natural feeling, resumed in a firm voice that was heard vibrating above the deafening noise of the cataract: “My son, in the name of Almighty God, in that of Jesus Christ His Son, who has given unto me the power of binding and loosing on earth, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, I absolve thee from all thy sins, Amen!” And the crowd, weeping and sobbing, repeated, “Amen!”

Nature again asserted herself and once more sobs drowned his voice; but in this second struggle, the imperious duty of the minister of God again vanquished the feelings of the man and the aged friend.

“On your knees, my brothers,” said he, “I am about to say the prayers of the dying.” And again the voice of the old pastor rose triumphant over that of the tempest, as, with hands extended, he prayed:

“Go forth, O Christian soul, in the name of God the Father Almighty, who created thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who suffered for thee; in the name of the Holy Ghost; in the name of the Angels and Archangels; in the names of the Thrones and Dominions; in the name of the Principalities and Powers; in the name of the Cherubim and Seraphim; in the name of the Patriarchs and Prophets; in the name of the holy Apostles and Evangelists; in the name of the holy Martyrs and Confessors; in the name of the holy Monks and Hermits; in the name of the holy Virgins and of all the Saints of God;—may thy place be this day in peace, and thine abode in holy Sion. Through Christ our Lord, Amen!”

And the people, sobbing, repeated, “Amen!”

A death-like silence had succeeded this mournful scene, when all at once plaintive cries were heard from behind the crowd which thronged the shore; they proceeded from a woman who, with disordered clothes and dishevelled hair, was running towards the scene of the catastrophe, carrying one child in her arms and leading another by the hand. She was the wife of Dumais, and some officious person had, without previous preparation, announced to her the accident which had happened to her husband, whose return she had been momentarily expecting.

Living at about half a league’s distance from the village, she had heard the tocsin, but being alone with her children, whom she could not leave, she had anxiously awaited her husband’s arrival to be informed of the cause of the alarm. The poor woman, at the sight of the one she held dearest in the world suspended above the abyss, uttered but one cry; but that cry was so harrowing,

that it went to the heart of the hearers like a dagger; and then, losing all consciousness, she fell inert on the shore. They at once carried her to the seigniorial manor, where every attention was lavished on her by Madame de Beaumont and her family.

As for Dumais, at the sight of his wife and children, a roar like that of a tiger,—so hoarse, so unearthly, so indescribable was it,—escaped from his laboring breast and struck horror to the listeners; then he seemed to fall into a state of unconsciousness which almost resembled death.

It was precisely at the moment when the old pastor was administering the sacrament of penitence, that Jules d'Haberville, Archy Lochiel, and their companion arrived on the spot. Jules made his way through the crowd to where the curé and his uncle, de Beaumont, were standing. Archy, on the contrary, advanced to the edge of the shore, and, folding his arms, took in at a glance the whole scene of desolation and calculated the chances of escape.

After a minute's consideration, Archy bounded, rather than ran, towards the group amongst whom was Marcheterre, and, whilst throwing off his clothes, gave his instructions. His words were brief, clear and concise: "Captain, I swim like a fish; there is no danger for me, but there is for the poor man, if I strike against the ice when I come up to it. Stop me first at about a dozen feet from the islet, so as to deaden the shock; your experience will guide you afterwards. Now for a strong but light rope, and a good sailor's knot."

He spoke, and whilst the old captain was adjusting the cord under his arms, he was girding himself with another cord, of which also he made a coil which he took in his right hand; thus prepared, he darted into the river, in which he disappeared for a moment, but, on rising to the surface, the current drove him rapidly towards the shore. He then made every effort possible to a skilful swimmer in order to reach the island, but it was in vain. Marcheterre, perceiving this, hastened along the strand and drew him towards the shore before his strength was exhausted. Once on land, Lochiel again ran to the rock.

The spectators hardly drew their breath when they saw Archy spring into the waves, in order to rescue Dumais, whom they had lost all hope of saving. Every one knew Lochiel's herculean strength and had frequently witnessed his aquatic exploits during the visits he had made with Jules to the Seigneur de Beaumont during their college vacations. Anxiety was therefore at its height during the terrible struggle of the young man, who, in spite of efforts which appeared almost superhuman, was so repeatedly driven towards the shore; and a cry of grief escaped from every breast at witnessing his defeat.

Jules d'Haberville had not known of this attempt at rescue on the part of his friend Lochiel. Being of a very sensitive nature, he had not been able, on arriving at the shore, to bear the harrowing sight; and after one look of

unutterable pity, he had cast down his eyes, and had not since raised them. The man suspended as it were by a thread over the yawning gulf; the pious and venerable priest administering the sacrament of penitence aloud, and beneath the vault of heaven, the prayers for the dying addressed to God for a man in the prime of his manhood, this sublime invocation, telling the soul, in the name of all the celestial powers, to detach itself from a body in the full vigor of manhood,—all seemed to him to be the delusion of a frightful dream. Jules d'Haberville, absorbed in these heart-rending emotions, had no knowledge of the efforts his friend had made to save Dumais. He had, indeed, heard the mournful cry of the crowd after Lochiel's ineffectual effort, but he had attributed it to some new catastrophe in the scene of desolation, from which he turned away.

It was no ordinary tie of friendship that bound him to his brother by adoption; it was like the love of David and Jonathan, according to the emphatic language of Scripture, "passing the love of women!" Jules did not spare his jokes at Archy's expense (who only laughed at them), but he looked on him as his own property that no one else was to touch. Woe to whoever might offend Lochiel when the impetuous Jules was present.

José, upon whom none of Lochiel's preparations on his first arrival had been lost, and who knew how violent d'Haberville, his young master, was, had slipped behind him, in readiness to control that fiery and indomitable nature by physical force.

The anxiety of the spectators was at its height when Archy made a second attempt to rescue Dumais, whom they had thought irretrievably lost. All eyes were turned with ever-increasing interest towards the unhappy man, whose convulsive trembling announced that he was losing strength at each successive shock to the old cedar. The trembling voice of the old pastor, praying to the God of mercy, alone broke the death-like silence.

Lochiel's first useless efforts had only incited him the more to this work of philanthropic devotedness; with rare self-abnegation, he had made ready, if necessary, to sacrifice his life. The rope, his only chance of safety, might easily break when burdened with a double load, besides being exposed, as it would be incessantly to the action of the impetuous torrent. He was also too skilful a swimmer to be ignorant of the imminent danger to which he exposed himself in dragging a man to shore who was quite incapable of assisting himself in any way. He also knew that he would have to remain under water without breathing until he reached the shore.

Still retaining his self-possession, he said to Marcheterre: "We must change our tactics; it was holding the coil of rope in my right hand which paralysed my strength, when I first sprang into the river, and again when I tried

to get near the islet.”

He then enlarged the diameter of the coil of rope, which he passed over his right shoulder and under his left arm, so as to leave himself free use of both his arms. Having taken these precautions, he made a bound like a tiger, and immediately disappearing under the waters, which bore him away as swiftly as a horse at full speed, did not reappear till within about twelve feet from the islet, when he was checked by the rope that Marcheterre hauled tight, as had been arranged between them. This manœuvre was nearly being fatal to him, for, losing his equilibrium, his head was plunged under water, whilst the rest of his body floated horizontally on the surface. His presence of mind fortunately did not desert him for an instant in this critical situation. He trusted implicitly to the experience of the old sailor. The latter suddenly letting out two fathoms of the rope, with a slight jerk, Lochiel resorted to one of those feats of strength known to good swimmers; and suddenly bringing his heels against his loins and then straightening his legs to strike the water perpendicularly, he helped himself by swimming alternately with his hands, till he at length recovered his equilibrium. Then putting his left shoulder forward to preserve his breast from a shock that would be fatal to him and Dumais, he came up to the place of the disaster with the speed of lightning.

Dumais, notwithstanding his apparent state of torpor and his immobility, had nevertheless lost nothing of what was passing. At the sight of the first attempt of his would-be deliverer, a ray of hope that had quickly vanished had shone on the depths of his soul, and this hope had revived within him on seeing the superhuman bound which Lochiel made when darting from the summit of the rock. The latter had hardly reached the ice, to which he clung with one hand, whilst with the other he unwound the rope coiled about him, when Dumais, letting go his hold on the sustaining tree, sprang so far by the help of his uninjured leg that he fell into Archy’s arms.

The impetuous torrent immediately rushed over the extremity of the ice, which, loaded with a double weight, reared itself up like a fiery horse; and this heavy mass, which the waters urged on with irresistible force, falling back on the old cedar, the veteran tree, after a useless effort to resist, was swallowed up in the abyss, dragging after it a part of the domain where it had reigned supreme for several centuries.

There were then great acclamations from both banks of South River; acclamations of triumph from the more distant spectators, and a cry of horror from those on the bank which was the nearest to the scene of this drama of life and death.

In fact everything had disappeared as completely as if the wand of a powerful enchanter had been waved over the scene and actors, who had

inspired such fearful interest. Along the whole breadth of the top of the cataract nothing could be seen between the two shores but the sad spectacle of the hurrying waters, which were precipitating themselves into the basin with formidable noise, and the curtain of white foam which was rising to the upper level.

Jules d'Haberville had only recognized his friend at the moment when he the second time sprang into the water. Having frequently witnessed his exploits in swimming, and knowing his prodigious strength, he had at first shown only half-stupefied astonishment, but when he saw him disappear under the water, he uttered a frenzied cry, like that of a tender mother who sees the bleeding corpse of her only child; a prey to his wild grief, he was about to throw himself into the torrent, when he felt the iron arms of José thrown around him.

Entreaties, threats, exclamations of rage and mortification, wild blows, bites,—all were ineffectual to make the faithful servant relax his grasp.

"It is all very fine, my dear Monsieur Jules," José said, "hit me and bite me, if it relieves you, but for God's sake keep quiet! Your friend will soon come up again, you know he dives like a porpoise, and that once he is under water, there is no knowing where he will reappear! Keep quiet, do, dear Monsieur Jules; you would not kill poor José, would you, who loves you so much and used to carry you about in his arms? Your father sent me to fetch you from Quebec; I am answerable for your soul and body, and it shall not be my fault if I do not take you back alive. If I do not, you see, Monsieur Jules, there will be a ball put through the head of poor old José. But look the captain is hauling in the rope as quickly as he can, and you may be sure Mr. Archy is at the end of it full of life."

Marcheterre, with the help of his friends, was, even whilst rushing along the shore, hauling in the rope with long and powerful pulls, as he felt a double weight at the end of it.

Once safely on the shore, great efforts were necessary to disengage Lochiel from the tight embrace of Dumais, who showed no signs of life. Archy, on the contrary, once freed from the embrace which nearly stifled him, threw up a few mouthfuls of water, breathed loudly and then said: "He is not dead, he can be only fainting, for hardly a moment ago he was alive."

They quickly carried Dumais to the seigniorial manor, where assiduous and skilful care was taken of him. At the end of half an hour, drops of salutary sweat rolled from his brow, and, at the end of another half hour, he opened his haggard eyes, which, after wandering round for some time, were at last fixed on the old curé. The latter placed his ear to the lips of Dumais, and the first words he could catch were: "My wife! my children! Monsieur Archy!"

“Do not be uneasy, my dear Dumais,” said the old man, “your wife has recovered from her fainting fit, but, as she believes you to be dead, caution will be necessary in announcing your deliverance to her; so many conflicting emotions might kill her. As soon as it will be prudent to do so, I will bring her to see you; I am going to prepare her for it. In the meantime, here is Monsieur Lochiel, to whom, under God, you owe your life.” At the sight of his deliverer, whom he had not before distinguished from the others present, there was a reaction in the whole system of the sick man. He put his arms round Archy, and, pressing his lips to his cheek, tears streamed abundantly from his eyes.

“How can I repay you,” said he, “for what you have done for me and for my poor wife and children?”

“By quickly regaining your health,” said Archy, cheerfully. “Monsieur de Beaumont has sent a messenger full speed to Quebec for the most skilful surgeon, and another messenger to prepare relays of carriages along the road, so that by midday to-morrow, at the latest, your broken leg will be so well set, that in two months you will easily be able to fire off a gun against your old friends the Iroquois.”

When the old pastor entered the room to which they had taken his adopted daughter, he found her half-lying on the bed, holding her younger child in her arms, while the other was sleeping at her feet. Pale as death, and taking no heed of what Madame de Beaumont and the other ladies of the village were saying to her to console her, she kept on repeating: “My husband! My poor husband! I shall not even have the sad consolation of kissing the corpse of my dear husband, the father of my children!”

On perceiving the old curé, she exclaimed, holding out her arms to him: “Is it you, my father, who have given me so many proofs of affection from my childhood, who are now coming to tell me that all is over? Ah! no; I know you too well; you would not bring such a message to the orphan you have brought up! I beg of you speak, you, whose lips utter only words of consolation!”

“Your husband,” said the old man, “will receive Christian burial.”

“Then he is dead,” exclaimed the poor woman; and for the first time sobs burst from her heaving breast. It was this reaction that the old pastor was awaiting.

“My dear daughter,” he replied, “a moment ago, the only boon you asked was to embrace the dead body of your husband, and God has heard your prayer. Trust in Him, for His powerful hand, which has withdrawn him from the abyss, is able also to give him back life.”

The young woman only answered by fresh sobs.

“He is the same God of boundless mercy,” continued the pastor, “who said

to Lazarus, ‘Come forth.’ All hope is not lost, for your husband in his state of horrible suffering—”

The poor young woman, who had, up till then, listened to her old friend without quite understanding him, seemed to wake from a horrible nightmare, and gathering her two sleeping children in her arms, she darted to the door.

To describe the meeting between Dumais and his family would be impossible. The imagination of such as are gifted with feeling hearts can alone picture it. It is easy to be pathetic when describing terrible sufferings, or great misfortunes, but the artist’s pencil refuses to depict happiness and only traces faint lines on the canvas.

“Now, let us go and sup,” said Monsieur de Beaumont to his old and venerable friend, “we have all great need of it, more especially this noble and courageous young man,” he added, pointing to Archy.

“Gently, gently, my dear sir,” said the old curé. “There is a more pressing duty for us to fulfill, which is that of thanking God, whose protection has been manifested in so striking a manner!”

All present knelt down, and the old curé, in a short but touching prayer, returned thanks to Him who commands the sea in its wrath, to Him who holds in His powerful hands the life and death of His feeble creatures.

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[8] A river which runs into the South River, at right angles with it, near the village.

[9] The seigniory, situated on the South River at this point, was known as the seigniory of Sainte-Claire and had been granted by Frontenac to René Lepage.—*T.G.M.*

CHAPTER VI

SUPPER AT A CANADIAN SEIGNEUR'S

THE table was laid in a low but spacious room, whose furniture, without being luxurious, left nothing to be desired as regards comfort. A thick, woollen, checked carpet, of Canadian manufacture, covered three quarters of the floor of the dining-room. The bright-colored woollen stuff, with which it was hung, and which also covered the backs of the sofa, the arm-chairs, and the mahogany chairs with feet like those of quadrupeds, was figured with gigantic birds, an attempt to classify which would have driven the imprudent ornithologist to despair.

An immense cupboard, reaching nearly to the ceiling, displayed, upon the many shelves with which it was furnished, a willow-pattern dinner-service, which seemed by its thickness to defy the awkwardness of servants who might let any of it fall. Above the lower part of the cupboard (which served for a press, and might be called the ground floor of the edifice) there projected a shelf at least eighteen inches wide, on which stood a sort of casket, higher than it was wide, and whose compartments, lined with green baize, were filled with silver-handled dessert knives and forks. On this shelf there was also a large silver jug, full of water for such as wished to dilute their wine, and some bottles of the divine juice of the grape.

A pile of real china plates, two decanters of white wine, two tarts, a dish of eggs *à la neige*, some wafers, a bowl of preserves, on a little table covered with a white cloth, near the cupboard, composed the dessert for the supper of a Canadian seigneur of those days.

In one corner of the room there was a cistern of blue and white china, shaped like a barrel, with a tap and basin, which served for the ablutions of the family. At the opposite corner, a large cellaret filled with square bottles containing brandy and absinthe, as well as raspberry, black currant, aniseed cordials, etc., for daily use, completed the furnishing of the room.

The table was laid for eight people. A silver fork and spoon, wrapped in a napkin, were placed on the left of each plate, and a bottle of light wine on the right. There were no knives[10] during the first course; every one was already provided with this useful implement, which Orientals only can dispense with. If it were a spring-knife, it was carried in the pocket; but if, on the contrary, it were a dagger-knife, it was suspended from the neck, in a sheath of morocco,

silk, or even of birch bark, artistically worked and embroidered by the aborigines. The handles were generally of ivory riveted with silver, and were even of mother-of-pearl for the ladies.

There was also to the right of each cover, silver cups or goblets, of various forms and sizes; some, very plain, with or without handles, some chalice-shaped, with or without feet, and some embossed; many were also gilt inside.

A servant-maid by handing on a waiter the usual *coup d'appétit*, that is to say, brandy for the gentlemen and cordials for the ladies, announced that supper was served. Eight persons placed themselves at table. Monsieur de Beaumont and his wife, Madame Descarrières their sister, the curé, Captain Marcheterre, his son Henri, and lastly Jules and Archy. The mistress of the house gave the place of honor to the venerable curé, by placing him on her right, and the second place, that on her left, to the old sailor.

The bill of fare consisted of some excellent soup (in those days soup was a matter of course, for dinner as well as for supper), a cold pie, called an Easter pie, and served, on account of its immense size, on a board covered with a napkin or small white cloth, according to its proportions. This pie, that Brillat-Savarin might have envied, was composed of a turkey, two chickens, two partridges, two pigeons, the back and thighs of two hares, the whole covered with slices of fat bacon. The force-meat, on a soft thick bed, on which these gastronomic treasures lay, and which also covered the upper part, was made from the two hams of that animal which the Jew despises, but which the Christian treats with more respect. Large onions interspersed, and spices, completed the dish. But a very important part was the cooking, which was the more difficult as, if the monster burst, it lost fifty per cent of its attractiveness. To prevent so deplorable an event, the under-crust, which also covered about three inches in depth of the culinary monster's sides, was not less than an inch thick. This crust, impregnated with the gravy from all these meats, was a delicious part of this unique dish.

Roast fowl and partridge, covered with double slices of bacon, pigs' feet, a stew, very different from that with which a Spanish hotel-keeper treated Gil Blas, were the other dishes which appeared at the hospitable board of Monsieur de Beaumont. For some time the guests ate in silence, and with good appetite; but during the dessert, the old sailor, who, even whilst eating like a famished wolf and drinking in proportion, had been incessantly looking at Archy with increasing interest, was the first to break the silence.

"It seems to me, young man," said he in a jeering tone, "that you are not much afraid of colds in the head! It also seems to me that you are in no great hurry to breathe the air of heaven; and that, like two others of your race, the beaver and the otter, you only put your nose out of water every half hour or so,

just for form's sake, and to see what is going on in the upper world. You are devilish like the salmon, too; for when one lets him have plenty of line, he takes advantage of it. Gudgeons of your sort are not caught in every stream, I'm thinking!"

"All of which," said Archy, "does not alter the fact that without your presence of mind and admirable care not to let out more line than was exactly necessary, I should have hurt my head and chest against the ice, and the body of poor Dumais, instead of lying in a warm bed, would now be tossing about in the icy bed of the St. Lawrence."

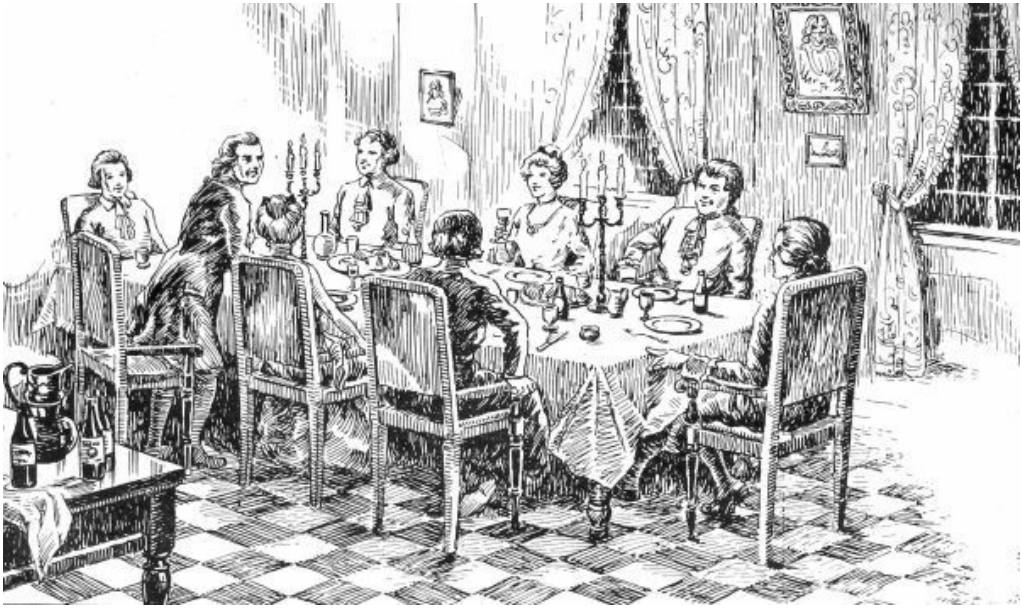
"Listen to that fellow!" replied Marcheterre. "To hear him talk, you would think it was I who had done the deed! I had to give you out more line, when I saw your heels going nearly over your head; a position you would have found awkward enough in the very middle of the rushing water. May the dev—, I beg your pardon, Monsieur le curé: I was going to swear, it is an old sailor's habit of mine."

"Ah!" said the curé, laughing, "it is just one more or less, for, you old sinner, you have long been indulging in them; your tally-stick is full of notches, and now you keep no account of your oaths."

"When my tally is full of notches, my dear curé," said Marcheterre, "you shall pass a plane over it to efface the notches, as you have already done; and we will begin them over again. Besides, I shall not escape you, for you will know how to hook me in the right time and place and tow me to a safe port along with the other sinners."

"You are too severe, Monsieur l'abbé," said Jules, "why should you wish the captain to deprive himself of the consolation of swearing just a little? Were it only against his nigger cook, who makes fricassees for him as black as his own face!"

"What, you mad little devil!" exclaimed the captain, pretending to be angry, "you dare to speak that way after the trick you played me!"



"When my tally is full of notches, my dear curé," said Marcheterre, "you shall pass a plane over it to efface the notches."

"I!" said Jules, meekly, "I play you a trick? I am quite incapable of it, captain; you calumniate me sadly."

"Ah, look at that meek saint!" said Marcheterre, "I have calumniated him! But never mind, I must now attend to what is more urgent. Lie to, for the present, boy, just for a short quarter of an hour; I will be at you again presently.

"I was about to say," continued the captain, "when Monsieur le curé thrust my unlucky oath into the hold and shut down the hatch on it, that even, young man, if you had descended the falls, through curiosity, so as to be able to tell your friends what goes on there, you would, like your relative the salmon, have also found out the way to scale them."

The conversation having turned to joking, witticisms and bon mots for a long time succeeded the painful emotions of the earlier part of the evening.

"Fill your goblets, all of you," exclaimed Monsieur de Beaumont, "I am about to propose a toast which I am sure will be well received."

"You can easily talk about filling," said the old curé, to whom they had given a richly chased cup, nearly double the size of those of the other guests, to do him honor, "but I now am more than ninety years of age, and have not the strong Breton head that I had at twenty-five."

"But, my dear friend," said Monsieur de Beaumont, "you will not have far

to go, as of course you will sleep here. And then if your legs fail you a little, your great age will pass for being the cause of it, and nobody will be scandalized."

"You forget, sir," said the curé, "that I accepted your amiable invitation in order to be at hand to attend to poor Dumais; my intention is to pass the night with him. If you take away my strength," he added laughingly, "of what use can I be to him?"

"Still, you must go to bed," said Monsieur de Beaumont, "for such are the orders of the master of the house. You shall be awakened if you are wanted. Be under no uneasiness as to poor Dumais and his wife; Madame Couture, their intimate friend, is with them. I will even after supper (for I have ordered refreshments for all who are here) send up a number of gossips who will ask no better than to encumber the sick room all night and vitiate the pure air of which he has so much need."

"You speak so to the point," replied the curé, "that I am obliged to yield." Saying which he poured a reasonable quantity of wine into the formidable cup.

Then the Seigneur de Beaumont addressed Archy in a slightly trembling but impressive voice:

"Your conduct is above all praise. One can hardly tell which is most to be admired, the self-devotion which made you risk your life for the sake of a perfect stranger, or the courage and presence of mind which enabled you to succeed! I know that you are about to embrace the profession of arms, you possess all the requisite qualities for your new profession. A soldier myself, I predict a successful career for you. Let us drink to the health of Monsieur Lochiel, the hero of the day!"

The young Scotchman's health was drunk with enthusiasm. Archy, after having replied to it, added with much modesty:

"I am really ashamed of receiving so much praise for so simple an act. I was probably the only person present who knew how to swim, for any of the others would have done as much. It is said," he added, smiling, "that your Indian women throw their new-born children into the lake or the river, leaving them to find their own way to shore, and that this is their first lesson in the art of swimming. I am inclined to think that our Highland mothers have the same excellent custom, for it seems to me I have always known how to swim."

"Mr. Archy is at his jokes again," said the captain. "As for me, although I have sailed for fifty years, I have never been able to learn to swim, not, however, for want of having fallen into the water oftener than it was at all necessary, but because I had always the luck to catch hold somewhere. If there was nothing within my reach, I just threw my limbs about as the dogs and cats

do, and sooner or later some one must have fished me out, since I am here now. This recalls to my mind an incident of my sailor's life. My ship was at anchor by the banks of the Mississippi. It might have been nine o'clock in the evening of one of those days of suffocating heat which can only be enjoyed near the tropics. I had lain down on the bowsprit of my vessel to breathe the evening breeze. With the exception of the gnats, sandflies and mosquitoes, and the infernal noise made by the alligators, which I do believe had assembled from all parts of the 'Father of Rivers' to give me a serenade, an Eastern prince might have envied me my couch. I am not of a very timid nature, I must say, but I have a natural aversion to all sorts of reptiles, whether they creep on the earth or live in the water."

"Captain," said Jules, "you certainly have delicate, refined, aristocratic tastes, and I honor you for it."

"Do you dare put in a word again, you good-for-nothing fellow, you?" exclaimed Marcheterre, laughingly, shaking his enormous fist at him. "I was nearly forgetting you, but your turn shall soon come now! In the meantime I will proceed with my story: I was feeling very comfortable, safely up there on the bowsprit, listening to the hungry monsters, snapping their jaws; I was even defying my enemies, saying to them: 'My fine fellows, you would like to eat my carcass by way of a delicate tit-bit for supper, would you not? There is but one impediment, you see, which is, that even if you would be obliged to fast like anchorets all your lives, I would not be the one to make you break your fast; I have too scrupulous a conscience for that.'

"I cannot exactly tell you how it happened," continued Marcheterre, "but somehow I finished by falling asleep, and when I awoke I was plump in the midst of the fine fellows. It is impossible to describe my horror to you, notwithstanding my habitual coolness. I did not, however, lose all presence of mind; whilst under water, I remembered that there was a rope hanging from the bowsprit, and in rising to the surface I had the good luck to catch hold of it, but in spite of my monkey-like agility and my youth, I only got clear by leaving one of my boots and a precious morsel of the calf of one of my legs, as hostages, in the throat of an uncivilized alligator.

"Now for your turn, you devil's imp," continued the captain. "Sooner or later I must pay you out for the trick you played me. Last year, I had just arrived from Martinique, when one morning, in the Lower Town of Quebec, I met my young gentleman just as he was preparing to cross the river to go home to his father's, at the commencement of the holidays. After a volley of hugs, from which I could only get free by pulling off to larboard, I begged him to announce my arrival to my family, and to tell them I could not go down to St. Thomas for three or four days. What did the saint do? He arrived at my place

at about eight o'clock in the evening, screaming out like a madman: 'Joy! joy! shout for joy!'

" 'My husband is arrived,' said Madame Marcheterre. 'My father is arrived,' cried my two daughters. 'Of course,' said he, 'I should not be so jolly otherwise.' First he kissed my old woman—there was no great harm in that. He tried to kiss my daughters, who boxed his ears soundly, and then shot off full sail. What do you say, Monsieur curé, to this fine beginning, before going farther?"

"Ah! Monsieur Jules," exclaimed the old pastor, "I am hearing fine things of you! It was certainly very edifying conduct for a pupil of the reverend Jesuit fathers!"

"You see, Monsieur l'abbé," said Jules, "that all that was only for fun, just to take part in the joy of this amicable family. I knew too well the ferocious virtue—with a basis as firm as that of the cape of Tempests—of these daughters of a sailor, to be in earnest. I knew that after having fired their double broadside of boxes on the ear, they would shoot off at full sail."

"I am beginning to believe, after all," said the old curé, "that you are telling the truth, that it was more tricks than bad intention on your part, for I know Jules d'Haberville perfectly."

"That is right," said the captain. "Now take his part, that is all that is wanting; but we shall see whether you will be equally indulgent as to the rest. When my gentleman had finished making a noise, he said to my wife: 'The captain begged me to tell you that he would be here to-morrow, towards ten o'clock in the evening; and, as he has made a good thing of his voyage (which after all was true), he wishes all his friends to share in his happiness. He would like that there be a ball and supper on his arrival at home, which would be at about the hour for sitting down to table. Therefore get everything ready for this fête, to which he has invited me and my brother Lochiel. It puts me out a little,' added the hypocrite, 'for I am in a hurry to see my dear parents; still, dear ladies, there is nothing I would not do for you.'

" 'But what is my husband about, to give me so little time!' said Madame Marcheterre. 'We have no market here! My cook is too old to be able to do so much work in one day! It seems hopeless; but we must try and perform impossibilities to please him.'

" 'Can I not be of some service to you?' said the hypocrite, pretending to be very sorry for my old woman. 'I will undertake the invitations with the greatest pleasure.'

" 'You will really be doing me good service,' said my wife, 'you know every one, and I give you *carte blanche*.'

“My wife then sent all over the parish to procure the meats she required. She and my daughters passed the greater part of the night helping the old cook to make pastry, whipped creams, blanc-mange, wafers, and a lot of trifles which are not to be compared to the good *tiaudes*[11] we get on the banks of Newfoundland. Besides Monsieur Jules did the thing in grand style. During the night he despatched two messengers on horseback, one to the north-east, the other to the south-west, bearing invitations to the fête; so that at six o’clock the next evening, thanks to his kind consideration, my house was full of guests, who were ducking like sea gulls whilst I was anchored at Quebec, and to whom Madame Marcheterre, in spite of a dreadful sick headache, was doing the honors of the house with the best grace possible. What do you say, gentlemen, to such a trick, and what have you to say for yourself, you young crocodile?”

“I wished,” said Jules, “that every one should take part in the joy of the family at the success of a friend who was so dear and so generous. I can assure you that if you had witnessed the regrets, the general consternation, when they were obliged to sit down to table towards eleven o’clock, without waiting any longer for you (the next day being a day of abstinence), you would have been melted to tears. As for your wife, she is an ungrateful, yes, a very ungrateful woman. Seeing, a little before eleven o’clock, that she was in no hurry to give us supper, and that she was even beginning to be a little uneasy about her dear husband, I just whispered a word in her ear, and, by way of thanks, she broke her fan across my face.”

Every one burst out laughing, and the captain partook heartily of the general hilarity.

“How comes it, Marcheterre,” said Monsieur de Beaumont, “that you never before told us of this excellent trick?”

“There was no use,” replied the captain, “telling every one how we had been taken in by this young rascal; besides, it would hardly have been very gracious of us to make known to you all that you owed the fête to Monsieur Jules d’Haberville: we preferred getting the credit of it ourselves. I only tell it now because I found it such a droll trick that I thought it would amuse you to hear of it.

“It seems to me, Mr. Diver,” continued Marcheterre, addressing himself to Archy, “that notwithstanding your quiet philosophical manner, you were an accomplice of your dear fellow-traveller.”

“I give you my word,” said Lochiel, “that I knew nothing at all about it; it was only the next day Jules told me in confidence of his exploit, and I scolded him well for it.”

“And of course you did not profit by it,” interrupted Jules, “flinging your great Scotch legs about to the imminent danger of the more civilized shins of your neighbors. Perhaps you have forgotten, that not content with dancing French cotillions, which are danced in all polite circles, to please you we were obliged to dance your Scotch reels to a tune which our fiddler soon caught by ear; not a very difficult matter. All that it requires is, to grasp the strings of the violin, and imitate the noise that cats might make if you thrust them into a bag and pulled them out again by the tail.”

“Come, you sad fellow, you,” said the captain to Jules, “and eat your soup with me to-morrow, and your friend also; at the same time you can make your peace with my family.”

“That is what may be called speaking to the purpose,” said Jules.

“There he is at his jokes again,” said Marcheterre.

As it was very late, they had to separate after drinking to the health of Marcheterre and his son, giving them the meed of praise which both had so well earned.

The young men were obliged to pass several days at St. Thomas. The ice continued to descend the river, the roads were flooded, the nearest bridge, even supposing that it had not been destroyed, was some leagues to the south-west of the village, and the rain was falling in torrents. They were obliged to wait till the river should be sufficiently free of ice to allow of their crossing in a boat at the foot of the falls. They divided their time between the de Beaumont family, their other friends, and poor Dumais, who had a long illness at the seigneur’s house, for the latter would not allow him to be moved before he had fully recovered. The sick man related to them his fights with the English and their savage allies, and told them a great deal about the manners and customs of the aborigines, with whom he had associated a good deal.

“Although a native of St. Thomas, I was brought up,” he said to them one day, “in the parish of Sorel. I was ten years old and my brother nine, when a party of Iroquois surprised us in the woods where we were gathering strawberries, and took us prisoners. After a somewhat long march, we came to their canoe, which had been hidden in the brushwood near the shore, and they took us across to one of the numerous islands which border the river St. Lawrence. Some one gave the alarm to my family, and my father, with his three brothers, all armed to the teeth, started in pursuit of them. They were but four against ten, but, without boasting, I may say that my father and uncles were men that I would not advise any one to trifle with. They were tall, well-made men, with open chests and broad shoulders. It might be about six o’clock in the evening; my brother and I were sitting in the middle of our enemies, in a little glade surrounded by a thick bush, when we heard my father’s voice

calling to us: ‘Lie flat down on the ground.’ I immediately laid hold of my little brother (who was crying and whom I had been trying to comfort) and dragged him flat down on the ground with me. The Iroquois had hardly started to their feet when four well-aimed shots struck down four of them, who rolled on the ground like eels. The other *canouaches* (a term of contempt), not wishing, I suppose, to fire at random upon invisible foes to whom they themselves would serve as marks, seemed to be making for the shelter of the trees, but our deliverers did not give them time to reach them, for falling on them with tomahawks, they felled three of them at one swoop, and the rest took flight, without the conquerors caring to pursue them. In all haste we were taken back to our mother, who almost died for joy at once more embracing us.”

Lochiel also related to the sick man the battles of the Scotch mountaineers, as well as their manners and customs, and the almost fabulous exploits of his hero, Wallace; whilst Jules amused him by the recital of his own escapades, and related several historical anecdotes that he knew would interest him.

When the young men bade farewell to Dumais, he said to Archy, with tears in his eyes: “Most likely, sir, I shall never see you again; but rest assured that I shall never forget you, and that I, my wife and my children, will pray for you every day of our lives. It pains me to think that, even supposing you should come back to New France, a poor man like me can never have a chance of proving his gratitude to you.”

“Who knows,” said Lochiel, “perhaps you may be able to do more for me than I have done for you.”

Did the Scot possess the gift of second sight of which his countrymen boast? The sequel of this story will show.

The travellers left their St. Thomas friends on the 30th of April at about ten o’clock in the morning. The weather was magnificent, but the roads were frightfully bad. They had six leagues to travel before arriving at St. Jean-Port-Joli, their destination; a journey they had to perform on foot, inveighing against the rain which had made the last vestiges of snow and ice disappear. It was far worse when they got to the road that at that time crossed the marsh of Cape St. Ignace. They often sank up to their knees, and were frequently obliged to extricate the horse, which had stuck in the mud.

Jules, the most impatient of the three, kept saying: “If I only had the ordering of the weather, we should not have had this devil’s own rain, which has turned the roads into so many swamps!”

Perceiving at last that each time he said this, José shook his head reprovingly, he asked him the reason.

“Ah, well! you see, Monsieur Jules,” said José, “I am only a poor, ignorant man, without *inducation*, but for my part, I think that if you had the ordering of the weather, we should not be any better off; see what happened to Davy Larouche.”

“You shall tell us Davy Larouche’s adventure,” said Jules, “when we shall have crossed this cursed swamp, from which I have some trouble to extricate myself, deficient, as I am, in the advantage of possessing the stork-like legs which adorn that proud Scotchman who is walking before us whistling a pibroch, music worthy of the roads we are travelling over.”

“How much would you give,” said Archy, “to exchange your pigmy French legs for those of the ‘proud mountaineer?’ ”

“Keep your legs,” replied Jules, “for the first precipitate retreat you may have to make before the enemy.”

Having crossed the marsh, the young men asked for José’s story.

“I must first tell you,” said José, “that a chap named Davy Larouche was a long time ago established in the parish of St. Roch. He was a tolerably well-off habitant, neither rich nor poor, just between the two. The good man was like me; he was not over sharp, which did not, however, prevent him getting along very well. So one morning Davy got up earlier than usual, goes and does his work in the stable, comes back to the house and shaves himself as if it were a Sunday, and dresses himself in his best.”

“ ‘Where are you going, husband?’ said his wife to him. ‘How fine you have made yourself! Are you going courting the girls?’

“You understand all she was saying was only by way of a joke; she knew quite well that her husband was shame-faced with women, and not at all eager after the creatures; but la Thèque (Thecla) was like her uncle, Bernuchon Castonguay, the most *factious* (facetious) body on all the south shore. She often said, pointing to her husband: ‘You see that great stupid there,’—not a polite way for a woman to speak of her husband. ‘Well! he would never have had the courage to ask me in marriage, I, who was the prettiest creature in the parish, if I had not gone at least half-way; yet his eyes used to blaze in his head when he saw me. I took compassion on him, then, for he did not seem in much of a hurry; it is true, that I had rather more need to be in a hurry than he had, for he had four good acres of land under his feet, whilst I had only my pretty self.’

“She was rather telling a lie there, the little rogue,” added José, “for she had a cow, a yearling heifer, six sheep, her spinning-wheel, and a chest so full of clothes that it had to be well pressed down with the knee to close it, and in this chest fifty good francs.

“ ‘Well, I took compassion on him,’ said she, ‘one evening that he was at our house, and sitting quite shame-faced in the corner, without daring to speak to me, so I said to him—I know you love me, you great stupid thing, go and speak to my father who is waiting for you in the little room, and then put up the bans at church. Thereupon, as he was as red as a turkey cock, and yet did not budge, I pushed him into the other room by the shoulder. My father opened a press and took out a bottle of brandy to give him courage, but in spite of all these advances, he was obliged to have three nips before his tongue was loosened.’

“So then,” continued José, “la Thèque said to her husband; ‘Where are you going husband, that you are dressed up so fine? Look out for yourself, for if you are up to any pranks, I will melt you down into lard.’

“ ‘You know well enough I am not,’ said Larouche, giving her a cut with the whip across the back, by way of fun. ‘Here we are at the end of March, my grain is all threshed, and I am going to the curé with the tithe.’

“ ‘That is all right,’ said his wife, who was a good Christian; ‘we must render unto God the things that are God’s.’ Larouche, therefore, threw his sacks on to his sleigh, put a live coal on his pipe, and springing on the load drove merrily away.

“As he was passing by a little wood he came across a traveller who was issuing from a cross path. This stranger was a fine handsome man of about thirty years of age. Long white hair floated on his shoulders, his beautiful blue eyes had an angelical sweetness, and the expression of his countenance, without being positively sad, was melancholy and compassionate. He wore a flowing blue robe, confined at the waist by a girdle. Larouche said he had never seen anything so beautiful as this stranger; that the loveliest creature was ugly in comparison with him.

“ ‘Peace be with you, my brother,’ said the traveller to him.

“ ‘Thank you for your wish,’ answered Davy, ‘a civil word costs nothing, and yet it is what no one seems in a hurry to give. Thank God, I am at peace with the whole world; I have an excellent wife, good children, a peaceful home, and all my neighbors like me; I have nothing to desire on that score.’

“ ‘I congratulate you,’ said the traveller. ‘Your sleigh is well loaded. Where are you going so early?’

“ ‘It is my tithe which I am taking to the curé.’

“ ‘It seems, then,’ replied the stranger, ‘that you must have had a good harvest; paying, as you do, one bushel out of every twenty-six that you reap.’

“ ‘Pretty good, I grant, but if I could have controlled the weather, it would have been quite another thing.’

“ ‘You think so?’ said the traveller.

“ ‘Do I think so! Why I have no doubt about it,’ replied Davy.

“ ‘Well,’ said the stranger, ‘you shall now have what weather you wish, and much good may it do you.’ So saying he disappeared at the foot of the little hill.

“ ‘It is funny, all the same,’ thought Davy. ‘I knew well that there were bad people going about the world, putting spells on men, women and children, and even animals; for instance, the wife of Lestin (Celestin) Coulombe, who, on the very day of her marriage, laughed at a beggar who had a squint in his left eye, and the poor creature was sorry enough at having done so; for he said to her angrily: “Take care, young woman, or you will have only squinting children.” The poor woman trembled for every child she brought into the world; and she had need, for you see the fourteenth, if you looked at it quite close, had a speck in its right eye.’ ”

“It seems,” said Jules, “that Madame Lestin must have had a dreadful horror of squinting children, since she could only make up her mind to present her dear husband with one after eighteen or twenty years of matrimony. She must have been a reflective, slow-going woman, who liked to take her time about what she did.”

José shook his head in evident dissatisfaction, and continued:

“But Larouche went on thinking to himself, ‘if there are wicked people who go about the country casting spells, I never heard speak of perambulating saints who went about Canada to make us do miracles. After all, it is no business of mine; I will not speak to any one of it, and next spring we shall see.’

“The following year, about the same time, Davy, feeling ashamed, got up on the sly before daylight to carry his tithe to the curé. He had no need of either horse or cart, he could carry it all in his hand tied up in a handkerchief. At sunrise, just at the same spot, he again met the stranger, who said to him, ‘Peace be with you, my brother!’

“ ‘There was never a more seasonable wish,’ answered Larouche, ‘for I think the devil is in my house, and keeps his Sabbath there night and day. My wife scolds me to death from morning till night, my children sulk, when they do no worse; and all my neighbors are exasperated with me.’

“ ‘I am very sorry to hear it,’ said the traveller, ‘but what are you carrying in that little bundle?’

“ ‘My tithe,’ answered Larouche with a downcast air.

“ ‘Still it seems to me,’ said the stranger, ‘that you have always had just the weather you wished for.’

“ ‘It is but too true,’ said Davy, ‘when I have asked for rain, wind, calm weather, I got it; and yet nothing has succeeded with me! The sun burnt the grain, the rain rotted it, the wind beat it down, and the calm weather brought night-frosts. All my neighbors have turned against me; they look on me as a magician who has brought a curse on their crops. Even my wife began by treating me with contempt, and she has finished by breaking out into abuse and invective against me. Even my children take their mother’s part. It is enough to drive a man crazy!’

“ ‘It must prove to you, my brother, that your wish was a foolish one; that you should always trust in the Providence of God, who knows better than man what is good for him. Have confidence in Him and you will find that you will not have the humiliation of carrying your tithe in a handkerchief.’

“At these words the stranger disappeared again at the foot of the same hill.

“Larouche took this for a maxim, and afterwards accepted gratefully whatever God sent him without troubling himself to try to rule the seasons.”

“I like this legend very much,” said Archy. “In its naive simplicity, it gives a sublime moral lesson; at the same time it shews the lively faith of our worthy New France habitants. Accursed be the cruel philosophy which would try to take from them the consolations their faith offers them in the numerous trials of this miserable life.

“We must acknowledge,” resumed Archy later, profiting by a moment when they found themselves at some little distance from the carriage, “that our friend José has always an appropriate story to tell us; but do you think his father himself related his marvellous dream on St. Michel’s hill?”

“I see,” replied Jules, “that you do not yet know half José’s talents; he is an inexhaustible inventor of stories. During the long winter evenings the neighbors assemble in our kitchen, and José often invents a story for them which lasts several weeks. When he is at his wit’s end what to say next, he just says to them, ‘I am beginning to feel tired, I will tell you the rest another day.’ José is also a poet of far greater renown than my learned uncle the chevalier, who is somewhat nettled at it however. He never fails to sacrifice to the muses, both at Shrovetide and for New Year’s day. If you had been at my fathers’ at those seasons, you would have seen messengers arriving from all parts of the parish to carry off José’s productions.”

“But surely he does not know how to write?” said Archy.

“And,” replied Jules, “those who come for them do not know how to read, I believe. This is how they manage. They send to the poet a fine singer, as they call him; which singer has an excellent memory, and in half an hour at most he takes away the song in his head. If any mournful event happens, José is begged

to make a lament; if, on the contrary, any comical event happens, it is always to him that every one in our parish addresses himself. This reminds me of what happened to a poor devil of a lover, who had taken his beloved to a ball without being invited. Although intruders, they were politely received. The young man had the awkwardness to make the young lady of the house fall in dancing, which was greeted with shouts of laughter from every one present. The father of the young girl, who was a rough sort of a man, feeling indignant at the accident, made no bones about the matter, but took José Blais by the shoulders and put him out of the house. He then apologized to the young man's belle, and would not allow her to leave. On hearing of this occurrence, our friend's muse could not be restrained, and he composed the following song which is droll enough in its simplicity:

'Sunday after vespers Boulé will give a ball,
But nobody must go, who cannot dance at all.
Fol dol de rol de riddle, fol dol de rol de ray.

'But nobody must go, who cannot dance at all,
José Blais like the others, wants to give Boulé a call.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

'José Blais like the others, wants to give Boulé a call.
His missus says he may, when the work is done up all.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

'His missus says he may, when the work is done up all;
So he runs out to the byre, and each cow begins to bawl.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

'So he runs out to the byre, and each cow begins to bawl,
For he treads on Rougette's foot, and at Barré's horn does haul.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

'For he treads on Rougette's foot, and at Barré's horn does haul.
Then rushes to the stable, into each horse's stall.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘Then rushes to the stable, into each horse’s stall.
And hastens to the house, when they were curried all.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘And hastens to the house, when they were curried all,
Puts on his new red vest, and coat with checks so small.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘Puts on his new red vest, and coat with checks so small.
His fine French shoes, and black cravat as rich as any shawl.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘His fine French shoes, and black cravat as rich as any shawl.
Then went to fetch his Lisett’ dear, and took her to the ball.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘Then went to fetch his Lisett’ dear, and took her to the ball.
Where they shewed him to the door, for he could not dance at all.
Fol dol, etc., etc.

‘Where they shewed him to the door, for he could not dance at all.
And kept the pretty Lisett’ his belle so straight and tall.
Fol dol, etc., etc.’ ”

“But that is a charming idyl!” exclaimed Archy laughing. “What a pity José has not studied; Canada would possess one more illustrious poet.”

“To return to his defunct father’s adventures,” said Jules, “I think that the old drunkard, after having defied La Corriveau (which the habitants always look on as dangerous, the dead always avenging themselves sooner or later), fell asleep by the roadside just opposite to the Isle of Orleans, where such habitants as travel by night always see goblins. I think, I say, that he must have had a terrible nightmare, during which he thought he was assailed on the one hand by the island sorcerers, and on the other by La Corriveau and her cage. José, with his prolific imagination, must have made up the rest, for you see how he turns everything to the best advantage; the fine picture from your supernatural history, and the cyclops from my uncle the chevalier’s Virgil were things that his defunct father had never heard of.

“Poor José,” added Jules, “how sorry I am to have treated him so badly the other day; I only knew it the next day, for I quite lost my senses when I saw you disappearing in the water. I begged him a thousand pardons, and he added: ‘What! you are still thinking about that trifle, and it still pains you! It delights me; on the contrary, now that all the uproar is over, it even makes me feel young again by recalling to my mind your fits of temper when you were a little child, when you used to scratch and bite like a little imp, and when I used to run off with you in my arms to save you from your parents’ corrections. When your anger was passed, you used to cry, and would bring me all your

playthings to comfort me.’

“Excellent José! What fidelity! What attachment to my family under all circumstances! Men, with hearts as hard as the nether millstone, too often despise those in José’s humble station, without themselves possessing one of their fine qualities. The most precious gift that the Creator has made to man is that of a good heart; even if its possession causes us many griefs, these pains are compensated by the sweet enjoyments that it brings us.”

The conversation of Jules d’Haberville, which was generally so frivolous and light, became subdued by feelings of the most exquisite sensibility, in proportion as the travellers approached the seigniorial manor of St. Jean-Port-Joli, whose roof they perceived by the light of the stars.

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[10] The author himself has always seen the present fashion of table-knives used during the first course; nevertheless, the tradition is as has been mentioned above; the following anecdote confirms it:

An old Canadian gentlemen dining at the Château St. Louis, after the conquest, at table made use of a splendid case knife, which he wore suspended from his neck. His son, who was present, and who, according to his father’s expression, had adopted the fashion of using table-knives before the dessert, in order to ape the English, told the author that he thought he should have died of shame at seeing the young people of both sexes, laughing and sneering at his father . . . Fifty years ago, the habitants always made use of their pocket-knives during meals; the men, of knives loaded with lead; a blacksmith made the blade, and the wooden handle was ornamented with tin chasing. As this instrument had no spring, the person using it was obliged to keep the blade straight with his thumb; the ingenious artificer who had made it, having facilitated the operation by placing a small button on the blade just where it joined the handle. The habitants made use of this weapon very skilfully, but novices generally pinched their thumbs terribly; a slight apprenticeship was necessary.

The women made use of ordinary pocket-knives, which they bought in the shops.

[11] An old habitant, on being offered some chicken at dinner exclaimed: “That is only *trash*! there is more sense in a piece of pork or a good *tiaude*!” This latter dish is composed of layers of fresh cod-fish and pork, placed alternately, and then stewed. It is of Dutch origin.

CHAPTER VII

THE D'HABERVILLE MANOR

THE d'Haberville manor was situated at the foot of a headland, which occupied about nine acres of the seigniorial domain, to the south of the highway. This headland or promontory, of about a hundred feet in height, was highly picturesque. Its crest, covered with resinous wood, preserving its verdant hue during the winter, offered a favorable contrast with the sombre spectacle presented at this season of the year by the rest of the country, now wrapt in its winter winding sheet. The evergreens gave repose to the weary eye, which would otherwise for six months have rested only on those bare trees, less favored by nature, and which covered the declivity and foot of the promontory. Jules d'Haberville often compared these emerald-headed trees proudly braving the rigors of the rudest seasons, to the great and powerful of the earth, who lose none of its enjoyments, whilst the poor tremble under their feet.

It could easily be imagined that a Claude Lorraine had delighted to embellish the sides and the foot of this headland, so great was the variety of trees which appeared to have given each other a rendezvous from all parts of the adjacent forests, in order to heighten the beauty of the landscape. The elm, the maple, the birch, the beech, the red pine, the ash, the wild cherry-tree, the cedar, the sumach and other aboriginal trees, which are the pride of our forests, formed a rich curtain on the steeps of this promontory.

A grove of venerable maples completely occupied the space between the foot of the promontory and the highway, bordered on each side by rows of hazel trees and early flowering rose trees.

The first thing which struck a traveller arriving at the d'Haberville estate was a brook, which, after falling down the south-east declivity of the promontory through the trees, mingled its limpid waters with those of a spring two hundred feet lower down, and winding across a large meadow, lost itself in the river St. Lawrence. This spring, cut out of the solid rock, and fed by the crystalline water which filters drop by drop through the stones, furnished the proprietor of the domain with the coolest and most refreshing beverage during the heat of summer. A small white-washed building was erected over this spring in the shade of the large trees. It seemed like a coy nymph to be hiding itself from all beholders in the thick foliage which surrounded it. The seats,

placed both outside and inside this humble kiosk, as well as the drinking vessels, bent into a conical form, which were hung on the wall, seemed so many invitations offered by the generous naiad to travellers rendered thirsty by the heat of the dog-days.

The top of this promontory still preserves its emerald crown, and the declivity still preserves its verdure; but now only five maples remain, the last remnants of the magnificent grove which was the glory of this picturesque landscape. Out of the thirty-five which seemed so healthy forty years ago, thirty have fallen one by one, from year to year, as if through some fatality. These trees gradually perishing under the destructive hand of time, like the last years of the present proprietor of this domain, seem to foretell that his life, linked to their existence, will expire with the last veteran of the grove. When the last log, which shall have warmed the chilled limbs of the old man, shall be consumed, his ashes will soon mix with those of the tree he will have burnt; a mournful and sinister warning, like that of the catholic priest at the beginning of Lent: *Memento homo quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris*.

The seigniorial manor, situated between the river St. Lawrence and the promontory, was only separated from the latter by a large courtyard, the highway and the grove. It was a one-storied building with a steep roof, a hundred feet long and flanked by two wings of fifteen feet, each projecting into the principal courtyard. A bake-house, adjoining the kitchen to the north-east, served also as a wash-house. A little summer house, contiguous to a large drawing-room to the south-west, gave some appearance of regularity to this manor built after the old Canadian fashion. Two other out-buildings to the south-east, served, the one, as a dairy, and the other as a second laundry, containing a well which communicated by means of a water-pipe with the kitchen of the main building. Coach-houses, barns and stables, five little out-houses, of which three were in the grove, a kitchen garden to the south-east of the manor, two orchards, one to the north, and the other to the north-east, completed a picture which will give some idea of this Canadian seigniorial residence, which the habitants used to call the d'Haberville village.

On whatever side a spectator seated on the summit of the cape might cast his eyes, he could but congratulate himself on having chosen so elevated a post, however little he might be given to admiring the beautiful views which are to be found on the banks of the St. Lawrence. If he cast his eyes downwards, the small dazzlingly white village seemed to spring suddenly from the green meadows which reached to the very border of the river. If, on the contrary, he raised them, an imposing panorama unfolded itself before his astonished gaze. There was the king of rivers, which at this point is already seven leagues wide, to the north meeting with no other obstacle than the

Laurentides, whose feet it bathes; and which the eye takes in with all its villages from Cape Tourmente to Malbaie; there were Ile aux Oies (Goose Island) and Ile aux Grues (Stork's Island) to the west; opposite were the Pillars of which one is as barren as the enchantress Circe's Æaean rock, whilst the other is always as green as Calypso's island; to the north the Seals' shallows, at all times so dear to Canadian sportsmen; and lastly there were the two villages of Islet and St. Jean-Port-Joli, crowned by the steeples of their respective churches.

It was nearly nine o'clock in the evening, when the young men arrived on the hill which overlooks the manor to the south-east. Jules came suddenly to a standstill at the sight of those objects which recalled to his mind the happiest days of his existence.

"I have never approached," said he, "the domain of my ancestors, without being deeply impressed! Let others vaunt as they will the beauty of the magnificent and picturesque sites which abound in New France, for me there is but one," he exclaimed, stamping with his foot on the ground, "it is the one where I was born! It is here where my childhood passed, surrounded by the tender and affectionate care of my good parents! It is here, where I have lived beloved by every one! The days seemed too short to suffice for my childish games! I used to get up at day break and dress myself in all haste; I had feverish thirst for enjoyment.

"I love all that now surrounds me. I love the moon, which you may see peeping through the trees which crown the summit of that beautiful height, she never seems to be so beautiful elsewhere! I love this brook which used to turn the little wheels that I called my mills! I love this spring, in which I used to quench my thirst during the heat of summer! It is here that my mother used to sit," continued Jules, shewing a little rock covered with moss and shaded by two superb beeches. "It is here, that I used to take her the icy water which I had drawn from the spring in my little silver cup! Ah! how many times has not that tender mother, watching at my bedside or suddenly awakened by my cries, given me in that same cup the milk of which I stood in need, or which through some childish whim I asked of her maternal tenderness! And to think I must leave all, perhaps forever! Oh, my mother! My mother! What a separation!" And Jules shed tears. Lochiel, deeply moved, pressed his friend's hand saying to him: "You will come back, my dear brother; you will come back to be the happiness and pride of your family!"

"Thank you, dear Archy," said Jules, "but let us get on, my parents' embraces will quickly dissipate this feeling of sadness."

Archy who had never visited the country during the spring, asked the meaning of all the little white objects which stood out from the brown trunks

of the maple trees.

"Those," said Jules, "are little troughs which the sugar-maker inserts underneath the incisions which he makes in the maple trees, in order to catch the sap from which he makes the sugar."

"Would not one say," said Archy, "that the trunks of these trees are immense hydraulic tubes, with spouts ready to supply a populous city."

This remark was cut short by the furious barking of a large dog which ran to meet them. "Niger! Niger!" called Jules to him. At the sound of this friendly voice the dog suddenly stopped, started onwards again, sniffed at his master to assure himself of his identity, and then received his caresses with that half-joyful, half-plaintive whine, which for want of speech expresses the love of this faithful and affectionate animal.

"Ah, poor Niger," said Jules, "I perfectly understand what you mean to say, half of it is reproaching me for having so long forsaken you, and the other half expresses your pleasure at seeing me again, and grants me an amnesty for my ingratitude. Poor Niger! when I come back from my long journey, you will not even have the happiness of dying at my feet like the dog of Ulysses!"

The reader will most probably like to make acquaintance with the members of the d'Haberville family. To satisfy so natural a wish, it is but right to introduce them in their hierarchical order.

The Seigneur d'Haberville was hardly forty-five years of age, but he appeared to be at least ten years older; so much had the fatigues of campaigning worn out a naturally strong and robust constitution; his duties as captain of a detachment of marines having constantly obliged him to be under arms. Continual warfare in the forests, without any other shelter (to use the forcible expression of the Canadians of old) than the heavens; these scouting or surprisal expeditions against the English or the Indians during the most rigorous seasons, soon affected the strongest constitutions.

Captain d'Haberville was physically what is called a fine man. Slightly over middle height, his perfectly regular features, his bright complexion, large dark eyes, which he seemed to soften at will, but of which few men could bear the glance when he was angry, his manners, simple in their elegance,—all these together gave him a distinguished aspect. A severe critic, however, might have found some fault with his long and thick eyebrows, as black as ebony. Morally, the Seigneur d'Haberville possessed all those qualities which distinguished the well-born Canadians of old. He might, however, be reproached on the score of vindictiveness by a stern moralist: for he hardly ever forgave either a real or an imaginary injury.

Madame d'Haberville, a good and pious woman of six and thirty years of

age, was entering that second period of beauty which men often prefer to that of early youth. Fair, and of middle height, all her features were stamped with angelic sweetness. This excellent woman appeared to have but one object, that of contributing to the happiness of all around her. The habitants in their simple language called her “the perfect lady.”

Mademoiselle Blanche d’Haberville, younger than Jules, was the living image of her mother, but of a slightly melancholy disposition. Gifted with intelligence beyond her years, she had great influence over her brother, whose fiery temper she often restrained with a look of entreaty. Although this young girl appeared very reserved she could shew surprising energy when circumstances required it.

Madame Louisa de Beaumont, the younger sister of Madame d’Haberville, had never separated from her since her marriage. Although rich and independent, she had nevertheless devoted herself to the family of her elder sister, for whom she entertained an affection that was quite touching. Ready to share their happiness she was equally ready to share their sorrows, if the cruel hand of misfortune should make itself felt on them.

Lieutenant Raoul d’Haberville, or rather the Chevalier d’Haberville, whom every one called “my uncle Raoul,” was a younger brother of the captain; and although two years younger than he, he looked at least ten years older. “My uncle Raoul” was a little man nearly as broad as he was long, and made use of a cane for walking; he would have been very ugly, even without his face having been seamed with the small-pox. It is very difficult to say how he acquired his appellation of “my *uncle* Raoul;” one may say of a man that he looks fatherly, he is quite a little papa; but one never says of any one that he looks like an uncle. Whatever may have been the reason, Lieutenant d’Haberville was “my uncle” to everybody; even his soldiers, when he was on service, called him “my uncle Raoul” behind his back. If one may be allowed to compare small things with great, it was like Napoleon, who was always “*le petit Caporal*” to his old soldiers.

“My uncle Raoul” was the lettered man of the d’Haberville family, and therefore somewhat of a pedant like nearly all who are in daily intercourse with those not so well educated as themselves. Though the best natured man possible when he got his own way, he had one little weakness, that of always thinking himself in the right; and this made him very irritable with those who were not of the same opinion as himself. “My uncle Raoul” prided himself on his knowledge of Latin, and he often launched scraps of it at the heads of both the learned and the unlearned. He held endless discussions with the curé of the parish on quotations from Horace, Ovid and Virgil, his favorite authors. The curé, a gentle, quiet-tempered man, almost always yielded to his irritable

antagonist for the sake of peace and quiet. Uncle Raoul also prided himself on being a great theologian; and this was far more embarrassing for the poor curé. He had a great affection for his friend, who had been very wild during his youth, and whom he had had much trouble in leading into the right path. He was sometimes obliged to yield points which were not essential to the salvation of "my uncle" so as not to exasperate him. But when an important matter was in question he called Blanche to his assistance, as she was her uncle's idol.

"What, my dear uncle," she would say, petting him, "are you not learned enough without encroaching on our good pastor's attributes; you triumph in all the other points of discussion," she would add looking significantly at the curé, "so be generous and allow yourself to be convinced on points that are peculiarly the province of God's ministers."

And as Uncle Raoul only argued for argument's sake, peace would soon be restored between the disputing parties.

Uncle Raoul was a person of no small importance; he was in certain respects the most important personage at the manor, since his retirement from the army; for the captain, whose military duties often compelled him to be long absent, entrusted all business affairs to him. His occupations were certainly very numerous; he kept account of the receipts and expenditure of the family, drew the rents of the seigniory, went to high mass every Sunday, wet or fine, to receive the holy water in the absence of the seigneur of the parish; and amongst other little duties that devolved upon him, he had to hold at the baptismal font all the first born children of the tenants on the estate, an honor which belonged by right to his elder brother, but which the latter renounced in favor of his younger brother.

A little scene will give some idea of Uncle Raoul's importance on solemn occasions. We will take an instance during that period of the month of November, when the rents of the tenants on the estate fall due.

Uncle Raoul, with a long quill pen behind his ear, is seated majestically in a large arm-chair, near a table covered with a green baize cloth, on which his sword is lying. He assumes a severe air when the tenant presents himself, without, however, in the least intimidating the debtor, who has been long accustomed only to pay his rent when he finds it convenient; so indulgent is the Seigneur d'Haberville towards his tenants.

But as Uncle Raoul holds more to the form than to the reality, and prefers the appearance of power even to power itself, he likes to have everything conducted with proper solemnity.

"How are you, my—my—lieutenant?" says the tenant, accustomed to call him "my uncle" behind his back.

“Well, and you? What do you want with me?” answers “my uncle,” looking very important.

“I am come to pay my rent, my—officer; but the times are so bad, that I have no money,” says Jean Baptiste,[12] shaking his head with a satisfied air.

“*Nescio vos!*” exclaims Uncle Raoul, raising his voice, “*reddite quæ sunt Cæsaris Cæsari*.”

“What you are saying is very fine my—my—captain, so fine that I do not understand any of it,” says the tenant.

“It is Latin, you ignoramus!” says Uncle Raoul, “and the meaning of this Latin is, pay your just rents to the Seigneur d’Haberville, under pain of being indicted before all the royal courts, of being condemned in the first and second instances to all expenses, damages, interests and *loyaux coûts*.”

“Those *royaux coups* must hurt one a good deal,” says the tenant.

“Good heavens!” exclaims Uncle Raoul, raising his eyes to heaven.

“I can well believe my—my lord, that your Latin threatens me with all its terrors; but I had the misfortune to lose my filly born this last spring.”

“What, you rascal! For the sake of a pitiful six months beast, you want to evade the seigniorial rights established by your sovereign, as solidly as those mountains to the north which you are looking at are established on their rocky bases. *Quos ego . . .* !”

“I think,” says the tenant, in a low voice, “he is talking Indian to frighten me,” and aloud he added: “You see, that my filly would in four years time have been (according to those who are judges of horse-flesh) the best trotter on the south shore, and would have been worth a hundred francs if she were worth a sou.”

“Come, be off to the devil!” answers Uncle Raoul, “and tell Lisette to give you a good glass of brandy, to console you for the loss of your filly. These rogues,” adds Uncle Raoul, “drink more brandy than they pay rent.”

The habitant, on entering the kitchen, says to Lisette, chuckling: “I have had tough work with ‘my Uncle Raoul,’ he even threatened to give me *royaux coups*.”

As Uncle Raoul was very pious after his own fashion, he never failed to say his beads and read in his “Book of Hours” every day; but yet, by a somewhat singular contrast, he employed his leisure hours in swearing with an energy that could hardly be called edifying, at the English, who had broken his leg at the taking of Louisbourg; so painful to him was the remembrance of this accident, which forced him to renounce the career of arms.

When the young men arrived in front of the manor house, they were astonished at the spectacle it presented. Not only were all the rooms lighted up, but also some of the out-buildings. There was an unusual stir, an extraordinary coming and going. And as the whole court was illuminated by this abundance of light, they easily distinguished six men, armed with hatchets and guns, seated on a fallen tree.

"I see," said Archy, "that the master of the house has put the guard under arms to do honor to our equipage as I had predicted."

José, who did not appreciate any badinage on this subject, moved his pipe from the right to the left side of his mouth, and, murmuring something between his teeth, commenced smoking again furiously.

"I cannot possibly explain," said Jules, laughing, "why my father's *guards*, as you do them the signal honor of calling them, are under arms; unless they are fearing a surprise on the part of our friends, the Iroquois; but let us hasten on, and then we shall soon learn the solution of the enigma."

The six men rose simultaneously as they entered the courtyard, and came forward to welcome their young seigneur and his friend.

"What!" said Jules, shaking hands heartily with them, "is that you my old friend Chouinard! and you, Julien! and you, Alexis Dubé! and you, my old friend Fontaine! and is that you, you rogue François Maurice! I was thinking, that, taking advantage of my absence, the whole parish bodily must have thrown you into the river St. Lawrence, as a reward for all the diabolical tricks you have played off on peaceable folks."

"Our young seigneur," said Maurice, "always likes to have his joke, but I must say that if every one was thrown into the river who plays off pranks on others, I know one who would long ago have drunk of it."

"Indeed!" answered Jules, laughingly, "but perhaps that comes from the bad milk I imbibed, for, remember, it was your dear mother who nursed me. But let us speak of something else. What the devil are you all doing here at this hour? Are you gaping at the moon and stars?"

"There are twelve of us," said old Chouinard, "who are taking our turns to guard the May-pole which we are to present to-morrow to your honored father; there are six amusing themselves in the house, whilst we are keeping the first watch."

"I should have thought that the May-pole would have taken good care of itself all alone. I do not think any one would be mad enough to leave his bed for the pleasure of breaking his back dragging that venerable mass away, whilst wood is to be had at every door."

"You are not up to what is going on, young gentleman," replied Chouinard.

“Don’t you see there are always people who are affronted at not being invited to the May-feast; no later than last year, some blackguards, who had had a hint to stay at home, had the audacity, during the night, to saw the May-pole in two, which the habitants of Ste. Anne were to present the next morning to Captain Besse. Think how ashamed every one felt when they arrived in the morning and saw their fine May-pole only fit to be burnt in the stove!”

Jules could not refrain from fits of laughter at a trick that he well knew how to appreciate.

“Laugh as you will,” said Fontaine, “but it certainly is not Christian to play such tricks! You understand,” he added, in a serious tone, “that we are not afraid of such insults being offered to our seigneur, but as there are always mean fellows everywhere, we are taking precautions in case of any insult being offered.”

“I am a poor man,” said Alexis Dubé, “but for all my land is worth, I would not have such an insult offered to our captain.”

Every one spoke to the same effect, and Jules was in the arms of his family before they had done inveighing against the blackguards, the mean fellows, who, in their imagination, might have the audacity to mutilate the fir-tree May-pole that they proposed offering next day to the Seigneur d’Haberville.

It may be supposed that the libations and the refreshments provided for them during their nightwatch, as well as the next morning’s substantial breakfast, did not fail still further to stimulate their zeal on this occasion.

“Come,” said Jules to his friend after supper, “let us go and see the preparations they are making for the May-day breakfast! As neither you nor I have had the advantage of witnessing that famous wedding of the rich Gamache, which so rejoiced the heart of Sancho Panza,—this may perhaps give us some idea of it.”

All was hurry and confusion in the kitchen, where they went first; the shrill laughing voices of the women, mixed with those of the six men off guard, who were occupied in drinking, smoking, and teasing them. Three maid-servants, each armed with a frying-pan, were making, or according to the generally received expression, “tossing” pancakes over a fire made in the open chimney, whose brilliant flames lit up the joyous faces throughout that large kitchen, producing a Rembrandt-like effect of light and shade. Several of the women neighbors, seated at a large table, were, with a big spoon, pouring into the frying-pans, as they were emptied, the batter of which the pancakes are made, whilst others were powdering those already cooked with maple sugar, as they heaped them up on dishes, where they were already forming very respectable pyramids. A large kettle, half full of lard, simmering in the heat of a stove,

received the *croquecignoles*[13] which two cooks were incessantly putting in and taking out.

The faithful José, the soul, the majordomo of the house, seemed to be in a hundred places at once on these grand occasions. Seated at the end of a table with his coat off, his shirt sleeves rolled up to his elbows, and his knife in his hand, he was furiously cutting up a loaf of maple sugar, whilst spurring up two other servants who were engaged in the same way. Then he would run for more flour and eggs as the batter diminished in the bowls, not forgetting in the meanwhile to visit the refreshment table, and see that nothing was wanting; perhaps, too, partly to take a glass with his friends.

Jules and Archy passed from the kitchen to the bake-house, where they were drawing from the oven a second batch of crescent-shaped pies, at least fourteen inches long, whilst quarters of beef and mutton, legs and ribs of fresh pork, and fowls of every description, were put ready in pans awaiting their turn in the oven. Their last visit was to the wash-house, where they were cooking, in a ten gallon boiler, the stew of fresh pork and mutton, which is the delight of the old men whose teeth are failing.

“Ah! this is indeed a feast like those of Sardanapalus of Assyrian memory!” said Archy,—“a feast which will last six months.”

“You have only seen a part though,” said Jules, “the dessert is in the same proportion. I thought you knew the customs of our habitants better. The master of the house would be accused of stinginess, if, at the end of the repast, the tables were not as loaded with food as when the guests sat down. When a dish is empty, or nearly so, you will see it immediately replaced by the servants.”

“I am the more surprised,” said Archy, “as your habitants are generally very saving, rather inclined to avarice than otherwise; now, how can you reconcile that with the waste there must necessarily be, during the hot weather, of all the meat which remains, and which one family alone could not possibly consume.”

“Our habitants, dispersed through all New France, at great distances from one another, and hence deprived of the advantage of markets, live during the spring, summer and autumn, on salt provisions, bread and milk; and with the rare exception of a marriage, seldom give what might be called an entertainment during those seasons of the year. To make up for this, there is a great consumption of all kinds of fresh meat during the winter; there is then a general feasting, and hospitality is pushed to its utmost limits from Christmas to Lent. It is a perpetual coming and going of visitors during that time. Four or five *carrioles*, holding a dozen or so people, arrive. Horses are unhitched; wraps are removed; the table is got ready, and at the end of an hour, at the most, this same table is loaded with smoking hot meats.”

“Your habitants,” said Archy, “must then possess Aladdin’s lamp!”

“You understand,” said Jules, “that if they had to make the preparations that we have, the habitants’ wives, being for the most part without servants, would soon be obliged to restrict their hospitality, or even put an end to it altogether, but it is not so; these social occasions are hardly any more trouble to them than to their husbands. The reason is simple enough; at their leisure they prepare two or three batches of different sorts of meats, which, due to the cold weather, keep well. When visitors arrive, all they have to do is to warm up the eatables in their stoves, which are always hot enough to roast an ox at that time of year. It is really a pleasure to see our Canadian women, who are always so light-hearted, preparing these impromptu repasts; to see them first working at one thing, then at another, all the time humming a song, or mixing in the conversation; then running from the table they are laying to the meat which is in danger of being burnt.

“Josephte[14] then sits down with her guests, getting up a dozen times during the meal if anything is wanted for them, singing her song, and after all enjoying herself as heartily as the others.

“You will probably say, that these warmed-up dishes lose a good deal of their flavor. This is true as regards ourselves, who are accustomed to live so differently; but, as habit is second nature, our habitants are not so particular; and as their taste is not vitiated like ours, I am certain that their repasts, moistened with a few glasses of good brandy, are everything they can wish for. But as we shall be obliged to return to this subject, let us now go and rejoin my parents, who must be already impatient at our absence, which I look on as so much time stolen from their affection. I thought you would like to be initiated more fully into our country Canadian manners and customs, particularly as you have not visited us before during the winter.”

The evening was prolonged far into the night, for they had so many things to say to one another. And it was only after receiving his father’s blessing, and tenderly embracing his other relations, that Jules retired with his friend to enjoy that slumber of which both stood so much in need after the fatigues of the day.

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[12] Jean Baptiste, the name given to Canadians, as John Bull to Englishmen.

[13] *Croquecignoles*, a cake somewhat resembling a dough-nut, and essentially Canadian. It is cut in strips, which the cook passes her fingers between to separate before throwing the cakes into the boiling lard.

[14] Josephte, a nickname given by the townspeople to the habitants' wives.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAY-DAY FEAST

IT was scarcely five o'clock the next morning, when Jules, who slept as lightly as a cat, called to Lochiel, whose bedroom was adjoining his own, that it was quite time to get up; but, whether the latter was really asleep, or whether he did not wish to answer, d'Haberville took the most expeditious means of arousing him, by getting up himself. Then, arming himself with a towel dipped in cold water, he entered his friend's room, and began his morning toilet for him by roughly washing his face. But as Archy, notwithstanding his aquatic taste, did not relish these somewhat officious attentions, he snatched the instrument of torture from his hands, and making it into a ball threw it at his head, then turning on his side was preparing to go to sleep again when Jules, darting to the foot of the bed, pulled off all the clothes. Reduced to this extremity the citadel was obliged to surrender at discretion, but as the garrison in the person of Archy was stronger than the besiegers in the person of Jules, Lochiel gave him a good shaking and asked with some temper if people at Haberville were not allowed to sleep at night. He was even going to finish by expelling him from the ramparts, when Jules, who, even while struggling in the powerful arms of his adversary, was in fits of laughter, begged him to have the kindness to listen, before inflicting so humiliating a punishment on a future soldier of the French army.

"What have you to say in your own defence, you incorrigible rascal?" said Archy who was now thoroughly awake. "Is it not enough to be always playing the devil by day without coming to torment me at night?"

"I am very sorry indeed," said Jules, "to have aroused you from your sleep, but as our folks have to plant another May-pole at the cross near which Belanger lives, about two miles from here, it is arranged that my father's is to be presented to him at six o'clock in the morning, and, if you do not wish to lose any part of this interesting ceremony, it is time to dress yourself. You know that I think every one must be, like myself, deeply interested in everything that brings us into contact with our good habitants. I know nothing more striking than the good feeling which exists between my father and his tenants, between our family and these fine fellows. Besides, as my brother by adoption you will have your part to play during a spectacle which you have never as yet witnessed."

As soon as the young men were dressed, they went into a room which looked out on the courtyard of the manor house, where an animated scene presented itself. About a hundred habitants were assembled, distributed here and there in little groups. Their long guns, their powder flasks suspended from their necks, their tomahawks stuck in their girdles, the hatchets with which they were armed, all these gave them more the appearance of people preparing for a war-like expedition than that of peaceable husbandmen.

Lochiel, who was much amused at the novel sight, proposed descending to join the groups which were surrounding the house, but Jules prevented him by saying that it was against etiquette, as they were all supposed not to be aware of what was passing without, where all was stir and bustle. Some were busy dressing the May-pole, others digging a deep hole in which to plant it, whilst others again were sharpening long wedges to hold it firm. This May-pole was of the most primitive simplicity. It was a tall fir-tree, stripped of its branches and twigs as far as the cluster of foliage at the top, which is called the *bouquet*; this *bouquet*, generally about three feet high, but always in proportion with the height of the tree, looked very fine as long as it continued green, but after being dried up by the heat of summer, by the month of August it was dismal-looking enough. A red pole, six feet long, crowned with a green vane and adorned with a large ball of the same color as the pole, was fastened among the branches of the *bouquet*; and when this was once nailed to the tree, the dressing of the May-pole was completed. We must also add that strong wedges of wood, let into the tree at intervals, made it easy to mount, and they also served as supports for the stakes with which the pole was raised.

The firing of a gun, from the principal door of the manor house, announced that everything was in readiness. At this signal, the d'Haberville family gathered in the drawing-room, in order to receive the deputation of whose arrival the shot gave them notice. The Seigneur d'Haberville took his place in a large arm-chair, while his wife seated herself on his right and Jules on his left. Uncle Raoul, standing and leaning on his sword, placed himself behind the principal group, between Madame Louisa de Beaumont and Blanche, who were seated on chairs. Archy stood by the side of Blanche. They had hardly taken their places when two old men, ushered in by the majordomo, José, advanced towards the Seigneur d'Haberville, and, saluting him with that graceful courtesy so natural to the Canadians of old, asked permission to plant a May-pole before his door. The permission being granted, the ambassadors withdrew and communicated the success of their mission to the crowd outside. They then all knelt down to ask God to preserve them from all accidents during the day. Then, in about a quarter of an hour's time, the May-pole rose slowly and majestically above the crowd, till its verdant head towered above

all the surrounding buildings. A few minutes sufficed to make it firm.

A second shot announced another deputation, the same two old men carrying their guns and accompanied by two of the principal habitants, bearing, the one, on an earthenware plate, a small glass two inches high of a greenish hue, and the other a bottle of brandy, were ushered in by the indispensable José, and begged Seigneur d'Haberville to come and receive the May-pole he had been so kind as to accept. Upon their seigneur gracefully accepting their invitation one of the old men added:

"Would our seigneur be pleased to 'wet' the May-pole before blackening it?"

And upon this, he presented him a gun with one hand, and with the other a glass of brandy.

"We will 'wet' it together my good friends," said Monsieur d'Haberville, making a sign to José, who, standing at a respectful distance with four glasses filled with the same liquor on a salver, handed it to them. Then the seigneur rising, touched glasses with the four deputies, swallowed at one gulp the glass of brandy, which he pronounced excellent, and taking the gun went to the door followed by all who were present.

As soon as the Seigneur d'Haberville appeared on the threshold, a young man, mounting to the very top of the May-pole with the agility of a squirrel, spun the vane round three times, crying out: "Long live the King! Long live Seigneur d'Haberville!" And all the crowd shouted at the top of their voices: "Long live the King! Long live the Seigneur d'Haberville!" Whilst this was going on, the young fellow descended with equal agility, cutting away with his tomahawk, which he drew from his belt, all the wedges and stakes of the May-pole.

As soon as the Seigneur d'Haberville had blackened the May-pole by firing off at it his gun charged only with powder, a gun was presented to every member of the family in succession, commencing with the seigneuress; and the women fired at it the same as the men. Then there was a constant firing kept up for at least half an hour. One might have thought that the manor house was attacked by the enemy. The unfortunate May-pole, which had been so white before this furious attack, seemed to have been suddenly painted black, so great had been every one's zeal to do it honor. Indeed, the more powder was burned, the more they thought they were complimenting the one to whom they had presented the May-pole.

As every pleasure must come to an end, even that of throwing powder to the winds, Monsieur d'Haberville profited by a moment, when the firing seemed to slacken, to invite all present to breakfast. Every one then made haste

to discharge his gun by way of a temporary adieu to the poor tree, fragments of which already strewed the ground; and then all was silent.

The seigneur, the ladies and a dozen of the principal habitants, chosen from the older ones, sat down at a table prepared in the usual dining-room of the family. This table was covered with the dishes, wines, and coffee which usually were to be found on the breakfast table of a Canadian in the best society; there were also added, to suit the taste of their guests, two bottles of excellent brandy and sugared cakes instead of bread.

The guests who were excluded from this table, saw no reason to be discontented at this arrangement, on the contrary they were proud of the attentions bestowed on their older relations and friends.

The second table in the adjoining room, presided over by Uncle Raoul, was served like that of a rich and ostentatious habitant under similar circumstances. Besides the enormous number of dishes of meat with which the reader is already acquainted, each guest had by his side the inevitable sugared cake, a *croquecignole*, a tartlet of five inches in diameter with more paste than preserve, and as much brandy as he could wish for. There were some bottles of wine on the table to which no one paid any attention; “that does not rasp one’s throat enough,” they said in their forcible language. This wine had been put on the table mainly for the women, who just then were occupied in waiting on the men, but would replace them after they had left. Josephte took a glass or two of wine, without being asked twice, but this was after the accustomed little glass of brandy to give her an appetite.

At the third table, which was spread in the large kitchen, Jules presided, assisted by his friend Archy. This table, at which all the young fellows had seated themselves, was served exactly like Uncle Raoul’s. Although at the two first tables the greatest merriment reigned, there was nevertheless a certain restraint; but at this one, more especially towards the end of the meal, which was prolonged late into the morning, there was such an uproar that the guests could not hear themselves speak.

The reader is under a great mistake if he thinks that the unhappy May-pole was allowed to repose itself after the murderous assaults already made on it; the guests kept getting up from table, and running out to discharge their guns, hastening to replace themselves at table after this little act of courtesy.

At the beginning of the dessert, the Seigneur d’Haberville, accompanied by the ladies, visited the guests of the second and third tables, where they were received with great demonstrations of joy. There was a kind word for everybody; the seigneur drank to the health of his tenants, the tenants drank to his health and that of his family, in the middle of at least twenty gunshots that were heard sounding from without.

This ceremony ended, Monsieur d'Haberville, on returning to the table was asked for a little song, and every one prepared to join in the chorus.

The Seigneur d'Haberville's song:

"Ah! is not wine:
Wine, wine, wine
A fine and rare invention!
To satisfy my passion
Let us drink its juice divine:
Shame to him who will not sip
Nor press the nectar to his lip;
Lip, lip, lip;
Shame to him who will not sip
Nor press the nectar to his lip!

"For when I steep:
Steep, steep, steep
My throat in this bewild'ring draught,
It seems into my heart to waft
A joy that makes it madly leap:
Shame to him who will not sip
Nor press the nectar to his lip!
Lip, lip, lip;
Shame to him who will not sip
Nor press the nectar to his lip!"

This song was hardly finished, when Uncle Raoul's sonorous voice was heard singing the following:

"Ah, yes, I dearly love a glass:
A mania 'tis with me:
My word for this I frankly pass;
My folly all may see:
A toper leads a life divine
Need never feel uneasy;
May gaily toast the god of wine
And always take life easy.

"Ah! yes, I dearly love a glass,
A mania 'tis with me;
My word for this I frankly pass:
My folly all may see,
To the war let Joseph go
And bravely in the battle stand.
The only strife I love to know
Is one that's fought with glass in hand.
Ah! yes, I dearly love a glass, etc."

"It is now your turn, our young seigneur," they exclaimed at the third table, "our elders have set us the example!"

"With all my heart," said Jules; and he sang the following song:

“Bacchus, seated on a cask,
Forbade me evermore to ask,
Water from the well or spring.
’Tis of wine, new wine alone,
Ev’ry bottle we must empty;
’Tis of wine, new wine alone,
Ev’ry flagon we must empty.

“Nor King, nor Emperor of France,
Will ever have the happy chance
Of drinking a full bumper.
’Tis of wine, new wine alone,
Ev’ry bottle we must empty;
’Tis of wine, new wine alone,
Ev’ry flagon we must empty.

“Whilst they spin, the dames and lasses,
The men and youths shall quaff their glasses;
And they shall drink full bumpers.
’Tis of wine, etc.”

The noble hosts having once set the example, every one hastened to profit by it, and songs succeeded each other, with ever increasing excitement. That of Père Chouinard (an old French soldier, who had retired from the service), in which love played a conspicuous part, without at all neglecting his brother Bacchus, met with the greatest success.

“Between Paris and Saint-Denis
I met a pretty girl
At the door of a cabaret,
And with her I went in.

“Hostess draw us some good wine:
The best in the cellar;
And if we cannot pay you now,
We’ll promise you a pledge.

“But what pledge will you promise me?
A fine large scarlet cloak
To cut up into petticoats
And give to the youngsters.

“Oh! sir and ma’am please to walk up,
Into the room above:
And there you’ll find to wait on you
Some pretty German girls.

“German girls! I’ll none of them:
I will have none but French,
Who always have such merry hearts
When filling up our glass.”

And all the men’s voices from three tables repeated in chorus:

"I will have none but French,
Who always have such merry hearts,
When filling up our glass."

Père Chouinard, having succeeded in putting an end to this gallant demonstration and having obtained a moment's silence, suggested that it was time to disperse. In warm terms, he thanked the Seigneur d'Haberville for his hospitality, and proud of the success of his song, he proposed to drink his health anew, which proposition was hailed with enthusiasm by the numerous guests.

The joyous party then marched off singing to the accompaniment of gunshots, which the echoes from the bluff repeated long after their departure.

CHAPTER IX

THE FEAST OF ST. JEAN BAPTISTE

FORMERLY every parish kept the feast-day of its patron saint. The holy day of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the parish of St. Jean-Port-Joli, which fell during the finest season of the year, did not fail to attract a great concourse of pilgrims, not only from the neighborhood, but also from great distances. The habitants, generally so much occupied with their rustic labors, had just at that time a little leisure, and the fine weather tempted them to profit by it. In every household there were great preparations for this solemn festival. Everywhere there was house-cleaning and white-washing going on, as well as scrubbing the floors and covering them with boughs of spruce; the "fatted calf" was killed, and the store-keepers had good sale for their liquors. On the 23rd of June, the eve of the feast of St. John the Baptist, every house, from the manor house and presbytery downwards, was filled with numerous pilgrims.

It was the seigneur who presented the "blessed bread" and selected, from among his friends, two young ladies and two young gentlemen, invited from Quebec a long time previously, to make the collection during the high mass which was celebrated in honor of the patron saint of the parish. It was no slight matter preparing the "blessed bread" and its accompanying *cousins* (a kind of cake) for the crowds who thronged, not only within the edifice, but also without, for the doors were all thrown open, so as to allow every one to participate in the service.

It was an understood thing that the seigneur and his friends should dine that day at the presbytery, and that the curé and his friends should sup at the manor house. A great number of the habitants, whose homes were too distant to return to between mass and vespers, took their meal in the little wood of cedar, fir and spruce which covered the valley between the church and the St. Lawrence. Nothing could be more picturesque than these groups, seated on the moss or the cool grass, around table-cloths of dazzling whiteness, which were spread on this carpet of verdure. The curé and his guests never failed to visit these groups, and exchange some words of friendship with the leading members of them.

On every side there were little booths, like wigwams, covered with branches of maple and various other trees, where refreshments were sold. The

vendors kept continually crying out in a monotonous voice, strongly accenting the first and last words, "*A la bonne bière! Au bon raisin! A la bonne pimprenelle!*" (Good beer! Good grapes! Good peppermint!) Fathers and lovers, excited by the occasion, slowly drew forth from their pockets the wherewithal to regale the children or their sweethearts.

"Nothing could be more picturesque than these groups, seated on the moss or the cool grass, around table-cloths of dazzling whiteness which were spread on this carpet of verdure."

The country Canadians had inherited from their Norman ancestors a very touching custom; it was that of lighting a bonfire at nightfall on St. John's Eve. An octagonal pyramid, of about ten feet in height, was erected opposite the principal entrance to the church. This pyramid, covered with branches of fir,

stuck into the interstices of the logs of cedar of which it was built, had a very picturesque effect. The curé, accompanied by his clergy, issuing from the church door recited the usual prayers, blessed the pyramid and with a taper lighted one of the little heaps of straw which were placed at each of the eight corners of the verdant cone. The flame then rose sparkling, amidst joyous cries, and the spectators, firing off guns, did not disperse, till the whole pile was consumed.

Blanche d'Haberville, her brother Jules and Lochiel did not fail to be present at this joyous ceremony, as well as Uncle Raoul, upon whom it was incumbent to represent his brother, detained at home by the rites of hospitality. An ill-natured person, looking at poor dear Uncle Raoul leaning on his sword and standing a little in advance of the others, might perhaps have been tempted to compare him to the deceased Vulcan of limping memory, particularly when the blaze of the burning logs lit up all his person with a purple hue; still, this did not prevent him thinking himself the most important personage present.

There was another most powerful reason for Uncle Raoul being present at the bonfire, and this was that it was the day for the public sale of salmon. On that day every habitant, who had a fishery, took the first salmon he had caught, and sold it at the church door for the benefit of the good souls; that is to say, he caused masses to be said for the deliverance of the souls in purgatory with whatever money it fetched. As the crier announced the object to which the money realized was to be applied, every one did his best to bid up the price of the fish. There is nothing more beautiful than this communion between Catholics and those of their kindred and friends that death has taken from them, their solicitude extending even to the invisible world. Our brethren of other forms of worship, like ourselves, shed bitter tears over the grave that hides those dearest to them on earth from their view; but there cease their tender cares!

Night had long closed in when Uncle Raoul, Blanche, Jules and Lochiel left the presbytery where they had been supping. Good Uncle Raoul, who had some smattering of astronomy, explained the wonders of the ethereal vault to his niece whom he was driving home in his carriage, but the young men did not profit much by these treasures of astronomical science, to the great disgust of the extempore professor, who taxed them with slyly spurring on their steeds, who were far more rational than their riders. The young men, full of life, and, drinking enjoyment at every pore on this magnificent evening in the midst of the forest, excused themselves as they best could, and then recommenced their tricks, in spite of reiterated signs from Blanche, who, loving her uncle dearly, tried to avoid everything that might displease him. The way home was indeed the more agreeable, for the highway wound through woods, which, from time

to time, intercepted their view of the St. Lawrence, whose sinuous course they followed, till an opening again disclosed to them its silvery waves.

At one of these glades, which gave to view the whole panorama from Cape Tourmente to Malbaie, Lochiel could not restrain an exclamation of astonishment, and, addressing Uncle Raoul, said:

"Will you, sir, who explain so well the wonders of the heavens, be pleased to cast your looks earthward, and tell me the meaning of all those lights appearing simultaneously on the north shore, as far as the eye can reach? Faith! I begin to believe our friend José's legend; Canada seems indeed to be the land of the imps, goblins, and genii with which my nurse rocked my infancy in the Scottish hills."

"Ah," said Uncle Raoul, "let us stop a moment here; those are the folk on the north shore, who, on St. John's Eve, communicate with their friends and relations on the south shore. They use neither ink nor pen to give their news! Let us begin at Les Éboulements; eleven adults have died in that parish since the autumn, three of whom were in the same house, that of my friend Dufour; the small-pox or some other malignant disease, must have visited the family, for the Dufours are fine men and in the prime of life! The Tremblays are well, I am glad of that, for they are good people. There is someone ill at Bonneau's; probably it is the grandmother, for she is very aged. There is a child dead at Belair's; I think it was their only one, for they have not been very long married."

My uncle Raoul went on thus for some time, ascertaining how his friends were at Les Éboulements, Ile-aux-Coudres, and Petite-Rivière.

"I think I understand," said Lochiel, "without however having the key to it; these are signals which are previously agreed upon, and by which the habitants communicate interesting intelligence from one shore of the river to the other."

"Yes," replied Uncle Raoul, "and if we were on the north shore we should see similar signals from the south shore.

"If the fire which is once lighted, or which is being fed, burns for a long time without being extinguished it is a sign of death. So many times as it is suddenly extinguished, so many deaths are there. For an adult there is a large blaze; for a child, a small one. The means of communication being somewhat rare even in summer, and entirely suspended during the winter, man, with his usual ingenuity, has invented a very simple substitute.

"The same signals," continued Uncle Raoul, "are known by all sailors, who in cases of shipwreck make use of them to communicate their distress. No later than last year five of our best hunters would have died of hunger on the Loup-Marins flats but for their knowledge of this code of signals. Towards the

middle of March there was so sudden a change of weather as to give every reason to believe that spring had arrived. The ice disappeared from the river and the brant, wild geese, and ducks made their appearance in great numbers. Five of our hunters, well furnished with provisions, started for the flats; the brant were in such abundance that they left their provisions in the boat, which they hastily tied opposite the hut, so as to hasten to take their station in the channel where they had to *bore* before the ebbing of the tide. I suppose you know that what is called *boring*, is digging a ditch in the mud, about three or four feet deep, in which the hunter conceals himself in order to be in wait for the game which are very shy, more particularly the brant and geese. It is not a very agreeable sport, for often you have to remain seven or eight hours crouching down on your heels in these holes, accompanied by your dog. You are in no want of something to kill the time, for in some places you have to be perpetually emptying out the muddy water, which threatens to drown you.

"All was ready, and our sportsmen were looking forward to being amply recompensed for their discomforts at the rising of the tide, when all at once there arose a fearful storm. The snow, driven by the wind, fell so thick that the hunters could not see the game at three fathoms distance from them. Our friends, having patiently waited until the rising of the tide drove them from their trenches, returned to their hut, sorely against their will. A sad sight awaited them; their boat had been carried away by the tempest, and the only provisions remaining for the five men, consisted of one loaf and a bottle of brandy, which they had placed in their hut on their first arrival, so that they might be able to take a glass and a mouthful of bread, before starting on their work. They held a council and determined to go to bed without supper; the snow-storm might last three days, and it would be impossible for them there, midway between the two shores—at least three leagues from either—to make their signals of distress visible to those on land. They were therefore obliged to economize their food. Alas! they were completely out in their reckoning; there ensued a regular second winter, the cold became intense, the snow-storm lasted a week, and at the expiration of that time the river was covered with ice as in January.

"They then began to make signals of distress, which were seen from both shores of the St. Lawrence, but it was quite impossible to send help. To the signals of distress, there succeeded those of death. Every evening the fire was lighted and then extinguished; the death of three of the castaways had already been thus registered, when some of the habitants, touched with compassion, attempted, at the peril of their lives, everything that could be done by brave and self-devoted men. It was all in vain; the river was so covered with floating ice that the stream carried the canoes either to the north-east or to the south-

west, following the flow and ebb of the tide, without taking them any nearer to the scene of the disaster. It was only on the seventeenth day that they received succour from some men of the Ile-aux-Coudres, who had managed to bring up their canoe. On their arrival, the habitants, not hearing any sound in the hut, concluded that all the hunters must be dead; however, they found two of them alive, though quite exhausted. After the usual means had been resorted to, to revive them, they were soon on their legs again, but they determined—though somewhat too late—that another time when they landed on an island, even in the summer, the first thing they would do, would be to place their boat out of all danger from the tide."

"Do you not think, my dear uncle," said Blanche, "that this fine calm evening, a song would add much to the charm of our drive by the side of the prince of rivers?"

"Oh, yes, a song!" said the young men.

This was taking the chevalier on his weak side. He did not need to be asked twice, and sang, in a magnificent tenor voice, the following song, which was a particular favorite of his, as he had been a noted sportsman before he was wounded. Although, as he acknowledged, it sinned against the rules of versification, he contended that its lively pictures and great originality more than compensated for its faults.

“Whilst late at eve I wander’d forth
Along a thicket’s hidden path,
Chasing the partridge and the snipe
Through this charming wood,
I thought amidst the rushes
I might take aim;
In readiness I held my gun
To shoot at one.

“To the warning voice I listened
Of my dog, the hunter’s friend,
On I went, and aloud I cried
Those rushes beside;
Softly and tenderly I sang
Whilst going my rounds,
Descrying whilst I there did rove
A quarry of love.

“I saw a damsel of beauty rare
Within that wood so fair,
By the wayside she was sitting
Gently reposing;
I, just then, let off my gun
Close to my fair one,
With startled scream the sound she greeted,
Which the woods repeated.

“My own sweet heart, I said to her,
Quite gently thus, I spoke to her,
I am but a brave hunter.
Of me, pray have no fear,
On seeing you, my lovely one,
Here all alone,
I would your trusty guardian be
And treat you tenderly.

“Oh! soothe my fears awhile I pray,
And my alarm, oh! chase away,
The night has me o’ertaken here,
I’ve wander’d far and near,
Show me I pray the nearest road
To my rustic abode,
For without you, from hence, dear sir,
Alive I could not stir.

“Fair one! let me take your hand,
Close by doth the village stand,
I can do you, this slight pleasure,
For I have leisure;
But before you haste away
My pretty one.
Will you not please to grant me this,
Just one, sweet kiss?

“To refuse you, would be hard,
For you merit a reward,
Take then two or even three
As best pleaseth thee;
You succor’d me so cheerfully,
Such service gave
That too much honor ’twas for me,
Farewell . . . heartily!”

“The devil!” said Jules, “Sir Knight, you go right into the thing! I would bet any money that you were a terrible fellow among the women in your young days, and must have made many victims! Come, my dear uncle, am I not right? do pray tell us some of your deeds of prowess.”

“Ugly, ugly, my dear fellow,” replied Uncle Raoul bridling up, “but I took amongst the women.”

Jules was going to continue in the same strain, but seeing the looks of entreaty directed towards him by his sister, who was biting her lips to prevent laughing, he repeated the end of the last verse:

“You succor’d me so cheerfully,
Such service gave
That too much honor ’twas for me,
Farewell . . . heartily.”

The young men were going on singing in chorus, when, on arriving at a clearing, they perceived a fire burning in the wood at a short distance from the road.

“It is the witch of this domain,” said Uncle Raoul.

“I have always forgotten to ask why she is called the witch of this domain,” said Archy.

“Because she has established her favorite domicile in these woods, which were formerly on the d’Haberville estate,” replied Uncle Raoul, “my brother has exchanged it for the present domain in order to be nearer his mill at Trois-Saumons.”

“Let us go and pay a visit to poor Marie,” said Blanche. “In my childhood she used every spring to bring me the earliest flowers of the forest and the first strawberries of the season.”

Uncle Raoul made some objections on the score of the lateness of the hour, but, as he could never refuse his charming niece anything, they fastened their horses at the entrance of a copse and approached the sorceress.

Poor Marie’s dwelling did not in any respect resemble that of the sybil of Cumæ, nor that of any other sybil ancient or modern. It was a log hut, the beams unfinished and hung within with moss of different colors, whilst, without, its conical roof was covered with birch-bark and branches of spruce.

Marie, seated at the door of the hut on a fallen tree, was watching some meat cooking in a frying-pan, which she held over a fire that was surrounded by stones to prevent it from spreading. She paid no attention to the visitors, but, according to her usual custom, went on with a conversation she had commenced with an invisible being, behind her, to whom she kept repeating incessantly, making gestures as if driving it away, sometimes with her right hand and sometimes with her left. “Go! go! It is you who are bringing the English to eat up the French!”

“Now then! prophetess of ill-omen,” said Uncle Raoul, “when you have finished talking to the devil, will you be so kind as to tell me what is the meaning of this menace?”

“Come now, Marie,” added Jules, “tell us, do you really believe that you are talking to the devil? You may be able to impose on the habitants; but you ought to know that we do not believe in such folly.”

“Go! go!” continued the witch making the same gesticulation, “it is you, who are bringing the English to eat up the French.”

“I will speak to her,” said Blanche. “She loves me and will answer me, I am sure.”

Then approaching her, she placed her hand on the old woman’s shoulder and said in her sweetest voice:

“Do you know me, my good Marie? Do you not recognize the little seigneuress, as you used to call me when I was a child?”

The poor woman broke off her monologue, and looked with affection on the beautiful young girl. Even a tear stood in her eye without being able to flow, there were so few of them in that fevered brain.

“My dear Marie,” said Blanche, “why do you lead this wild and wandering life? Why do you live in the woods, you the wife of a rich habitant, the mother of a numerous family? Your poor little children, brought up by strangers, have much need of their own good mother. After the fête I will come for you with mama and we will take you home: she will speak to your husband, who still loves you. You must be very unhappy!”

The poor woman bounded on her seat; and her eyes flashed fire, whilst, erect and white with anger, she exclaimed, looking at those present:

“Who dares speak of my woes? Is it the beautiful young lady, the pride of her parents, who will never be either wife or mother? Is it the rich and noble young lady brought up daintily, who will soon like me have no shelter but a hut? Woe! woe! woe!”

She rose suddenly and as she was darting into the forest exclaimed anew, on seeing Jules much affected:

“Is it, indeed, Jules d’Haberville who weeps over my woes? Is it, indeed, Jules d’Haberville, the bravest of the brave, whose bleeding body I see dragged along the Plains of Abraham? Is it indeed he who waters with his blood my country’s last glorious battlefield? Woe! woe!”

“It grieves me much to see this poor woman,” said Lochiel, as she again turned to dart into the thicket.

She heard what he said, and, returning for the last time, crossed her arms, and said to him with a bitter calmness:

“Keep your pity for yourself, Archibald Lochiel, the witch of this domain has no need of your pity! Keep it for yourself and for your friends! Keep it for yourself, when forced to execute a barbarous order, you shall tear with your nails that breast, which nevertheless covers a noble and generous heart. Keep your pity for your friends, Archibald Lochiel, when you shall apply the incendiary torch to their peaceful dwellings; when the old men, the sick, the women and children, shall flee before you like sheep before a raging wolf! Keep your pity; you will have need of it, when you shall carry in your arms the bleeding body of him you call brother! Oh! Archibald Lochiel! I feel one great sorrow, that of not being able to curse you! Woe! woe! woe!”

Having thus spoken she disappeared in the forest.

“May an Englishman choke me,” said Uncle Raoul, “if mad Marie is not the very model of all the sorceresses sung by both ancient and modern poets; she must have got out of bed the wrong way for she is generally so polite and gentle with us.”

All agreed that they had never heard her speak in this strain before. They went the rest of the way in silence, for, though they paid no heed to her words,

they had nevertheless produced a feeling of sadness. This little cloud, however, was soon dispersed on arriving at the manor house where they found a large party assembled. The joyous shouts of laughter reached even the highway, and the bluff echoed back the burden of the song:

"Bring back your sheep fair shepherdess,
Fair shepherdess, your sheep."

The dancers had broken one of the links of the round dance and were running over the court of the manor house in single file. They surrounded the chevalier's carriage, again linked the chain and danced round several times, calling out to Mademoiselle d'Haberville: "Descend, fair shepherdess."

Blanche sprang lightly from the carriage, the leader of the dance took possession of her and began to sing:

"The fairest of all we now behold
The fairest of all we now behold,
Within my own, her hand I hold
Within my own, her hand I hold;
Too soon must end my happiness
Bring back your sheep, fair shepherdess,
Bring them back, oh! bring them back
Your sheep, your sheep, fair shepherdess,
Bring them back, oh! bring them back
Fair shepherdess, your sheep."

They then danced round the chevalier's carriage several times singing:

"Bring them back, oh! bring them back
Fair shepherdess, your sheep."

They then broke the chain and all the joyous party filed off into the house, dancing and singing the joyous burden of their song.

Uncle Raoul, at length delivered from these pitiless dancers, descended from his carriage as he best could and joined the rest of the party at the refreshment table.

CHAPTER X

THE GOOD GENTLEMAN

THE two months that Jules was to pass with his family, before leaving for Europe, had already expired, and the vessel in which he had taken his passage was to sail in a few days. Lochiel was in Quebec, making preparations for a voyage of two months at the very least. An ample stock of provisions was necessary, and Monsieur d'Haberville had entrusted the young Scotchman with providing them, while Jules' mother and sister packed in the young men's trunks all the delicacies that their thoughtful kindness could suggest. The nearer approached the time of a separation, which might be forever, the more attentive was Jules to his parents from whom he was loath to be separated. Still, he said to them one day:

"I have promised "the good gentleman," as you already know, to go and sleep at his house before leaving for Europe; I shall be back to breakfast here to-morrow morning."

Monsieur d'Egmont, whom everybody called "the good gentleman," lived in a little house, on the Trois-Saumons river, about three-quarters of a league from the manor house. He lived there with a faithful old servant, who had shared his good and evil fortunes. André Francœur was of the same age as his master and was also his foster-brother; the companion of his childish games, and in his riper years more his friend and confidant than his servant. André had found it as natural to attach himself to him, when oppressed by the iron hand of misfortune, as when in happier days he had followed him in his parties of pleasure, and received the presents which his good and generous master constantly heaped upon him.

"The good gentleman" and his servant were then living on the income of a small capital, to which they had both contributed. It might even be said that the servant's share from his savings was larger than that of the master, accruing from a small income allowed him by his family when he was living in France. Was it honorable in Monsieur d'Egmont to live partly on Francœur's savings? Every one will answer, no; but "the good gentleman" reasoned differently:

"I was formerly rich. I dispensed the greater part of my fortune in obliging my friends. I bestowed benefits on everybody indiscriminately, and my noble friends have only paid me with ingratitude. André is the only one who has showed any gratitude, the only one whose heart has proved noble; I can,

therefore, without indelicacy unite my fortunes to his, as I would have done with one in my own rank, if I had been able to find one as generous as my servant; besides the whole will be for the survivor."

When Jules arrived, "the good gentleman" was busy weeding a patch of lettuce in his garden. Absorbed in his work, he did not see his young friend, who, leaning on the fence, looked at him in silence and listened to his monologue.

"Poor insect!" said "the good gentleman," "poor little insect! I have been unfortunate enough to hurt you, and behold the other ants, who were formerly your friends, rush on you to eat you up! These little creatures are then as cruel as men! I will come to your assistance; and I thank you, madam ants, for the lesson, as I have now a better opinion of my own species."

"Poor misanthrope!" thought Jules. "How much he must have suffered, with so sensitive a mind!"

Then noiselessly withdrawing, he entered by the garden gate.

Monsieur d'Egmont made a joyful exclamation on seeing his young friend, and embraced him affectionately; he had known him from childhood and loved him as his own child. Although for the last thirty years that he had lived on the d'Haberville estate, he had steadily refused to go and, with his faithful servant, live entirely at the manor house. He nevertheless paid frequent visits there, extending them often to more than a week's duration, particularly in the absence of other visitors; for, without positively avoiding society, he had suffered too much in his relations with men in his own class to be able cordially to take part in their noisy pleasures.

Although Monsieur d'Egmont was so poor he did not fail to do a great deal of good. He comforted the afflicted, visited the sick, doctored them with herbs, whose hidden virtues his botanical researches had revealed to him; and if his charities were not abundant, they were distributed so cheerfully and with so much delicacy, that the poor were more gratified for them than for the far more considerable ones bestowed by many of the rich. They seemed, indeed, to have forgotten his name for the sake of bestowing on him that of "the good gentleman."

When Monsieur d'Egmont and his young friend entered the house after a short walk round the grounds, André placed on the table a dish of fine trout, and another of broiled wild pigeons, covered with raw chervil.

"It is not a very luxurious supper," said Monsieur d'Egmont. "I caught the trout myself before the door an hour ago, and André shot the pigeons at sunrise, in that dead tree at half a gunshot's distance from here. You see, without being a seigneur, I have a fish pond and dove-cot on my domain. A

salad of lettuce dressed with cream, a bowl of raspberries, and a bottle of wine will complete your supper, my friend Jules!"

"And never have fish-pond and dove-cot furnished a better meal to a hungry sportsman," said the latter.

They had a very cheerful meal, for Monsieur d'Egmont, in spite of his great age, seemed to have resumed the cheerfulness of his youth in order to amuse his young friend. His conversation, always amusing, was also instructive, for he had associated much with men in his youth, and had also found in study a solace in his misfortunes.

"How do you like this wine?" said he to Jules, who, whilst eating like a wolf, had already swallowed several bumpers.

"Excellent, on my honor."

"You are a connoisseur, my friend," answered Monsieur d'Egmont, "and, if it is true that age improves men and wine, this wine ought to be good, and I myself ought to have arrived at perfection, for I am nearly ninety years of age."

"Doubtless," said Jules, "that is why you are called "the good gentleman."

"My son, the Athenians banished Aristides, even while calling him 'the Just.' But do not let us talk of men but of wine, I seldom drink any myself, I have learnt to do without that, as well as many other luxuries that are not necessary to our well being, and I still enjoy perfect health. This wine, which you find so good, is older than you are; its age is not very great perhaps for a man, but it is great for wine. Your father sent me a basket of it the day you were born, for he was so happy that he made presents to all his friends. I have always taken great care of it and only produce it on rare occasions like this. Your health, my son, and success to your undertakings; and promise me that when you return to New France, you will come and sup with me and drink the last bottle of this wine, which I will keep for you.

"You look at me with astonishment. You are thinking that, in all probability, I shall long before your return have paid that last debt, which the most reluctant debtor owes to nature! You are wrong, my friend, a man like me never dies. But see, as we have done supper, let us leave the table and go and seat ourselves *sub tegmine fagi*, that is to say, at the foot of that splendid walnut tree, whose tufted branches are reflected in the limpid waters of this charming river."

It was a magnificent evening. The light of the moon, then at its full, was playing on the stream at their feet, and the ripple of the water was the only sound that disturbed the stillness of this fine Canadian evening. Monsieur d'Egmont remained silent for some minutes, with his head resting on his breast; and Jules, not wishing to interrupt his reverie, traced geometrical

figures with his finger in the sand.

"I have wished very much, my dear Jules," said Monsieur d'Egmont, "to converse with you before your departure for Europe, and before you enter on life. I know very well that other people's experience is of but little use, and that every one must buy his own; but no matter, I shall at any rate have had the satisfaction of opening my heart to you, that heart which ought to have withered long ago, but which still beats as warm as when I was the life of the gay circle of my friends, half a century ago. You looked at me with astonishment just now, my son, when I told you, that a man like me never dies; you thought it was a metaphor, but I spoke in all sincerity. I have so often on my knees prayed for death, that I have ended by hardly believing in its existence. The heathen made a divinity of it; doubtless this was to pray to it in the time of great misfortune. If what physiology teaches us is true, and our sufferings are occasioned by the sensitiveness of our nerves and proceed from our whole organization, then, my son, I have suffered enough to have killed fifty of the most robust men."

Again "the good gentleman" was silent, and Jules threw some pebbles into the water.

"See," resumed the old man, "this stream which flows so peacefully at our feet; in an hour, at the most, it will join the more turbulent waters of the large river, in whose vicissitudes it will partake, and in a few days, mingled with the waves of the Atlantic, it will be the plaything of all those furious storms which heave its waters up even to the clouds. Behold the picture of our life! Till now, your days have been as peaceful as the waters of my little river, but very soon you will be tossed on the broad stream of life, and pass onwards to the dangers of that immense ocean of humanity which overthrows all it meets with. I have known you from your birth, d'Haberville; I have marked all the phases of your youthful existence with an attentive eye; I have carefully studied your disposition, and it is this that made me wish for the conversation we are now holding; for never was there a more perfect resemblance than between your disposition and mine. Like you, I was by nature good-hearted, sensitive, and generous even to prodigality. How came it then, that these precious gifts, which ought to have ensured me a happy life, have been the cause of all my misfortunes? How comes it that these good qualities, so much prized among men, have risen up against me to my ruin, like so many implacable enemies? How comes it, that, like pitiless enemies, they have cast me down and rolled me in the dust? It seems to me, however, that I deserved a better fate. Like yourself, I was born of rich parents, who idolised me, and thus it was always easy for me to follow the dictates of my benevolent nature. Like you, I only sought to make myself beloved by all who surrounded me. Like you, in my

childhood, I had pity on everything which I saw suffer; on the insect that I had inadvertently wounded, on the little bird which had fallen from its nest. I wept for the fate of the little ragged beggar who told me his tale of woe; I took off my own clothes to cover him; and if my parents had not incessantly seen to my wardrobe, the son of the rich Monsieur d'Egmont would have been the worst clothed of all the boys in the college where he boarded. It is needless to add that, like yourself, my hand was always open to all my companions; as they said, 'I kept nothing for myself.' After all, it is strange," he continued, closing his eyes as if speaking to himself, "it is strange that I did not then meet with any ingratitude from my young companions. Is ingratitude the lot of the grown man? Or is it a snare which this charming human nature spreads before the good-hearted, confiding, and generous child, in order the better to despoil him afterwards, when it is better worth its while? I cannot make this out; but still, no! childhood and youth cannot be so depraved!

"And you, Jules," resumed the old man after this aside, "have you already met with ingratitude from those you have been of use to, that despicable ingratitude which stupifies you and pierces your heart like a dagger?"

"Never!" said the young man.

"Then it must be self-interest, the natural consequence of civilization which causes ingratitude; the more man stands in need of, the more ungrateful he is. This recalls to my mind a little incident in my life. About twenty years ago, a poor Indian of the Huron tribe arrived at my house in a most pitiable state. It was spring-time; he had had a long and toilsome walk, and had swum across icy streams, when very warm, so that he had a violent attack of pleurisy, accompanied by a most alarming inflammation of the lungs. I saw that in bleeding him profusely lay his only chance of life. I had never bled any one, and, with my penknife, I made my first essay in the art of phlebotomy on this child of nature. To be brief, herbs and assiduous care operated a cure; but the recovery was long, and he remained two months at my house. At the end of a short time, André and myself were able to speak the Huron tongue like natives. He told me that he was a great warrior and a great hunter, but that an immoderate use of brandy had been his ruin. His thanks were as brief as his farewell:

" 'My heart is too full to speak long,' said he; 'a Huron warrior ought not to cry like a woman; thank you, my brothers.' And he plunged into the forest.

"I had completely forgotten my Indian, when, four years afterwards, he arrived at my house in company with another one. He was no longer the same man, as the one I had seen in so pitiable a condition. He was splendidly dressed and everything about him announced the great warrior and the great hunter, qualities which are inseparable among the natives of North America.

He and his companion deposited, in a corner of my room, two packages of merchandise of considerable value, for they consisted of the richest furs, the most splendid moccasins embroidered with porcupine quills, the most costly work in bark, and other articles in which the Indians trade with us. I congratulated him on the fortunate change in his circumstances.

" 'Listen, my brother,' said he, 'and pay attention to my words. I owe you much, and I have come to pay my debts. You saved my life, for you know good medicine. You have done more, for you also know the words which enter into the heart. From the drunken dog I was, I have become the man that the Great Spirit created. You were rich when you lived on the other side of the Great Lake. This wigwam is too small for you; build one large enough for your great heart. All these things belong to you.'

"I was melted to tears at this primitive man's act of gratitude. In the course of a long life, I had then met with two grateful men,—the faithful André, my foster-brother, and this child of nature, who, seeing that out of all his gifts I would only accept a pair of moccasins, uttered his piercing cry *houa*, and started off full speed, followed by his companion. In spite of my enquiries, I have never been able to obtain any tidings of him since that time. Our good curé undertook to sell the goods, and the proceeds, as well as the interest, have been lately distributed to the Indians of his tribe."

"The good gentleman" sighed, collected his thoughts a moment, and then went on with his narration:

"I am now going, my dear Jules, to tell you of the happiest and the unhappiest period of my life: five years of happiness! fifty years of suffering. O God! for one day, only one day of my joyous youth to make me forget all that I have suffered! One day of that delirious joy which seems as acute as physical pain. Oh! for one hour, but one hour of those hearty and stirring peals of laughter, which gladden the heart, even to bursting, and which like a refreshing draught from Lethe, efface every mournful memory from the mind! How light my heart was, when, surrounded by my friends, I presided at the festive board! One of those happy days, O God! when I believed in sincere friendship, when I had faith in gratitude, when I knew nothing of ingratitude!

"When I had completed my studies, all careers were open to me; I had only to choose. That of arms seemed to be the most natural for a man of my birth; but it was repugnant to me to shed the blood of my fellow creatures. I obtained a place of great trust in a public office. With my disposition it was the road to ruin. I was myself rich; as my father had left me a large fortune, and the emolument from my appointment being considerable, I rolled in the wealth that I despised.

"I will not seek," said Monsieur d'Egmont, striking his forehead with his

two hands, “to palliate my folly by charging others with my misfortunes. Ah! no! but it is certain that I should have been able to meet my own expenses, but not those of my friends, nor those of my friends’ friends, who threw themselves on me like famished wolves on an easy prey. I bear them no ill-will, they only acted according to their nature; when a beast of prey is hungry, it devours everything it meets with. Unable to refuse being of use to them, my hand was never closed; I became not only their banker, but if they had need of a security, of someone to endorse their bills, my signature was at the service of every one of them. My dear Jules, that was my great mistake, for I can say with truth, that ninety-nine times out of a hundred, I have been obliged, even when embarrassed myself, to liquidate their debts out of my own pocket to save my credit and avoid that ruin, which otherwise would have been imminent. A great English poet has said:

‘Neither a borrower nor a lender be. . .
For loan oft loses both itself and friend.’

My dear son, give in handfuls, since you have an irresistible longing to do so, but at least be careful of your signature. You may be always pressed for money, but you will escape the misfortunes which for the last half century have embittered my existence.

“My private affairs were so mixed up with those of my office, that it was some little time before I perceived their alarming condition. When on looking into my accounts I discovered the truth, I was thunderstruck. Not only was I ruined, but also there was a considerable defalcation! Bah! I said to myself at last, what signifies the loss of my wealth! Of what consequence to me is the gold I have always despised! Let me pay my debts; I am young, I am not afraid of work, I shall always find enough of it to do. Besides what need I fear? My friends owe me considerable sums, and when once they are aware of my financial difficulties, not only will they hasten to liquidate their debts, but also, if necessary, will do for me what I have so often done for them. How foolish I was, my son, to judge of others by myself. I would have moved heaven and earth to have saved a friend from ruin; I would have made the greatest sacrifices. How foolish and credulous I was, those miserable men were right in laughing at me.

“I made out a statement of what I owed, of the value of my property, and clearly saw that after getting in what was owing to me, and selling my estates, I should only owe a balance that, with the help of my relations, I could easily pay. My spirits rose again. How little I knew of men! I imparted my difficulties, in confidence, to those indebted to me. I told them that I trusted in their friendship to keep the thing quiet, that time pressed, and that I begged of them to pay me what they owed me as soon as possible. I found them cool and

indifferent. Several to whom I had lent money without taking any acknowledgment in writing, had even forgotten that they owed me anything! Those whose notes I held, told me that it was not very generous to take them unawares, and that they would never have expected it of a friend. The greater number of those who had had any transactions at my office, impudently pretended that I was their debtor. They were right, I owed them a trifle, but they owed me considerable sums. I asked them to come to a settlement; they promised to do so, but never did; on the contrary, they took pleasure in undermining my credit by spreading the report that I was ruined, and that I had the face to ask payment of imaginary debts. They did more; they turned me into ridicule, saying that I was an extravagant fool. One of them, who six months previously had only been able to keep a position—which he was nearly losing through committing a breach of confidence—by means of the pecuniary assistance I rendered him, and the secret of which will die with me, was forever exercising his wit at my expense; and his witticisms were immensely successful among my old friends. This last piece of ingratitude quite overwhelmed me.

"There was but one, and that one a mere acquaintance whom I had sometimes met in society, who, having got wind of my impending ruin, at once said to me:

" 'We have had business together, and I bring you what I think is the balance owing to you; look at your books and see if it is all right.'

"He has long been dead, honor to his memory! and may his children benefit by an old man's blessing.

"Time pressed, as I have said, and even if I had had the heart to institute proceedings, nothing could have saved me. The intrigues of both friends and enemies, who were eager to share in the spoils, formed an addition to my difficulties. I could not face the storm any longer, so bowed my head, and resigned myself to it.

"I would not wish, my son, to sadden your young heart with the recital of all I have suffered, suffice it to say that in the clutches of pitiless creditors, I drank the cup of bitterness to its very dregs. Apart from the ingratitude of my friends, I was not a man to suffer much for myself individually. My natural good spirits would not even have abandoned me within the walls of the Bastille; I could have danced to the discordant music of its creaking bolts. But, my family! my family! and oh! that poignant remorse which haunts us by day and chases away our sleep by night, which gives us no truce or rest and gnaws at our very heart-strings. My opinion is, my son, that, with very rare exceptions, every one who has the means, pays his debts; the torments he endures at the sight of his creditors being more than sufficient to make him do

so, without his being subjected to the rigor of laws, which are often made for the rich to the detriment of the poor. Look into all the codes of law, both ancient and modern, and you will be struck with the barbarous egotism which dictated them all. Can one indeed imagine a more humiliating torture than that felt by a debtor in the presence of his creditor?—generally some miserly fellow, to whom he is obliged to bow and scrape. Can one imagine anything more humiliating than to be obliged to be perpetually dodging to avoid meeting a creditor?

"One thing has always struck me: Civilization warps man's powers of judgment, and that as regards common sense, that strong common sense, that one might expect to find in every civilized being (I except, however, the domestic animals educated in our families), the savage is very superior to us. I will give you an amusing example. Some years ago at New York, an Iroquois was seen contemplating a vast edifice of sinister aspect; its high walls and barred windows puzzled him greatly. It was a prison. Presently a magistrate entered on the scene.

" 'Will the pale-face tell his brother,' said the Indian, 'of what use this large wigwam is?'

"The citizen bridled up, and answered in a consequential tone:

" 'That is where we shut up the red-skins who refuse to pay to the merchants the beaver skins which they owe them.'

"The Iroquois examined the edifice with increasing interest, went round it, and asked to be admitted inside it. The magistrate, being likewise a merchant, took good care not to refuse him, hoping to inspire with salutary terror the other Indians, to whom this one would not fail to relate the clever, as well as ingenious, means that the pale-faces took to oblige the red-skins to pay their debts.

"The Iroquois examined all the edifice with the most minute care, descended into the cells, tried the depth of the wells, listened attentively to the least noise he heard; and ended by saying with fits of laughter:

" 'But Indian not able to take beaver here?'

"In five minutes the Indian had given the solution of a problem which civilized man has not yet had the sense, the plain common sense to solve after centuries of study. This simple and ignorant man, not being able to believe that a civilized nation, whose grand inventions he admired, was capable of such an amount of folly, had believed, in all simplicity, that subterranean canals had been excavated, which communicated with those rivers and lakes that were the richest in beaver; and that Indians were incarcerated there in order to give them greater facilities for hunting these valuable amphibia, and thus the quicker to

satisfy their creditors. The walls and iron gratings seemed to him to have been necessitated by prudence as a protection to these treasures.

"You understand, Jules, that I am now going to speak to you only in the interest of the creditor who deserves both sympathy and pity, and not in that of the debtor, who, after having wandered about all day haunted by fearful misgivings, at night gnaws his pillow in despair after having watered it with his tears.

"I was young, only thirty-three, an age when life has hardly begun; I had talent, energy, and strong trust in my own powers. I said to my creditors, take all I possess, but do not exercise your right of arrest; leave me liberty of action, and I will do my best to satisfy your claims. If you paralyze my efforts, you do yourselves wrong. This plain reasoning was above the comprehension of civilized man. Our friend the Iroquois would have understood it; he would have said: 'My brother not able to take beaver, if the pale-face drives him out of his senses and ties his hands.' Well! my creditors paid no heed to this reasoning, which is easy enough to understand; and they kept this sword of Damocles suspended over my head for thirty years, the time allowed them by the laws of the country."

"But it was most amazingly foolish!" exclaimed Jules.

"One of them, however," continued Monsieur d'Egmont, smiling sadly at Jules' sally, "I say, that one of them, who was delightfully ingenious in conferring torture, took out a warrant for arresting me; and by a refinement of cruelty, worthy of a Caligula, only executed it eighteen months afterwards. Can any one imagine more fearful suffering than that endured by a man surrounded by a numerous family, who for eighteen months sees them tremble at every sound they hear, and shudder at the sight of every stranger, believing him to be the bearer of an order for the incarceration of the one dearest to them! The only thing that astonishes me is, that we were not quite overwhelmed with this weight of intense suffering!

"This state of suspense was so unbearable, that twice I went to my creditor, begging him, for God's sake, to make an end of the matter and put me in prison. He did so, at last, but he took his own time. I could have thanked him on my knees. I enjoyed a sort of negative happiness behind my prison bars, in defying the malice of man to inflict greater suffering on me.

"During the first month of his captivity, a prisoner experiences a singular want; it is a feverish restlessness, a continual necessity for locomotion. During his meals, and even during the night he rises to satisfy it, like a lion in its cage. May that noble animal forgive me for comparing him to man! He only devours when he is hungry; and his hunger once satisfied, he is generous towards all the weak creatures he meets with.

“After this trying time, this feverish restlessness, after this death-cry of the man so lately free, I, in my captivity, felt a tranquillity like that experienced by a sailor who, busied in working a vessel during a fearful storm, only feels the shock of the last waves which strike the ship after the tempest has ceased; for apart from the numberless vexations and humiliations of captivity, and apart also from the grief which I felt for my disconsolate family, I was certainly less miserable. I thought I had swallowed the last drop of bitterness in that cup of sorrow, which the malice of man is forever holding to the fevered lips of his brethren. I had not considered the hand of God, which now made itself felt by the madman, who was the architect of his own misfortunes. Two of my children fell so dangerously ill, at two different periods, that the doctors, despairing of their lives, told me each day that their end was approaching. It was then that I felt the full weight of my chains. It was then, that, like the mother of Christ, I might have exclaimed: ‘Approach and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow!’ I knew my children were dying, and I was only separated from them by the width of the street. During those long sleepless nights, I could see people moving about by their bedsides, and the lights being carried from room to room; and every moment I dreaded to see these signs of life disappear, for they announced to me that my children still required being nursed with maternal love. I am ashamed to acknowledge that I was so often so overcome by despair, that I was tempted to dash out my brains against the bars of my window. To know that my children were on their death-bed, and not be able to fly to their succor, to bless them, and press them in my arms for the last time!

“All this time my persecutor knew as well as I did all that was passing in my family. Pity then is extinct in the heart of man, to take refuge in the heart, I was going to say the soul of unreasoning animals! The lamb bleats piteously when its companion’s throat is cut; the ox roars with rage and grief when he scents the blood of one of his own species; the horse snorts loudly and utters that mournful neighing which thrills through one at the sight of his brother writhing in the agonies of death; the dog howls plaintively during his master’s illness! But man follows his brother to his last resting-place, whispering and chatting of his business and relating amusing stories.

“Lift up your head in pride, O master of the creation! You have the right to do so! Raise your proud head to Heaven, O man! whose heart is as cold as the gold you finger night and day. Pelt mud by handfuls at the man, who, warm-hearted, with strong passions, and blood burning in his veins, has erred in his youth! Raise high your head, proud Pharisee, and say: ‘I have never erred!’ Less forgiving than the Divine Master, whom you pretend to serve and who pardons the repentant sinner, take no heed of the sufferings which scorch the

heart like the burning wind of the desert, of the wasting remorse which, after fifty years of the strictest probity, still gnaws the heart of him whose impetuous passions have led him astray in his youth, and say: ‘I, I have never erred.’ ”

“The good gentleman” clasped his breast with both hands, and kept silence for a short space of time, and then exclaimed:

“Forgive me, my son, if, carried away by the remembrance of so much suffering, I have given vent to my wrongs in all the bitterness of my heart. It was only the seventh day after the arrival of his friends, that the great Arabian poet Job, who sang of so many sorrows, uttered this heart-rending cry: *Pereat dies in qua natus sum!* I, my son, have buried my wrongs in the depths of my heart for fifty years! Forgive me then if I have spoken in all the bitterness of my soul; if, soured by misfortune, I have calumniated all men alike, for there are many noble exceptions.

“As I had long before given up everything I possessed to my creditors, and all my movables and immovables had been sold on their behalf, I presented petition upon petition to the king in order to procure my release after four years imprisonment. The ministers were of opinion, that all things considered, I had suffered sufficiently, but a difficulty arose, which was this: When a debtor has made an honest and complete surrender of all he possesses, and has sold all his movables and immovables, does anything remain to him? It was a ticklish question. However, after debating it a long time, they decided in the negative, in spite of an argument, three hours long, from a great mathematician, a fine speaker, who undertook to prove that if two is paid out of two, a small fraction will remain. So they ended by very politely showing me the door.

“My prospects being as completely destroyed as my heart, I have since then only vegetated without being of use to myself, or to others.

“But now, my son, only see the ill-luck which pursued me. When I gave up all my property to my creditors, I asked of them, as a favor, to let me still enjoy an estate, then of little value but which I foresaw would be very productive eventually; promising them to use every effort both morally and physically to make the most of it for their benefit. Of course they only laughed in my face, for there was beaver to be taken there! Well! Jules, this same estate, the sale of which at that time hardly covered the costs of the proceedings, was, at the end of ten years, sold for an enormous price, which would more than have liquidated all my debts. But I was so disheartened and broken down with the weight of my disgrace that I had not even the heart to appeal against this injustice. When I was a little calmer, I made out an accurate statement of my debts, and they only amounted to one-third of the fabulous

sum which had been reported.

“Europe was too thickly peopled for me; I embarked for New France with my faithful André, and I chose this solitary spot, where I should have lived happily, if I could have drunk of the waters of Lethe. The ancients, who were our masters in all that concerns the imagination, doubtless created this river for the consolation of suffering humanity. Having for a long time been imbued with the errors of the sixteenth century, I exclaimed in my pride: ‘Oh, my fellow-men! If I have had my share of your vices, I have at any rate seldom found one among you who possessed any of my virtues!’ Religion, our beneficent mother, has since then checked these proud emotions and made me examine myself. I have bowed myself beneath the hand of God, fully persuaded that in following my natural inclinations I could claim no merit.

“You are the first person, my son, to whom I have ever related the history of my life, and I have suppressed several painful episodes, for, knowing how tender your heart is, I have spared your feelings. My end is gained; and now let us spend part of the evening with my faithful domestic, who will appreciate your showing him this mark of attention before your departure for Europe.”

When they entered the house, André was just finishing arranging a bed on a sofa, which was the result of the combined mechanical skill of master and man. This piece of furniture, of which both were very proud, had one leg shorter than the others, but the inventive genius of Francœur remedied this little inconvenience by means of a small block of wood.

“This sofa,” said Monsieur d’Egmont, with a well satisfied look, “cost André and me more calculation than it cost the great architect Perrault[15] to build the colonnade of the Louvre, the pride of the great monarch; but to our honor, be it said, we achieved it. It is true that one leg presents arms to all comers, but what piece of work is faultless!

“As for you, friend Francœur, you ought to have remembered that a soldier was to sleep in this camp-bed and have left the leg, that you have propped up, still presenting arms.”

André did not much relish this joke, which ruffled his artistic vanity a little, but could not help laughing at his master’s jocular words.

Before retiring for the night “the good gentleman” presented Jules with a little silver candlestick of exquisite workmanship:

“This, my dear boy, is the only thing left me by my creditors of my former wealth; perhaps it was meant to charm my wakeful nights! Good night, my son; at your age one sleeps soundly; I shall now go and say my prayers beneath the vault of this great temple, which always strikes me with awe by announcing the power and grandeur of God, and, when I shall again enter

beneath my roof, you will have long been in a deep sleep."

So saying, he tenderly embraced Jules.

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[15] Claude Perrault (1613-88). French architect, among whose works were the colonnade of the Louvre, the National Observatory at Paris, and some of the decorations of Versailles.—*T.G.M.*

CHAPTER XI

MADAME D'HABERVILLE'S LEGEND

ALL was sad and silent in the d'Haberville manor house; even the servants went about their duties with a downcast look, very different from their usual gaiety when waiting on this good family. Madame d'Haberville restrained her tears so as not to distress her husband, and Blanche hid herself to weep, so as not to grieve her affectionate mother more than was necessary, for in three days' time, the vessel in which the young men had taken their passage was to sail for England. Captain d'Haberville had invited his two friends, the curé and Monsieur d'Egmont, to a family dinner; it was a farewell dinner at which every one tried in vain to be cheerful. The curé, a man with a great deal of tact, thinking it was better to converse on serious subjects than to be perpetually relapsing into a painful silence, thus addressed them:

"Do you know, gentlemen, that the horizon of New France is growing darker every day. Our neighbors, the English, are making formidable preparations to invade Canada, and everything looks like an approaching invasion."

"What next?" said Uncle Raoul.

"Whatever you like, my dear chevalier," answered the curé, "but it is very certain that we have not enough troops to resist our powerful neighbors for long."

"My dear abbé," rejoined Uncle Raoul, "I cannot help thinking that in reading your breviary this morning, you must have stumbled on a chapter of the lamentations of Jeremiah."

"That accusation tells against yourself, for the prophecies are accomplished."

"No matter," exclaimed the chevalier clenching his teeth. "The English! the English take Canada, indeed! Faith, I would undertake to defend Quebec with my crutch. You have forgotten that we have always beaten the English; beaten them, one against five, one against ten, and sometimes one against twenty! The English, indeed!"

"*Concedo*," said the curé, "I will grant everything you wish, and even more if that will please you; but just take notice that each of our victories has weakened us, whilst our enemy, thanks to England's forethought, seems to

gain fresh strength, and that, on the other hand, France is leaving us almost entirely to our own resources."

"Which shows," said Captain d'Haberville, "the confidence which our well-beloved King, Louis XV, reposes in our ability to defend his colony."

"In the meantime," broke in Monsieur d'Egmont, "France sends us so few troops that the colony is becoming weaker every day."

"Let them only give us powder and shot," replied the captain, "and one hundred of my militiamen will do more in our warfare of surprises, ambuscades, and reconnoitring, than five hundred picked men of the French army. I do not speak unadvisedly; there are plenty of proofs of what I say. This, however, does not prevent," he added, "our being in great need of help from the mother country, and that a small portion of those troops, which our beloved monarch is sending to the north of Europe in order to help Austria, would be of infinite value if used for the defense of this colony."

"It would have been very desirable," put in "the good gentleman," "that Louis XV should have left Maria Theresa to contend with Prussia, and have neglected us less."

"It is hardly becoming in a young man like me," said Lochiel, "to take part in your grave discussion; but history will come to my aid in default of experience. Mistrust the English, mistrust a government which has its eyes always open to the interests of its colonies, and therefore to the interest of the British Empire; mistrust a nation which has all the tenacity of the bulldog. If the conquest of Canada be necessary to her, she will never lose sight of it, no matter at what sacrifice; witness my unhappy country."

"Bah! Scotchmen, indeed," exclaimed Uncle Raoul.

Lochiel laughed.

"Gently, my dear uncle, gently," said "the good gentleman," "and to make use of a saying you quote often enough when receiving the rents of the seigniory: 'Render unto Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's.' I have studied the history of Scotland a good deal, and I can assure you that the Scotch are not inferior in valor and patriotism to any nation of the known world, ancient or modern."

"Do you not see," replied the chevalier, "that I only wanted to vex my second nephew Lochiel just the least bit in the world, for, thank God," he added bridling up, "I flatter myself I know something of history. Archy well knows the high esteem in which I hold his fellow-countrymen, and the praise I have always awarded to their fiery courage."

"Yes, my dear uncle, and I thank you for it," said Archy pressing his hand. "But distrust the English; distrust their perseverance; do not forget the *delenda*

est Carthago of the Romans."

"So much the better," said Jules. "I thank them for their perseverance, it will give me an opportunity of returning to Canada with my regiment. What would I not give to make my first campaign against them here, in New France; on this soil which I love, and where dwell all whom I love best on earth! You, too, shall return with me, dear Archy, and in this hemisphere you shall avenge all you have suffered in your own country."

"With all my heart," exclaimed Archy, grasping the handle of his knife, as if he held the terrible claymore of the Camerons of Lochiel in his hand. "I will serve as a volunteer in your company, if I do not get a commission; and the simple soldier will be as proud of your exploits as if he shared in them himself."

The young men grew excited at the thoughts of future deeds of daring; Jules' black eyes flashed fire, and the ancient military ardor of his race suddenly blazed forth in him. The enthusiasm became general, and the cry of "*Vive le Roi!*" burst simultaneously from all. Tears flowed from the eyes of the mother, sister and aunt, in spite of their efforts to restrain them.

The conversation, which for a time had flagged, now became suddenly animated. They laid plans of campaigns, they beat the English by sea and by land, and they raised Canada to the highest pinnacle of glory and prosperity!

"Fill your glasses," exclaimed Captain d'Haberville, pouring himself out a bumper, "for I am going to propose a toast which every one will gladly drink: 'To the success of our arms! and may the glorious *fleur-de-lys* banner float over all the citadels of New France to the end of time!' "

Hardly had they raised their goblets to their lips to do honor to this toast, when a frightful explosion was heard; it was like the bursting of a thunderbolt, or as if some massive body had fallen on the manor house, and had shaken it to its very foundations. They hastily rose from the table and ran out. A brilliant sun illuminated one of the finest of July days. They went up to the roof, but there were no signs of anything having fallen on the building. Every one was awe-struck, and more particularly Monsieur d'Haberville, who exclaimed: "Can it be that this phenomenon foretells the fall of my house!"

Monsieur d'Egmont, the abbé and Uncle Raoul, the man of letters of the family, endeavored to explain the physical causes of this phenomenon, but they did not succeed in dispelling the painful feelings it had given rise to. They went into the drawing-room to take their coffee, without lingering any longer in the dining-room where the goblets were still standing untasted.

Events which afterwards happened only confirmed the d'Haberville family in their superstitious fears. Who can tell, after all, if these warnings, which

were believed in by all antiquity, are not presages of some great danger which is threatening us? If we must reject everything that is incomprehensible to our weak understandings, we should soon become sceptics; sceptics not fit to live, like Molière's Marphorius. Who can tell? A long chapter might be written on "who can tell!"

The weather, which all day had been so fine, began to cloud over about six o'clock in the evening; at seven o'clock rain began to fall in such torrents as to seem to threaten a second deluge; the thunder shook the vault of heaven, and an immense fragment of rock was struck by a thunderbolt, and detaching itself from the hillside, with a crashing sound rolled down into the highway, which, for several days, it completely blocked up.

Captain d'Haberville, who for a long time had fought in company with the Indian allies, had become imbued with many of their superstitions; and hence, when he became a victim of the misfortunes which overwhelmed so many Canadian families in 1759, he did not fail to believe that these disasters had been predicted to him two years previously.

Jules, who at supper was seated between his mother and sister, shared in the depression of the whole family. In order to make a diversion, he asked his mother to relate one of those legends which used to interest him so much when he was a child.

"It will be," he said, "one more memory of the most affectionate of mothers to bear away with me to old Europe."

"I cannot refuse my son anything," said Madame d'Haberville. And she at once commenced the recital of the following legend:

"There was once a mother who had an only child; a little girl as fair as a lily-of-the-valley, and whose beautiful azure eyes seemed to wander from her mother to heaven, and from heaven to her mother till they at last were fixed on heaven. How proud and happy was this tender mother, when in her walks every one complimented her on the beauty of her child, on her cheeks as red as the newly-blown rose, on her hair as fair and soft as threads of spun flax, and falling in graceful curls on her shoulders! Oh yes! this good mother was proud and happy!

"However, one day she lost this child which she idolized; and, like Rachel in the Bible, she refused to be comforted. She passed a part of every day in the cemetery, where she would wind her arms round the little tomb where her child was sleeping. Wild with grief, she would call in her tenderest voice:

" 'Emma! my dear Emma! here is your mother who has come to look for you and carry you to your little cradle, where you will be so warm and snug! Emma! dear Emma, you must be very cold under this damp earth!'

“And she would listen with her ear pressed close to the cold stone, as if she heard an answer. She would tremble at the slightest noise, and would begin to sob and cry when she found that it was caused by the north wind agitating the branches of the weeping-willow. And the passers-by would say:

“ ‘The grass in the cemetery, so incessantly watered by that poor mother’s tears, ought to be always green, but her tears are so bitter that they scorch like the burning noon-day sun after a heavy shower of rain.’

“She would weep seated on the banks of the streamlet where she had so often taken her child to play with the pebbles and shells on the shore; and where she had so often washed its little feet in the pure and limpid waves. And the passers-by would say:

“ ‘The poor mother sheds so many tears that she swells the current of the brook!’

“She would return home to weep in all the rooms in which she had been a witness of her child’s gambols. She would open a trunk in which she carefully preserved all that had belonged to it; her clothes, playthings, the little silver-gilt cup from which she had drunk for the last time. With a convulsive grasp, she would seize one of the little shoes, and passionately kiss it. Her sobs would have melted a heart of stone.

“She would pass a part of the day in the village church praying God to work a miracle, just one only miracle for her: to give her back the child! And the voice of God seemed to reply to her:

“ ‘Like the holy King David, you shall one day go to your child, but she will never return to you.’

“Then she would cry:

“ ‘When, O my God! when shall I have this happiness?’

“She would drag herself to the foot of the statue of the Blessed Virgin, that mother of great sorrows; and she would fancy that the madonna’s eyes would become sad, and that she could read this sad sentence in them:

“ ‘O Daughter of Eve! like me you must suffer with resignation, until the glorious day when you shall be rewarded for all.’

“And the poor mother would exclaim anew:

“ ‘Ah! when, kind Virgin Mother, will that blessed day come?’

“She would water the floor with her tears, and return home lamenting.

“One day when she had been praying more fervently even than usual, and shedding more abundant tears, she fell asleep in the church; most probably exhaustion had induced sleep. The beadle closed the sacred edifice without observing her presence. It might have been nearly midnight when she awoke; a

ray of moonlight, which shone into the sanctuary, showed her that she was still in church. Instead of being frightened at her solitude, she was pleased, if such a feeling could be allied with the suffering state of her poor heart!

" 'I shall now be able to pray,' she said, 'alone with my God! alone with the Blessed Virgin! alone with my own heart.'

"As she was on the point of kneeling down, a dull sound made her raise her head; there was an old man issuing from one of the side doors of the sacristy, and approaching the altar with a lighted taper in his hand. She saw with surprise that he was an old beadle of that village, who had been dead twenty years. The sight of this spectre did not frighten her in the least; every feeling except that of grief seemed dead within her. The phantom mounted the altar steps, lighted the candles, and made the usual preparations to celebrate a *requiem* mass. When he turned round, his eyes seemed fixed and expressionless, like those of a statue. He re-entered the sacristy, but almost immediately re-appeared, and this time he was followed by a venerable priest carrying a chalice and clothed with the priestly garments of a minister of God who is going to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice. His large eyes, unnaturally wide open, were full of sadness, and his movements were like those of an automaton which is moved by hidden mechanism. She recognized, in him, the old curé, who also had been dead for twenty years, and who had baptized her and given her her first communion. Far from being awe-struck at the sight of this denizen of the tomb, far from being frightened at this wonderful occurrence, the poor mother, absorbed in her grief, thought that her old friend, compassionating her state of despair, had broken asunder the fetters of the tomb in order once more to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for her; she only thought that the good pastor, who had so often consoled her, was now coming to her aid in her maternal anguish.

"Everything was solemn, mournful, lugubrious, sad, and silent during the mass which was celebrated and served by death. Even the tapers threw a faint light, like that of an expiring lamp. At the very moment when the bell for the *sanctus* (which gave a hollow sound like that of bones being broken by a grave-digger in an old cemetery) announced that Christ was about to descend on the altar, the sacristy door opened anew, and there issued forth a procession of little children, who, walking two by two, crossed the choir and defiled into the alley on the right of the altar. These children, who appeared to be hardly six years old, had wreaths of immortelles on their heads, and, in their hands, some held baskets of flowers and vases of perfume, and others small gold and silver goblets, containing a transparent liquid. They walked with a light step, and joy shone on their heavenly countenances; one only, a little girl, at the end of the procession, seemed to follow the others with difficulty, loaded as she

was with two immense buckets which she could hardly carry. Her little feet, red with pressure, bent under the burden and her crown of immortelles seemed withered. The poor mother would have held out her arms and uttered an exclamation of joy on recognising her little daughter, had not her arms and tongue felt paralysed. She saw all these children pass near her down the space on the left side of the altar, and she recognized several that Death had recently gathered to his store. When her little girl, bending beneath her burden, passed by in her turn, she remarked that, at every step she took, the water, which filled the two buckets that she was dragging along with so much difficulty, was running over on to the floor. When the child's eyes met her mother's, they had an expression of great sadness, as well as of tenderness mixed with reproach. The poor woman made an effort to twine her arms around her, but lost consciousness. When she came to herself all had vanished.

"In a monastery, about a league from the village, there lived a hermit, of great renown for his sanctity. This saintly old man never left his cell except to listen to a sinner's painful confession or to succor the afflicted. To the former he would say:

" 'I know man's corrupt nature, do not be discouraged; come to me confidently and boldly every time that you fall again into sin; you will every time find my arms open to receive you and to raise you up again.'

"To the latter he would say:

" 'If I were to relate my life to you, you would be astonished at finding in me one who has been the plaything of the most unbridled passions, and my misfortunes would make you shed torrents of tears.'

"The poor mother threw herself at the feet of this holy hermit and weeping related the marvels she had witnessed. The compassionate old man, who thoroughly understood human nature, saw a favorable opportunity of putting an end to this grief which surpassed all the maternal sorrow he had ever met with in his long experience.

" 'My daughter, my dear daughter,' said he, 'our over-excited imagination often makes us the sport of illusions, which must generally be placed in the category of dreams, but the Church teaches us also that wonderful occurrences, similar to the one you have related to me, may really take place. It is not for us weak and ignorant mortals to assign any limits to God's power! It is not for us to scrutinize the decrees of Him, who took worlds in His powerful hands, and launched them into infinite space. I do not therefore doubt the vision which you saw, and holding it for true will explain it to you. The priest, who left his grave to say a *requiem* mass, has doubtless obtained God's permission to repair some omission in the exercise of his holy ministry; and the beadle most probably had been the cause of it, through forgetfulness or negligence. The

procession of young children, crowned with immortelles, signifies those who have died without having forfeited baptismal grace. Those who carried baskets of flowers, or vases in which exquisite perfumes were burning, are those whom their mothers, being resigned to the decrees of Providence, have offered to God, if not joyfully, which would not be natural, at least with resignation, knowing that their children were exchanging a land of trials, for that heavenly land, where, near the throne of their Creator, they will sing His praises to all eternity. In the gold and silver goblets were the tears which nature, jealous of her rights, had forced from those mothers, who, even while making the sacrifice of their children's lives, had exclaimed with the holy Job: The Lord hath given! and the Lord hath taken away! Blessed be the name of the Lord!'

"The poor kneeling mother, tearfully drank in every word which fell from the lips of the holy man. Like Martha at the feet of Christ saying: 'Lord, hadst thou been here, my brother had not died, but now also I know that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee;' she kept on repeating with undoubting faith: 'My father, if you had been near me, my daughter would not have died, but I know that even now, God will grant you all that you ask of Him.'

"The good old man collected his thoughts a moment, and prayed to God to direct him. He had to pronounce a sentence of life or death on this poor mother, who seemed so inconsolable. He had to deal a heavy blow, a blow which would bring her back a more reasonable state of mind, or which would entirely crush that breaking heart. He took the poor creature's hands in his own, which were dry and shrivelled with age, and tenderly pressing them he said in his softest voice: 'Then you dearly loved the child you have lost?'

" 'Did I love her, my father! O God! what a question!'

"And, as if out of her senses, she writhed in agony at the old man's feet. Then suddenly raising herself she laid hold of his soutane and exclaimed in a broken voice:

" 'My father! you are a saint! my child! give me back my child! my little Emma.'

" 'Ah yes!' said the monk, 'you loved your child dearly; you would have done much to have spared her the very slightest suffering?'

" 'Anything, anything, my father,' exclaimed the poor woman. 'I would have rolled in live coals to have saved her from the least burn!'

" 'I believe you,' said the monk, 'and of course you love her still?'

" 'Do I love her still!' said the mother springing up as if a serpent had stung her to the heart's core. 'Do I love her still! It is evident that you know nothing of maternal love, since you think that even death itself can annihilate

it!’

“And trembling in every fibre she shed fresh torrents of tears.

“ ‘Go away, woman,’ said the old man in a tone of voice which he strove to render stern. ‘Go hence, you who come here to impose on me; go hence, for you lie to God and to his minister. You have seen your little daughter, bending under the burden of your tears, which she has collected drop by drop, and yet you tell me that you love her! She is near you at this moment, pursuing her painful task; and yet you tell me that you love her! Go away, for you lie to God and to his minister!’

“The poor woman awoke from an oppressive dream; she saw that her grief had been insane, and she asked pardon of God for it.

“ ‘Go in peace,’ said the hermit, ‘pray for resignation, and peace will again take possession of your soul.’

“A few days afterwards, she told the monk that her little daughter had appeared to her in a dream, was radiant with happiness, and carrying a basket of flowers; she had thanked her for having ceased to shed tears, as she would have been condemned to have gathered them all up. This excellent woman, who was also rich, consecrated the rest of her days to works of charity. She lavished the most affectionate care on the children of the poor, and adopted several of them. When she died, the following epitaph was graven on her tombstone: ‘Here lies the orphans’ mother.’ ”

Whether it were from the state of mind arising from the circumstances in which the family found themselves, or whether it were that the legend itself was tinctured with melancholy, every one was affected by it, and some even to tears. Jules kissed his mother, and, after thanking her, hurried from the room to hide his emotion.

“My God,” he said, “preserve my life, for if anything happened to me, my poor mother would perhaps be as inconsolable as the mother in this affecting legend, which she has just related to us.”

A few days afterwards, Jules and Lochiel were sailing on the ocean, and in two months time they arrived in France, after a prosperous voyage.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONFLAGRATION ON THE SOUTH SHORE

THE trees were clothed with their ordinary attire after the departure of the hyperborean winter; the woods and the meadows were enamelled with flowers of bright and variegated colors, and the birds with their gay songs were saluting the arrival of the spring of the year 1759. All nature was smiling, man alone appeared sad and discouraged; and the song of the husbandmen returning home at dusk was no longer to be heard, for the greater part of the land lay fallow for want of hands to cultivate it. A dark veil rested on all New France, for the mother country, like a true stepmother, had abandoned her Canadian children. Left to their own resources, the government had called all the able-bodied men under arms to defend the colony, which was threatened with a formidable invasion.

The English had made immense preparations, and their fleet, consisting of twenty ships of the line, ten frigates, and eighteen smaller vessels, besides a good many others, and having on board eighteen thousand men, was sailing up the St. Lawrence under the command of General Wolfe, whilst two land forces still more numerous, were to effect a junction with them under the very walls of the capital of New France.

All the able-bodied population of Canada had nobly responded to the appeal of their country in the hour of danger; only women and children, the aged and infirm were left at home. Will the memory of their past exploits, their glorious victory at Carillon, the previous year, enable the Canadians to withstand an army as numerous as the whole population of New France, including old men, women and children? Will their well-proved courage enable them, with such unequal force, to repulse an enemy desperately determined on taking possession of their colony?

For a long time, you have not been appreciated, my old Canadian brothers, you have been unworthily calumniated. Honor to those who have vindicated your fame! Honor, a hundred times honor, to our countryman M. Garneau, who has torn asunder the veil which had hidden your great deeds! Shame to us, who instead of ransacking the old chronicles, which are so glorious to our race, have contented ourselves with bowing our heads under the humiliating reproach of being a conquered people, which was thrown in our face at every turn! Shame to us, who were almost ashamed of being Canadians! We would

have scorned the idea of being ignorant of the history of the Assyrians, Medes and Persians, and yet formerly the history of our own country was a dead letter to us.

For some years there has been a glorious reaction; for some years, every one has lent a helping hand to the work of restoration; and Canada may exclaim with Francis I: “All is lost, except honor.” Still I am far from believing that all is lost; on the contrary the surrender of Canada has been perhaps a great benefit to us; the revolution of ’93, with all its accompanying horrors, weighed lightly on this happy colony which was then under the protection of the British flag. We have gathered fresh laurels in fighting under England’s glorious ensign, and twice has the colony been saved by the valour of her new subjects. In the senate, at the bar, on the field of battle, everywhere in the sphere of action, the Canadian has known how to prove himself inferior to no race. For a century you have struggled, my countrymen, to maintain your nationality, and, thanks to your perseverance, it is still intact; but perhaps the future has yet in store for you another century of struggles and combats in defense of it! Courage and union my fellow-countrymen!

Two detachments of the English army had landed at Rivière Ouelle, at the beginning of June, 1759. Some habitants of that parish, being in ambush on the skirts of the wood, had received them with a brisk discharge of musketry, and had killed several men. The officer in command, exasperated at this check, determined to take signal vengeance. The two detachments had ascended the river, and towards evening had encamped near a stream which runs into Ste. Anne’s creek to the south-east of the present college. The next morning the officer in command, being ready to order the march of one of the companies, called the lieutenant and said to him:

“You are to set fire to all the dwellings of these dogs of Frenchmen that you come across on your way. I shall follow you at a short distance.”

“But,” said the young officer, who was a Scotchman, “must the dwellings of those who offer no resistance be also fired? They say that there are only old men, women and children left in these dwellings.”

“It seems to me, sir,” replied Major Montgomery,[16] “that my orders are clear and precise; you are to set on fire all the dwellings of these dogs of Frenchmen that you come across on your way. But I was forgetting your predilection for your enemies!”

The young man bit his lips till the blood started, and marched his men away. In this young man, the reader will, of course, have recognized Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, who, having made his peace with the British government, had returned to his own country and obtained a lieutenancy in a regiment recruited by himself amongst his clan of highlanders. Archy went away

groaning in spirit, and letting out all the Gaelic, English, and French oaths that his memory could furnish him with. At the first house where he stopped, a young woman threw herself, in tears, at his feet, saying to him: “Mr. Englishman, do not kill my poor old father; do not shorten his days, he has not long to live.”

A little boy of eleven or twelve years old threw his arms round him, crying out:

“Mr. Englishman, do not kill grand-papa![17] If you only knew how good he is!”

“Do not be afraid,” said Archy, entering the house, “my orders are not to kill women, old men and children. They imagined, I suppose,” he added bitterly, “that I should not meet with one on my way.”

A decrepit old man, stretched on a bed of sickness, said to him:

“I have been a soldier all my life, sir; I do not fear death, which I have seen face to face, but for God’s sake spare my daughter and her child!”

“No harm shall be done them,” said Archy with tears in his eyes, “but if you are a soldier you will know that a soldier must obey orders; I am ordered to burn down all the buildings on my road, and I must obey. Where can you be moved, my father? Now listen,” he added in a whisper, as if afraid of being heard by the men outside. “Listen, your grandson seems quick and intelligent; if he can find a horse, let him gallop off and warn your countrymen that I have orders to burn everything on my way; perhaps they will have time to save their most valuable effects.”

“You are a good and brave young man!” exclaimed the old man. “If you were a Catholic, I would give you my blessing; anyway thank you, a hundred time thank you!”

“I am a Catholic,” said Lochiel.

The old man with difficulty raised himself on his bed, lifted his eyes towards Heaven, stretched out his two hands towards Archy, who bent down his head, and said:

“May God bless you for this act of humanity! In your day of great affliction, when you implore the divine mercy, may God have in remembrance the mercy you showed your enemies, and may He hear your prayer! In the day of trial, say to Him with confidence: I have been blessed by a dying old man, my enemy!”

The soldiers hastily moved the old man and his bed to the entrance of an adjacent wood; and Lochiel, when he resumed his line of march, had the satisfaction of seeing a little boy, mounted on a young and spirited horse, flying over the road before him. He breathed more freely.

The work of destruction progressed; but Archy, from time to time, had the consolation, on arriving at any eminence which overlooked some extent of country, of seeing the women, old men and children taking refuge in the adjoining woods. Even though melted to tears by their misfortunes, he inwardly rejoiced at having done all in his power to soften the losses of these unfortunate people.

All the dwellings and out-buildings of a part of Rivière Ouelle, of the parishes of Ste. Anne and St. Roch by the side of the St. Lawrence, already presented only a spectacle of smoking ruins, and the order had not yet arrived to stay this devilish work of destruction. On the contrary, Lochiel from time to time saw his superior officer's division, which was following at a short distance, halt suddenly on some raised ground, doubtless to enable its commanding officer to enjoy witnessing the fruits of his barbarous order. Sometimes he almost thought he could hear his shouts of ferocious laughter.

The first house in St. Jean-Port-Joli was that of a rich habitant, a sergeant in Captain d'Haberville's company, where Lochiel had frequently lunched with his friend Jules and his sister during their holidays. He sadly recalled the eager gladness of the good people, who were made so happy by these visits. On their arrival the mother and daughters of the Dupont family would run to the dairy, the garden, the stable, to fetch the eggs, the butter, the cream, the parsley and chervil, to make pancakes and savory omelets; the father and sons would hasten to unharness the horses, lead them to the stable and give them a good feed of oats. While the mother was preparing a meal, the young people would smarten themselves up a little. They would get up an impromptu ball, and dance about to the sound of a violin, which had oftener three strings than four and which squeaked under the old sergeant's bow. Jules, in spite of his sister's remonstrances, would upset everything in the house, put every one out, take the frying-pan out of Mother Dupont's hands, carry her in his arms to make her dance a minuet, notwithstanding the old lady's attempts to get away from him, on account of her not being suitably dressed; and these good people, laughing heartily, would never find that they made too much noise. Lochiel thought over all this in the bitterness of his soul, and a cold perspiration broke out all over him, when he gave the order to set fire to this dwelling which in happier times had been so hospitable.

Almost the whole of the edifices in the first concession of St. Jean-Port-Joli parish were reduced to ashes, and yet the order to desist had not arrived. At sunset having reached the little river Port-Joli, a few acres only from the d'Haberville domain, Lochiel halted his men. He ascended the hill of the same name as the river, and there, in sight of the manor and its large out-buildings, he waited; waited, like a criminal on the scaffold, who hopes even to the very

last moment that a messenger of pity may arrive bearing a reprieve. With his heart filled with sad remembrances, he gazed on that dwelling where for ten years he had been welcomed as a son; where he, a proscribed and exiled orphan, had found a new home. He gazed mournfully on the still and silent village which he had seen so full of life and animation before his departure for Europe. Some pigeons, hovering over the buildings on which they occasionally alighted, appeared to be the only living creatures on this fine domain. He sadly repeated with the Scotch poet, Ossian: 'Selma, thy halls are silent. There is no sound in the woods of Morven. The wave tumbles alone on the coast. The silent beam of the sun is on the field.'

"Ah! yes! my friends," exclaimed Lochiel in the language he loved, "our rooms are now, alas! silent and deserted! No voice is now heard from this hillside, which used formerly to echo back such joyous tones. The only sound now to be heard is that of the wave breaking on the sandy shore! But one pale ray of the setting sun illumines your meadow, formerly so smiling!

"What must be done, my God! if this ferocious animal's rage is not satiated? Ought I to refuse to obey? But then I should be dishonored! A soldier, more especially in the time of war, cannot refuse to execute the orders of his superior officer, without being forever branded with disgrace. This brutal fool would have the right to order me to be shot instantly, and the shield of Cameron of Lochiel would be forever sullied! For who would undertake to vindicate the memory of a young soldier who had preferred a culprit's death to the stain of ingratitude? On the contrary, that which, with me, would have been only a feeling of gratitude, would be imputed to me as treason by this man, who pursues me with such diabolical hatred!"

Major Montgomery's harsh voice put an end to the monologue.

"What are you doing here?" he said to him.

"I have halted my soldiers on the shore of the river," answered Archy, "and I was intending even to pass the night there, after to-day's long march."

"It is not yet late," replied the major. "You know the plan of the country better than I do, and you can easily find some other place to bivouac in, than the spot I have just chosen for myself."

"I will march on my men," said Archy, "there is another river about a mile further where we can pass the night."

"That is well," replied Montgomery in an insolent tone of voice, "and as there will be but a few dwellings to burn in that distance, your troop will soon be able to rest after their fatigues."

"That is true," said Lochiel, "for there are but five houses; but, two of them, that group of buildings which you see and a mill on the river where I

must bivouac, belong to the Seigneur d'Haberville, to the man who during my exile received me and treated me as his own son. In God's name! Major Montgomery, do you yourself give the order for destroying them."

"I could never have believed," answered the major, "that one of his Britannic Majesty's officers would have dared to speak of his treason towards his sovereign."

"You forget, sir," said Archy, with difficulty restraining himself, "that I was then a child. But once more, I entreat you, in the name of all you hold dearest in this world, to give the order yourself and not oblige me to be wanting in both honor and gratitude by applying the incendiary torch to the property of those who showered every kindness on me in my days of misfortune."

"I understand," said the major, sneeringly, "you would keep a door open, by means of which to reinstate yourself in your friends' good graces, when occasion offers."

At this cruel taunt, Archy, beside himself, was for one moment tempted to draw his claymore and say to him:

"If you are not as cowardly as you are insolent, defend yourself, Major Montgomery!"

Fortunately he remembered himself in time; instead of his hand grasping his sword, it wandered instinctively to his breast which he tore with his nails in his rage. Then he remembered the words of the witch of the domain:

"Keep your pity for yourself, Archibald Lochiel, when, forced to execute a barbarous order, you shall tear with your nails that breast, which, nevertheless, covers a noble and generous heart!"

"That woman must indeed have been inspired by the evil one," he thought to himself, "when she made such a prediction to a Cameron of Lochiel."

Montgomery, for a moment, looked with savage delight at this combat of conflicting passions which wrung the young man's very soul, enjoying this paroxysm of anguish; then flattering himself that he would refuse to obey, he turned his back on him. Lochiel, penetrating his perfidious design, made haste to rejoin his company, and half an hour afterwards the whole hamlet of Haberville was a prey to the flames.

Archy then stopped on the little hill, near that spring where, in happier times, he had so often slaked his thirst with his friends; from there his lynx eyes perceived Montgomery, who had returned to the spot where he had given his orders, and now with folded arms seemed to gloat over the terrible spectacle. Then, foaming with rage at the sight of his enemy, he cried out:

"You have a good memory, Montgomery. You have not forgotten the

blows which my ancestor gave your grandfather with the flat of his sword in one of the Edinburgh taverns; but I also have a tenacious memory, I shall not always wear this uniform, which ties my hands, and sooner or later I will repeat the dose on your shoulders, for you will be too cowardly to meet me face to face; so barbarous a man as you, must be a stranger to every noble sentiment, even to that of courage, which man shares in common with the animals who are deprived of reason! May you and your whole race be accursed! May you, even more unfortunate than those you have deprived of shelter, have, when you die, not one stone on which to lay your head! May all the furies in hell . . .”

But seeing that he was but venting impotent rage, he went moaning away.

The mill on the Trois-Saumons river was soon only a heap of ashes; and the burning of several houses which d’Haberville owned in Quebec, which had happened during the siege of the capital, completed his ruin.

Lochiel, after taking the usual precautions for the safety of his company, bent his steps towards his friends’ former manor house, which now only presented a spectacle of desolation. By taking a path through the woods, with which he was acquainted, he was but a few minutes in reaching it. There, seated on the summit of the hill, he for a long time gazed silently in the deepest anguish on the smoking ruins which lay at his feet. It was about nine o’clock; the night was dark, and but few stars were visible in the firmament. Still, he thought he could distinguish some living creature wandering about the ruins; it proved to be Niger, who, a few minutes afterwards, raised his head towards the top of the hill, and gave three mournful howls, thus, in his fashion, weeping over the misfortunes of the family who had fed him. Lochiel thought that these plaintive cries were meant for him, and that this faithful animal was reproaching him for his ingratitude to his old friends, and he wept bitterly.

“See,” said he, “the fruits of what is called the code of honor amongst civilized nations! Are they also the fruits of those precepts which the Gospel teaches such as profess the Christian religion? That religion which is all love and pity, even towards our enemies! If I had taken part in some expedition, commanded by one of the chiefs of those aborigines whom we treat as barbarians, and if I had said to him: ‘Spare this house, for it belongs to my friends; I was a wanderer and a fugitive and they took me into their family, where I found a father and a brother!’ The Indian chief would have answered me: ‘Certainly, spare your friends, it is only the serpent which bites those who have warmed it by their fire.

“I have always lived,” Lochiel went on, “in the hopes of one day rejoining my Canadian friends and embracing the family I have loved so well, and that now, I love, if possible, more than ever. A reconciliation even, would not have

been necessary, for it was but natural that I should return to my country, gather together the wreck of my ancestral fortune, reduced to a mere nothing by the confiscations of the British government. There was nothing for me but the army, as it offered the only career worthy of a Cameron of Lochiel. I repossessed myself of my gallant father's claymore, which one of my friends had redeemed from among spoils taken by the English on the unhappy field of Culloden. With this weapon, which has never failed a man of my race, I dreamed of a glorious career; I was much distressed when I learnt that my regiment was to join the expedition against New France, but a soldier cannot, honorably, resign in war time; my friends would understand this! Now, there is no further hope for the ungrateful wretch who has burnt his benefactor's property! Jules d'Haberville, he whom I formerly called my brother, his good and pious mother, who was my mother also by adoption, that beautiful and gentle young girl, whom I called my sister to hide a tenderer feeling which the poor orphan's gratitude obliged him to hide in his heart, all these good friends perhaps would listen indulgently to my vindication and end by pardoning me. But Captain d'Haberville! Captain d'Haberville who loves with all the intensity of his soul, but whose hatred is implacable! This man who has never pardoned a real, or a supposed injury, will he ever allow his family to pronounce my name, except to curse it?

"But I have been stupid and cowardly," proceeded Lochiel, gnashing his teeth. "I ought to have declared before my soldiers, why I refused to obey; and even if Montgomery had ordered me to be shot instantly, men would have been found to approve my disobedience and vindicate my honor. I have been stupid and cowardly! For supposing the major, instead of ordering me to be shot, had brought me before a court-martial, they would have appreciated my motives even while pronouncing the sentence of my death. I should have been eloquent in defence of my honor; I should have been eloquent in defence of the noblest sentiment in man's heart, gratitude. Oh! my friends, may you be witnesses of my remorse! I seem to have a legion of vipers gnawing my breast! Coward! a thousand times a coward!"

A voice near him repeated: "Coward! a thousand times a coward!" At first he thought it was the echo from the hillside which was repeating his words on this night when all nature was so calm and tranquil, whilst a storm of passion was raging in his heart. He raised his head and perceived, at a few feet's distance from him, the witch of the domain standing upright on the highest point of rock which projected over the summit of the hill. She clasped her hands and stretching them towards the ruins at her feet, exclaimed in a wailing voice: "Woe! woe! woe!" She then, with lightning-like rapidity, descended the narrow and dangerous path which led to the foot of the promontory, and

wandered among the ruins, crying out: “Desolation! desolation! desolation!” Then, raising her arm threateningly towards the summit of the bluff, she exclaimed: “Woe! woe to you, Archibald Lochiel!”

The old dog uttered a plaintive and prolonged cry, and then all was again silent.

Just as Archy, painfully impressed by this sinister sight and the words, was bowing his head on his breast, four powerful men threw themselves on him, stretched him on the ground and tied his hands. They were four Indians of the Abenaquis tribe, who, keeping under cover of the outer edge of the wood, had been spying all the movements of the English troops from the time they had landed at Rivière Ouelle. Archy, relying on his herculean strength, made desperate efforts to break his bonds. The strong elk-skin thong, which was twisted three times round his wrists, gave several times, as if going to break, but still resisted his powerful efforts. Lochiel seeing this, resigned himself to his fate, and offering no further resistance, followed his enemies, who, plunging into the forest, took a southerly direction. His powerful Scottish legs saved him much ill-treatment.

Very painful and bitter were the captive’s reflections during this rapid march through the forest, that forest whose every path he knew, and where, free and light as the mountain deer, he had so often hunted with his brother d’Haberville. Without heeding the savage joy of the Indians, whose eyes shone like carbuncles on seeing him a prey to despair, he exclaimed:

“You have gained the victory, Montgomery! my curses are falling on my own head! You will say that I have deserted to the enemy! You will loudly proclaim me a traitor, whom you have long suspected! You have won the victory, for appearances will be against me! Your joy will be great, for I shall have lost everything, even honor!”

And like Job he cried:

“Let the day perish, wherein I was born!”

After two hour’s rapid walking they arrived at the foot of the mountain, opposite the cutting leading to the Trois-Saumons lake, which made Archy suppose that a detachment of Indians was encamped there. When they arrived on the shores of the lake, one of those who held the prisoner uttered three times the loon’s cry; and each of the seven mountains echoed the shrill and piercing cry of the proud swan of Lower Canada three times, each time fainter and fainter.

In spite of the uncertain starlight, Lochiel would not have been able to restrain a gesture of surprise mingled with admiration, at the sight of that beautiful sheet of limpid water, bosomed in the mountains and dotted with

islets crowned with evergreen firs, had his heart been susceptible of any other emotion than that of sadness. It was to this lake, that, for nearly ten years, he had made frequent fishing and hunting excursions with his friends. It was across this very lake, at its widest part, that he had swum to prove his skill and endurance. But during that sad night everything appeared to him to be as dead in nature as in his own sad heart.

A bark canoe came off from one of the islets, rowed by a man wearing the costume of the aborigines, with the exception of having a fox-skin cap on his head; the Indians wore on their heads only the feathers with which they adorned them. The new-comer conversed some little time with the four Indians. It seemed to Archy that they were giving him some account of their expedition, but as they made use of the Abenaquis dialect, he could not understand what they said.

Two of the Indians went off in a southeasterly direction, taking a path a little higher up than the lake. Archy was then placed in the canoe and taken to the island from which the man with the fox-skin cap had come.

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[16] Captain Alexander Montgomery; not General Richard Montgomery, killed in Quebec in 1775, with whom he has often been confused. At this time Richard Montgomery was with the British Army at Lake Champlain. —*T.G.M.*

[17] See Appendix B.

CHAPTER XIII

A NIGHT WITH THE INDIANS

LOCHIEL after having cursed his enemy, and lamented the day of his birth, returned to a more Christian frame of mind, when he found himself tied firmly to a tree, and all hope died within him. He knew that the Indians hardly ever spared their captives' lives, and that a slow and cruel death was reserved for him. Regaining his natural strength of mind, he did not even think of asking God to deliver him, but, in the bitterness of his soul, recalling all his offences towards his Creator, he prayed Him to accept the sacrifice of his life as an atonement for his sins. He prayed God to give him the necessary strength and courage so that he might suffer patiently the cruel death which awaited him, and humbled himself before God. "After all," thought he, "what will the judgment of men signify to me when the dream of life is past! Does not my religion teach me that all is but vanity!" And he bent with resignation beneath God's hand.

The three warriors, seated in a circle at a distance of about twelve feet from Lochiel, were smoking their pipes in silence. Indians are not naturally very communicative, and besides they look upon frivolous conversation as unworthy of sensible men and only fit for women and children. However, one of them, named Talamousse, addressing the man of the island said to him:

"Is my brother going to wait here long for the Portage warriors?"

"Three days," he replied, showing three fingers. "The Grand-Loutre (Great Otter) and Talamousse can start to-morrow with the prisoner, the Frenchman will rejoin them at the large encampment of Captain Launière."

"That is well," said Grand-Loutre, stretching out his hand toward the south. "We will take the prisoner with us to the encampment of Petit-Marigotte, where we will wait three days for my brother and the Portage warriors, and then proceed to the encampment of Captain Launière."

Lochiel for the first time perceived that the voice of the man with the fox-skin cap had a different sound from that of the other two, though he spoke their language with great facility. Until then, he had borne the tortures of a burning thirst without uttering a single word; and the sight of the beautiful and limpid waters of the lake, which lay at his feet, was like the punishment of Tantalus. Under the impression that this man might be a Frenchman, he ventured to say:

“If there is a Christian among you, will he for the love of God give me something to drink.”

“What does the dog want?” said Grand-Loutre to his companion.

The man who had been addressed was some time in replying. His whole body trembled, a livid pallor spread over his countenance, a cold sweat bathed his forehead, but recovering his self-possession by a great effort, he answered in his usual voice:

“The prisoner asks for something to drink.”

“Tell the dog of an Englishman,” said Talamousse, “that he will be burnt to-morrow, and that if he is very thirsty we will give him some boiling water to refresh him.”

“I will tell him,” replied the Canadian, “but, in the meantime, will not my brothers allow me to take some water to their prisoner?”

“My brother may do as he pleases,” said Talamousse, “the pale-faces have hearts as tender as a young girl’s.”

The Canadian bent a piece of birch-bark into a conical form, and offered it full of cold water to the prisoner, saying to him:

“Who are you, sir? In God’s name, who are you! whose voice so resembles that of a man who is very dear to me?”

“Archibald Cameron of Lochiel,” said the prisoner, “formerly the friend of your countrymen, but now their enemy, and one who well deserves the fate he will meet with.”

“Monsieur Archy,” said Dumais, for it was he, “even if you had killed my brother, and even if I should be obliged to split open the skulls of these two *Canaouas*[18] with my tomahawk, you shall be free in an hour’s time. I will first try persuasion before having resort to harsher measures. Now, silence!”

Dumais returned to his place near the Indians, and after a somewhat prolonged silence remarked:

“The prisoner thanks the red-skins for making him suffer a man’s death, he says that the pale-face’s death-song shall be that of warrior.”

“*Houa!*” said Grand-Loutre, “the Englishman will do as the owl does, who moans when she sees the fires of our wigwams at night.”

And he went on smoking, looking scornfully at Lochiel.

“The Englishman,” said Talamousse, “talks like a man, now that he is far from the stake; the Englishman is a coward who could not bear thirst; the Englishman, weeping, asked his enemies to give him something to drink, just as little children ask their mothers.”

And he made a gesture like spitting on him.

Dumais opened a bag, and bringing out some provisions, offered some to the two Indians, who refused to eat. Then disappearing into the wood, he returned with a bottle of brandy, which he had put in hiding under the roots of a spruce tree, and, taking a drink of it, commenced to eat. One of the savages devoured the contents of the bottle with his eyes.

"Talamousse is not hungry, my brother," said he, "but he is thirsty; he has made a long march to-day and is tired; fire-water refreshes the legs."

Dumais passed the bottle to him; the Indian laid hold of it with a hand trembling with joy, drank eagerly, and gave him back the bottle after having swallowed a good half-pint at a draught. His eyes lost their brilliancy and became dull, and the stupification of drunkenness began to appear in his countenance.

"That is good," said the Indian as he gave the bottle back.

"Dumais does not offer any to his brother Grand-Loutre," said the Canadian. "He knows he never drinks it."

"The Great Spirit loves Grand-Loutre," said he. "He made him vomit the only mouthful of fire-water he ever drank; the Great Spirit loves Grand-Loutre. He made him so ill that he thought he would have visited the land of spirits. Grand-Loutre thanks him, fire-water takes a man's senses away."

"Fire-water is good," said Talamousse, after a moment's silence, stretching out his hand towards the bottle, which Dumais removed from him: "Give, give, my brother, I pray you, another drink, I pray you."

"No," said Dumais, "not now—presently."

And he put the bottle into his bag.

"The Great Spirit loves the Canadian also," answered Dumais after a pause, "he visited him last night during his sleep."

"What did he say to my brother?" asked the Indians.

"The Great Spirit told him to buy the prisoner," said Dumais.

"My brother lies like a Frenchman," exclaimed Grand-Loutre. "He lies like all the pale-faces; the red-skins do not lie."

"The French never lie when they speak of the Great Spirit," said the Canadian.

And drawing out his bottle from the bag, he swallowed a small mouthful of brandy.

"Give, give, my brother," said Talamousse, stretching out his hand towards the bottle, "I pray you, my brother!"

"If Talamousse will sell me his share of the prisoner," said Dumais, "the Frenchman will give him another draught."

“Give me all the fire-water,” answered Talamousse, “and take my share of the dog of an Englishman.”

“No,” said Dumais, “one drink, and no more.”

And he pretended to put the bottle away.

“Then give it, and take my share,” said the Indian.

He seized the bottle with both hands, swallowed another half-pint of the precious liquor, and fell asleep on the grass, completely intoxicated.

“There goes one,” thought Dumais.

The Grand-Loutre looked at what was going on with distrust, but nevertheless went on smoking stoically.

“Will my brother now sell me his share of the prisoner?” said Dumais.

“What do you want to do with him?” replied the Indian.

“Sell him to Captain d’Haberville, who will hang him for having burnt his house and his mill.”

“Burning hurts more; d’Haberville will drink vengeance with as much pleasure as Talamousse drank his fire-water.”

“My brother is wrong, the prisoner would endure the torments of fire like a warrior, but he would cry like a woman if you threatened him with the rope; Captain d’Haberville knows that well.”

“My brother lies again,” said Grand-Loutre, “all the English we have burnt, wept like cowards, and not one of them sang his death-song like a man. They would have thanked us to have hung them; it is only the Indian warrior who prefers the stake to the shame of being hung like a dog.”[19]

“Let my brother listen,” said Dumais, “and let him pay attention to the words of the pale-face. The prisoner is not English but Scotch, and the Scotch are the English Indians. Let my brother look at the prisoner’s dress, and he will see it is very like that of the Indian warrior.”

“That is true,” said Grand-Loutre. “He is not smothered in his clothes like the English soldiers, and the soldiers of the Great Ononthio,[20] who lives on the other side of the Great Lake; but what has that to do with it?”

“It has this to do with it,” replied the Canadian, “that a Scotch warrior prefers being burnt to being hung. Like the red-skins of Canada, he thinks that it is only dogs who ought to be hung, and that if he visited the land of spirits with a rope round his neck, the warriors of his tribe would refuse to hunt with him.”

“My brother lies again,” said the Indian, shaking his head doubtingly. “The Scotch Indians are still pale-faces, and cannot have the courage to suffer like the red-skins.”

And he went on smoking pensively.

“Let my brother lend ear to my words,” replied Dumais, “and he will see that I speak the truth.”

“Speak, your brother listens.”

“The English and the Scotch,” continued the Canadian, “inhabit a large island on the other side of the Great Lake; the English live in the plains, the Scotch in the mountains. The English are as numerous as the grains of sand of this lake, and the Scotch as the grains of sand of the islet we are now on; nevertheless, they have made war against each other for as many moons as there are leaves on this large maple tree. The English are rich, the Scotch are poor; when the Scotch beat the English, they returned to their mountains loaded with valuable booty; when the English beat the Scotch, they found nothing in return among the mountains; it was all gain on one side, and nothing on the other.”

“If the English were so numerous,” said Grand-Loutre, “why did they not pursue them into their mountains and exterminate them all? My brother says that they all live on the same island, they could not then have escaped them?”

“*Houa!*” cried Dumais, in Indian fashion, “my brother will see that that was impossible, if he will listen to me.

“The Scotch Indians inhabit mountains which are so high, so high,” said Dumais, pointing to the sky, “that an army of young Englishmen, who, once upon a time, had pursued them, had white beards when they descended.”

“The French are always foolish,” said the Indian, “they only try to make people laugh; they will soon put on *matchicotis* (petticoats) and go and sit with our squaws to amuse them with their tales; they are never serious like men.”

“My brother should see,” replied Dumais, “that it is to make him understand how high the Scotch mountains are.”

“Let my brother speak; Grand-Loutre listens and understands,” said the Indian, who was accustomed to this figurative style.

“The Scotch have legs as strong as the elk, and are as agile as deer,” Dumais went on.

“Your brother believes you,” interrupted the Indian, “if they are all like the prisoner, who, in spite of his bonds, was always on my heels when we were bringing him here; he has legs like an Indian.”

“The English,” replied the Canadian, “are large and robust, but they have soft legs and big stomachs; so that, although they were often victorious, when they came to pursue their enemies into their high mountains, these last, being so much more agile, always got away from them, prepared ambushes, and killed a good many of them; so much so, that the English generally gave over

pursuing them in places where they would only get hard blows, and where they would die of hunger. Still the war went on. The English made many prisoners; they burnt some, but at the stake these last always sang their death-song, insulting their enemies and telling them that they had drunk out of their grandfathers' skulls, and that they did not know how to torture warriors."

"*Houa!*" exclaimed Grand-Loutre, "these Scotchmen are men!"

"The Scotch had for a chief," the Canadian went on, "a brave warrior named Wallace; when he went to war, the ground trembled under his feet; he was as tall as this fir-tree, and he was himself worth a whole army. He was betrayed by a miserable wretch, sold for money, made prisoner, and condemned to be hung. At this news, there was a cry of rage and grief through all the Scotch mountains; the warriors all painted their faces black; they held a council, and ten great chiefs, bearing the calumet of peace, set out for England. They lead them into a great wigwam; they lighted the fire of council and smoked for a long time in silence; a great chief then spoke and said: 'My brothers, the earth has drunk enough of the blood of the warriors of two brave nations, we wish to bury the hatchet; give us back Wallace and we will stay as hostages in his place; you shall kill us if he lifts a tomahawk against you again!' And he offered the calumet to the English Ononthio, who waved it from him with his hand, saying: 'Before the sun shall have set three times, Wallace will be hung!'

" 'Listen, my brother,' said the great Scotch chief, 'if Wallace must die, let him die a warrior's death; it is only dogs that are hung,' and anew he offered the calumet, which Ononthio rejected. The deputed chiefs took council together, and their head-chief spoke once more: 'Let my brother listen to my last words, and let his heart rejoice, let him have eleven stakes prepared, to burn Wallace and his ten warriors, who will be proud to share his fate; they will thank their brother for his clemency.' And again he offered the calumet of peace, which Ononthio again refused."

"*Houa!*" said Grand-Loutre, "those were nevertheless fine words, and came from generous hearts. But my brother does not tell me why the Scotch are now friends with the English, and make war with them against the French?"

"The deputies returned to their mountains with their hearts filled with rage; at each death-cry, which they uttered before entering the towns and villages to announce the lamentable end of Wallace, every one ran to arms and the war went on between the two nations for as many moons as there are grains of sand in my hand," said Dumais, throwing down a handful of sand. "The Scotch were generally conquered by enemies as numerous as the stars on a fine night; the rivers ran with blood, but they never again thought of burying the warrior's

hatchet. The war would be going on still, were it not that a traitor had betrayed to the English soldiers that nine great Scotch chiefs, having assembled in a cavern to drink fire-water, had fallen asleep there like our brother Talamousse."

"The red-skins," said Grand-Loutre, "are never traitors to their nation; they deceive their enemies but never their friends. Will my brother tell me, why there are traitors amongst the pale-faces?"

Dumais, feeling rather perplexed how to reply to such a point-blank question, went on as if he were not conscious of any interruption.

"The nine chiefs, taken by surprise and unarmed, were taken to a great city, and all condemned to be hung before the end of one moon. At this sad news fires were lighted at night on all the Scotch mountains to convoke a great council of all the warriors of the nation. The wise men said many fine words for three days and three nights; and yet they did not decide on anything. They consulted the medicine men, and a great sorcerer declared that the *mitsi-manitou* was angry with his children, and that the hatchet must be buried forever. Twenty warriors, painted black, went to the great town of the English, and before entering it uttered as many death-cries as there were captive chiefs. They held a great council, and the Ononthio of the English granted them peace on condition that they would give hostages, that they would deliver up their strong places, that the two nations would make but one, and that the English and Scotch warriors would fight the enemies of the great Ononthio shoulder to shoulder. They made a feast which lasted three days and three nights and they drank so much fire-water, that had not the women put away the tomahawks, the war would have begun afresh. The English were so pleased that they promised, over and above the treaty, to send to Scotland the heads, feet, and tails of all the sheep they should kill in future."[21]

"That was good," said the Indian. "The English are generous."

"My brother must see," continued Dumais, "that a Scotch warrior likes better to be burnt than hung, and he will sell me his share in the prisoner. Let my brother make his price, and Dumais will not look at the money."

"The Grand-Loutre will not sell his share in the prisoner," said the Indian. "He has promised Taoutsi and Katakoui to deliver him up to-morrow at the encampment of Petit-Marigotte, and he will keep his word. We will assemble the council and Grand-Loutre will speak to the young men; and if they consent not to burn him, there will still be time to give him up to Captain d'Haberville."

"My brother knows Dumais," said the Canadian. "He knows that he is rich, that he has a good heart, and that he is a man of his word; Dumais will pay for

the prisoner six times as much—counting on his fingers—as Ononthio pays the Indians for every enemy's scalp."

"Grand-Loutre knows that his brother is speaking the truth," replied the Indian, "but he will not sell his share of the prisoner."

The Canadian's eyes flashed fire, he grasped the handle of his hatchet, but, thinking better of it, he carelessly knocked the ashes from that part of the tomahawk which serves as a pipe to the French as well as to the Indians in their reconnoitring expeditions. Although Dumais' first hostile movement had not escaped his companion's lynx eye, he nevertheless went on quietly smoking.

Dumais' words, when Lochiel had recognized him, had given birth to renewed hope in his heart. Notwithstanding the poignant remorse which racked his very soul, he was still too young to bid farewell to life and all he held most dear without regret! Could he, without a feeling of bitterness, renounce that brilliant career of arms which had made so many of his ancestors illustrious! How could he, the last of his race, bury the tarnished scutcheon of the Camerons of Lochiel in his own tomb, without a feeling of sorrow? Could he without regret bid farewell to life with the thought that he left the d'Haberville family under the impression that it had warmed a viper in its bosom; with the thought that his name would be pronounced with horror by the only real friends he had in the world; with the thought of Jules' despair and the imprecations of the implacable captain; of the silent horror of that good and holy woman who had called him son, of that beautiful and gentle girl who had formerly called him brother, to whom he had hoped to give some day a dearer title. Archy was indeed very young to die. By having his life spared, he might perhaps be able to repair all, and a ray of hope darted through his mind.

Lochiel, encouraged by Dumais' words, had followed the scene of life and death, which was passing before him, with ever-increasing anxiety. Being ignorant of the Indian dialect, he tried to catch the meaning of the speakers' words by watching the varying expression of their features. Although the night was rather dark, he had not missed one of the malignant and scornful looks which had been directed towards him by the Indian. Knowing the ferocity of Indians when they are under the influence of alcohol, it was not without surprise that he saw Dumais pass the bottle to them; but when he saw that one of them refrained from tasting it, and that the other was stretched full length on the sand, dead-drunk, he understood his deliverer's tactics to get rid of one of his enemies. When he heard the name of Wallace pronounced, he remembered that during Dumais' illness, he had often spoken of his favorite hero's fabulous exploits; but still he could not make out why he held forth to the Indian about a Caledonian warrior's exploits. Had he understood the end of the Canadian's

discourse, he would have remembered Jules' endless jokes about what he pretended was his countrymen's favorite dish. When he saw anger darting from Dumais' eyes, when he saw him grasp his tomahawk, he was nearly calling out to him not to strike, but then he saw him resume his peaceful attitude. His generous heart could not allow his friend to be exposed, through a feeling of gratitude, to being put to death for killing an Indian who was an ally of the French. The Canadian kept silence for some time, refilled his pipe, began to smoke, and said, in his calmest tone of voice:

"When Grand-Loutre fell sick of the small-pox near the South River, as well as his father, his wife and his two sons, Dumais went to them and, at the risk of himself and his family taking the illness, he moved them to his great wigwam, where for three moons he tended them. It was not Dumais' fault that the old man and the two young ones died, and Dumais had them interred with candles around their bodies like Christians, and the Black Robe prayed to the Great Spirit for them."

"If Dumais," replied the Indian, "and his wife and children had fallen sick in the forest, Grand-Loutre would have taken them to his wigwam, would have fished in the lakes and rivers for fish, have hunted the woods for game, would have bought fire-water which is the Frenchman's medicine, and he would have said: 'Eat and drink, my brother, and get strong.' Grand-Loutre and his squaw would have watched day and night by the bed of his French friends; and Grand-Loutre would not have said: 'I fed you, I nursed you, with my furs I bought you fire-water, which is the pale-faces' medicine!' Let my brother take the prisoner," added the Indian standing proudly erect. "The red-skin no longer owes anything to the pale-face."

And he again tranquilly resumed his smoking.

"Listen, my brother," said the Canadian, "and forgive Dumais if he hid the truth from you. He did not know your great heart. He is now going to speak in the presence of the Great Spirit who hears him, and the pale-face never lies to the Great Spirit."

"That is true," said the Indian, "let my brother speak, and his brother will listen."

"When Grand-Loutre was sick, three years ago," said the Canadian, "Dumais related what happened to him, when the spring ice carried him away towards St. Thomas' falls, and how he was saved by a young Scotchman, who arrived that evening at Seigneur de Beaumont's."

"My brother did tell me," said the Indian, "and showed me the remainder of the islet where, hanging over the abyss, he every moment expected death. Grand-Loutre already knew the place, and the old cedar to which he clung."

“Well,” resumed Dumais, rising and taking off his cap, “your brother declares here, in the presence of the Great Spirit, that the prisoner is the young man who saved his life!”

The Indian uttered a terrible cry which the echoes of the mountains repeated with a noise like thunder, bounded up, and drawing his knife, rushed upon the prisoner. Lochiel, who had not understood anything of their conversation, thought that his last moment had arrived, and recommended his soul to God, when, to his great surprise, the Indian severed his bonds, shook his hands heartily with lively demonstrations of joy, and thrust him into his friend’s arms.

Dumais, sobbing, pressed Archy to his breast, and then kneeling down exclaimed:

“O my God! I have prayed Thee to stretch out Thy protecting hand over this noble and generous young man; my wife and children have incessantly offered the same prayer; I thank Thee, I thank Thee! O God! for having granted me much more than I asked! I give Thee thanks, O God! for I would have committed a crime to save his life, and I should have dragged on a life gnawed by remorse, till the tomb would have received a murderer!”

“Now,” said Lochiel after having thanked his deliverer, with the liveliest expressions of gratitude, “let us at once set out, my dear Dumais, for if my absence from the bivouac is noticed, I am utterly ruined; I will explain this to you as we go along.”

Just as they were stepping into the canoe, three loon cries were heard from the south shore of the lake opposite the islet.

“Those are the young men from Marigotte,” said Grand-Loutre, addressing Lochiel, “and they have come for you, my brother. Taoutsi and Katakoui must have sent them word by means of some Indians that there was an English prisoner on the islet; but they will have to cry a long time before they will awaken Talamousse, and Grand-Loutre will sleep till the Canadian’s return. A prosperous journey, my brothers.”

Archy and his companion, taking a northerly direction, long heard the loon cries which the young Indians uttered at short intervals, but they were already beyond their reach.

“I fear,” said Archy, as they were descending the opposite side of the mountain, “that the young Abenaquis warriors, disappointed in their expectations, may do some harm to our friends on the islet.”

“We are certainly depriving them of a great treat,” said Dumais; “they must find the time hang heavy at Marigotte and to-morrow would have passed quickly, roasting a prisoner.” Lochiel shuddered involuntarily.

“As for the two Indians we have left, do not be under any uneasiness about them; they will know how to take care of themselves. The Indian is the most independent creature in creation; he only gives an account of his actions to others when he chooses. Besides, the worst that could happen to them under the circumstances, would be their having, as they term it, to *cover* half the prisoner with beaver skins or other articles; in a word to pay half to Taoutsi and Katakoui. It is even more than probable that Grand-Loutre, who is a sort of wit among them, will get out of it by making the others laugh at the expense of his two partners, for he is never at a loss. He will tell them that Talamousse and he had the undoubted right to dispose of their half of the captive, that the half which was at liberty walked off with the other half; that they had better make haste and run after him as the prisoner being loaded with their property cannot get away very quickly; or some nonsense of that sort, which is always well received by the Indians. Another thing is probable; he will tell them of my adventure at St. Thomas falls, which all the Abenaquis know of, and say that I owe my life to your courage; and as Indians never forget a service that has been rendered them, they will exclaim: ‘My brothers did well to let the deliverer of our friend the pale-face go free.’ ”

Lochiel wanted to enter into a long explanation so as to excuse himself in Dumais’ eyes for his ruthless conduct of the preceding day; but the latter stopped him.

“A man like you, Monsieur Archibald Lochiel,” said Dumais, “owes me no explanations. It is not he, who, at the imminent peril of his own life, did not hesitate for a moment to expose himself to the fury of the elements in order to succor a stranger; it is not so noble a heart that can be suspected of being wanting in the finest feelings of humanity and gratitude. I am myself a soldier, and I know the full extent of the duties which are imposed by military discipline. I have been present at many a scene of horror on the part of our savage allies, which, in my quality of sergeant, commanding a party often stronger than they, I might have prevented, if superior orders had not tied my hands; ours is a rude trade for feeling hearts.

“I was once the witness of a spectacle which still makes me shudder when I think of it. I saw a band of savages burn an English woman. She was a young and very beautiful woman. I think I still see her tied to the stake, where they tortured her for eight mortal hours! I still see this poor woman, in the midst of her brutal executioners; and, like our mother Eve, having no other covering but her long flax-like hair, which covered half of her body. I still fancy that I hear her heart-rending cry: ‘Mein Gott! Mein Gott!’ We did all we could to buy her, but without success; for, unfortunately for her, her father, her husband, and her brothers, in defending her with the courage of despair, had killed several

savages, and among others one of their chiefs and his son. We were but about fifteen Canadians, against at least two hundred Indians. I was very young at that time and I wept like a child. Ducros, nicknamed Laterreur (the Terror), cried out to Francœur, foaming with rage: ‘What, sergeant, are we men, and shall we suffer them to burn a poor woman before our eyes, without defending her! Are we Frenchmen! Only give the order, sergeant, and for my share I will kill ten of these *canaoua* dogs, before they have time to defend themselves.’ And he would have done as he said, for Laterreur was a fine fellow, and as quick as lightning. Black Bear, one of their most renowned warriors, turned towards us chuckling. Ducros darted on him with his raised tomahawk and exclaimed: ‘Take your hatchet, Black Bear; and, coward! you shall see that you have not a feeble woman to deal with!’ The Indian shrugged his shoulder, with a look of pity, and contented himself with slowly saying: ‘The pale-face is foolish, he would kill his friend to defend the *squaw* of a dog of an Englishman who is his enemy.’ The sergeant put an end to the quarrel by ordering Ducros to rejoin our little group. This sergeant had a brave and honest heart, as his name attested. He said to us, with tears in his eyes: ‘It would have been useless for me to infringe my orders, we could not have saved the poor woman, and we would have all been massacred. What would be the consequence? The powerful tribe of the Abenaquis would detach itself from the alliance of the French, would become our enemies, and then how many of our women and children would have had to share the fate of this unfortunate English woman! And I should be responsible for all the blood that would be shed.’

“Well, Monsieur Archy, even six months after this horrible scene, I used to start up out of my sleep all bathed in sweat; I would think I saw the poor victim, in the midst of those wild beasts; I was always thinking I heard her heart-rending cries of ‘Mein Gott! Mein Gott!’ Every one was astonished at my coolness and courage, when the ice was bearing me away towards the St. Thomas falls; and this was the principal reason. Just as the ice broke up, and exploded with a frightful report, I thought I heard amidst the powerful voices of the tempest, the heart-rending cry of that poor Englishwoman: ‘Mein Gott! Mein Gott!’[22] I thought that it was a chastisement sent by Providence which I deserved for not having succored her. For, you see Monsieur Archy, men often make laws which God is far from sanctioning. I am only a poor ignorant man, who owes what little learning he has to the venerable curé who brought up my wife; but that is my opinion.”

“And you are right,” said Archy, sighing.

As they journeyed along the two friends conversed about the d’Haberville family. The ladies and Uncle Raoul had taken shelter in Quebec, on the first

news of the English fleet having made its appearance in the St. Lawrence. Captain d'Haberville was encamped at Beauport, with his company, as was also his son Jules, who had returned to Canada with the regiment in which he served.

Dumais, fearing some unlucky encounter with the Abenaquis Indians, who were spying on the movements of the English army, insisted on escorting Archy as far as the bivouac where he had left his soldiers. Lochiel's last words to him were:

"You are now quits with me, my friend, for you have given life for life; but I can never adequately requite you. There is some extraordinary connection, Dumais, between our two existences. Starting from Pointe-Lévis, two years ago, I arrived on the shores of the South River, just in time to save you from the abyss; a few minutes later, and you must inevitably have been lost. Yesterday, I was made prisoner by the Indians, after a long voyage on the ocean; and you, my dear Dumais, you were in the nick of time, on an islet of the Trois-Saumons lake, to save my honor and my life. God's providence has certainly manifested itself in a very striking manner. Farewell, dear friend. Whatever chances I may meet with in my soldier's career, I hope we may repose our heads beneath the same turf, and that your children and grandchildren will have reason to bless the memory of Archibald Cameron of Lochiel."

When the Highlanders, at sunrise, remarked their young officer's pallor, they attributed it to his having feared some surprise and having passed the night without sleep, roaming round the bivouac. After a slight repast, the house next the mill, which was now a heap of ashes, was set on fire by his order; but hardly had he resumed his march, when a messenger from Montgomery[23] brought him word that the work of destruction was to cease.

"It is, indeed, time!" exclaimed Archy, nervously gnawing the handle of his claymore.

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[18] Canaoua: a contemptuous name given to the Indians by the Canadians of old.

[19] See Appendix C.

[20] The King of France. A name bestowed on Governor Montmagny (Great Mountain) by the Indians and afterwards on his successors.—*T.G.M.*

[21] The Indians are very fond of the heads and feet of animals. I once asked an old *canaoua,* who was boasting of having been present at a feast

where seven of their enemies had been eaten, “which part of a roasted enemy was the most delicious?” He answered, unhesitatingly: “The feet and hands, my brother.”

[22] An old soldier, Godrault by name, who had served under my grandfather described to me, nearly seventy years ago, this terrible scene, of which he had himself been a witness. He told me that the unfortunate victim had exclaimed: “Mein Gott!” My family used to think that the soldier had mistaken the pronunciation, and that it was rather, “My God!” that she had exclaimed; I think it probable, however, that the poor woman was Dutch and that she really did cry “Mein Gott!”

[23] See Appendix D.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

VAE VICTIS! says the wisdom of nations. Woe to the conquered!—not only on account of the disasters consequent on a defeat, but also because the conquered are always in the wrong. They suffer materially, they suffer in their wounded self-love, they suffer in their reputation as soldiers. Even if they have fought one against ten, or one against twenty, if they have performed prodigies of valor, still they are defeated; they find hardly any sympathy from their countrymen; history only records their defeat. Here and there they get some slight praise from writers of their own nation, but even this praise is almost invariably mingled with blame. The battle fought anew with pen and compass in hand, and the shades of generals, whose bodies repose on the fields of slaughter they so bravely defended, are taught what they ought to have done to have still been of the number of the living. Seated in a well-stuffed arm-chair, we triumphantly demonstrate by what clever manœuvres the conquered would have come out the conquerors in the struggle. We bitterly reproach them for the consequences of their defeat. However, they merit more generous treatment at our hands. Has not a great captain of our days, who rivalled Alexander and Cæsar, said: “Who is there who has never committed a mistake in war!” *Vae victis!*

On the morning of the 13th of September, 1759, a day of mourning in the annals of France, the English army, commanded by General Wolfe, after having eluded the vigilance of the French sentinels and surprised the advanced posts during a dark night, was ranged in battle array on the Plains of Abraham, where it had commenced to entrench itself. General Montcalm, carried away by his chivalrous courage, or perhaps thinking it urgent to interrupt work, which might produce fearful consequences, attacked the English with only a part of his troops, and was vanquished, as was inevitable, with forces so disproportioned to those of the enemy. The two generals sealed this memorable battle with their lives—Wolfe endowing England with a colony, nearly as large as the half of Europe; Montcalm losing to France an immense country which her king and improvident ministers knew so little how to appreciate.

Woe to the vanquished! For if the Marquis of Montcalm had gained the victory over the English army, he would have been vaunted to the clouds,

instead of being blamed for not having awaited the reinforcements he was to receive from Monsieur de Vaudreuil and Colonel de Bougainville. Military critics would have praised his tactics in having so abruptly attacked the enemy, before they had time to reconnoitre and to profit by the irregularities of the ground to entrench themselves in an impregnable position. It would have been said that a hundred men sheltered by intrenchments were worth a thousand who were exposed. Motives of jealousy, unworthy of a high soul, would not have been attributed to General Montcalm; and the brilliant laurels, which he had so often gathered on glorious fields of battle, would have sheltered him from such suspicions.

Vae victis! The city of Quebec, after the disastrous battle of the 13th of September, was nothing but a heap of ruins; even the fortifications were not safe from surprise, for a part of the ramparts had given way. The ammunition in the magazines was exhausted; the artillery-men, rather to hide their state of distress than to hurt the enemy, fired guns only at long intervals against the formidable batteries of the English. There were no more provisions. And yet this brave garrison, which suffered so much and defended itself so valiantly, has been accused of cowardice. If the governor, a new Nostradamus, had known that the Chevalier de Lévis was near at hand with succor for the city, and, instead of capitulating, had awaited the arrival of the French troops, it is certain that far from the garrison being accused of pusillanimity, its courage would have been lauded to the skies. Of course it was cowardly of the garrison to yield a town, which they knew they could not defend. Trusting to the humanity of the enemy, who had carried fire and sword into the peaceful fields, they need not have stopped to consider the fate of the citizens' lives, or the honor of their wives and children exposed to all the horrors of a town taken by assault! Certainly this poor garrison was very cowardly! Woe to the vanquished!

General Murray.

After the capitulation, the English neglected nothing that might secure the conquest they had made of so important a place as the capital of New France. The walls were built up again, new fortifications were added to the former ones, and the whole furnished with powerful artillery. From besiegers as they were the previous year, they might now become the besieged. Their precautions were wise, for General de Lévis, the following spring, resumed the offensive with an army of 8,000 men, partly regular troops and partly Canadian militia.

In the meantime, the English army, proud of the victory it had gained seven months previously, was again ranged in battle-order at eight o'clock in the morning of the 28th of April, 1760, on the same plains where it had fought so

successfully. General Murray, who commanded an army 6,000 strong, and supported by twenty-two guns, occupied the most advantageous position, whilst the French army, slightly more numerous, but with only two pieces of artillery, crowned the heights of Ste. Foye. Although the French were fatigued with a painful march over nearly impassible roads across the Suède marshes, they longed to avenge their defeat of the preceding year. The thirst of blood raged in the breasts of enemies, whose long-standing hatred, which they had brought with them from old Europe, was now stirred up afresh on the new continent. The valor was the same on both sides, and 14,000 of the best troops in the world only awaited the order of their respective commanders to drench with their blood anew those same plains, which had already drunk that of so many brave soldiers.

Jules d'Haberville, who had already distinguished himself at the first battle of the Plains of Abraham, now was with one of the five companies commanded by the brave Captain d'Aiguebelle, who, on the order of General de Lévis, at first abandoned Dumont's mill, which was attacked by a superior force. Jules, seriously wounded by the bursting of a shell, which had broken his left arm, refused to retire at the instances of his friends, who urged him to have his wound dressed at once, as the blood was flowing abundantly from it. Only stopping to bandage his arm slightly with his handkerchief, he charged afresh, with his arm in a sling, at the head of his company, when the general, thinking it important to get possession, whatever it might cost, of a post on which the issue of the combat depended, gave the order to resume the offensive.

Almost all General Murray's artillery was actively protecting this important position, when the French grenadiers charged it anew; bullets and grape-shot decimated their ranks, which they kept filling up in as good order as if on parade. This position was taken and retaken several times during that memorable battle, where both sides vied with each other in valor. Jules d'Haberville, "the little grenadier," as his soldiers called him, carried away by his excitement, and in spite of his wound, threw himself into the thick of the enemy, who for a moment left the French in possession of the mill; but they were hardly established in it, when the English, returning to the charge in greater numbers, again made themselves masters of it after a sanguinary struggle.

The French grenadiers, momentarily thrown into disorder, reformed again at a short distance, under the fire of artillery and a shower of balls which completely riddled their ranks. For the third time they attacked the mill, and this time they charged with fixed bayonets, and after a bloody fight obtained possession of it and held it. During this third charge, every feeling which

makes life dear, seemed to be dead in young d'Haberville's soul, for, his heart filled with deep resentment at his friendship being betrayed, and at the total ruin of his family, he seemed to implore death as a boon. When, therefore, the order was given to advance for the third time, bounding onwards like a tiger and uttering the war-cry: "Follow me grenadiers!" he threw himself single-handed on the enemy, with whom he fought like a madman. The work of slaughter had again begun with renewed fury, and when the French remained masters of the position, they dragged Jules from beneath a heap of dead and wounded. As he gave some signs of life, two grenadiers carried him to the borders of a little river near the mill, where the application of some cold water restored him to consciousness. It was more the loss of blood than the severity of the wound which had caused him to faint; a sabre-cut had gone clean through his helmet, and cut the flesh of his head without fracturing the bone. A soldier stanched the effusion of blood and said to Jules who wished to return to the fight:

"Not for a short quarter of an hour, sir; you have had enough for the present; the sun burns like the devil on the mound, and that is dangerous for wounds on the head. We will carry you into the shade of the wood, where you will find some fellows who have also received scratches." D'Haberville, too weak to offer any resistance, soon found himself among a number of wounded soldiers, who had sufficient strength to drag themselves as far as the thicket of firs.

Every one knows the issue of the second battle of the Plains of Abraham; the victory was dearly bought by the French and the Canadians, whose loss was as great as that of the enemy. It was a useless effusion of blood. New France, abandoned by the mother country, was ceded to England by the listless Louis XV only three years after that glorious battle, which might have saved the colony.

Lochiel had been nobly revenged for all the suspicions injurious to his loyalty, which his enemy Montgomery had tried to instil into the minds of the superior officers of the British army. His extensive information, the time which he had devoted to the study of his new profession, his aptitude for all military exercises, his vigilance at the posts confided to him, his sobriety, had from the first gained him general esteem; and his high courage, tempered, however, with prudence in the attack on the French lines at Montmorency, and on the field of battle of the 13th of September, 1759, had been noticed by General Murray, who publicly loaded him with praise.

After the rout of the English army at the second battle of the Plains of Abraham, Archibald Lochiel, after performing prodigies of valor at the head of his Highlandmen, was the last to yield the ground he had contested inch by

inch. He again distinguished himself for his coolness and presence of mind in covering the retreat of the remains of his company; for instead of following the stream of fugitives to the city of Quebec, remarking that Dumont's mill was evacuated by the French grenadiers (who were occupied in pursuing their enemies, of whom they made great slaughter) he profited by the circumstance to shelter his movements from the observation of the enemy, and ordered his men to defile between this position and the adjacent wood. Just then, he thought he heard his name called, and turning round he saw an officer issuing from the wood, with his arm in a sling, his head covered with a bloody bandage, and his uniform in tatters, who tottered towards him, sword in hand.

"What are you doing, brave Cameron of Lochiel," exclaimed the unknown. "The mill is evacuated by our gallant soldiers; it is not even defended by women, children, or weak old men! Turn back, brave Cameron, you can easily burn it to crown your exploits!"

It was impossible to mistake the jeering voice of Jules d'Haberville, although his face, soiled with blood and mud, was hard to recognize.

Archy had but one feeling at these insulting words, that of tender compassion for the friend of his youth. His heart swelled to bursting, and a choking sob broke from his chest, for he seemed to hear the words of the witch of the d'Haberville domain, resound afresh:

"Keep your pity for yourself, you will want it, when you shall carry in your arms the bloody body of him you now call brother! I feel only one great regret, O Archibald Lochiel! It is for not being able to curse you! Woe! woe! woe!"

Without pausing to consider the critical position in which he was placed, or his responsibility for the safety of his soldiers, he halted his company, and went to meet Jules, carrying his claymore with its point towards the ground. One moment, one single moment, all the young Frenchman's affection for his adopted brother, seemed to reawake in him, but repressing this first impulse of affection, he called to him in a hollow and plaintive voice:

"Defend yourself, Monsieur de Lochiel, you love easy victories! Defend yourself! Ah! traitor!"

At this fresh insult Archy crossing his arms, only answered in his most affectionate tone of voice:

"You also, my brother Jules, you also condemn me without a hearing!"

At this affectionate reproach, a strong shudder paralysed the small strength still remaining to Jules; his sword dropped from his hand, and he fell forward on the ground. Archy sent one of his soldiers to fetch some water from the adjacent stream and without thinking of the danger to which he exposed himself, took his friend in his arms, and carried him to the outskirts of the

wood, where several of the wounded, both French and Canadian, were so affected by the young Englishman's care of their young officer, that they did not think of harming him, though several had already reloaded their guns. Archy, after having examined his friend's wounds, came to the conclusion that loss of blood was the sole cause of the fainting fit. The cold water he threw in his face, soon made him recover consciousness. He opened his eyes, and raised them to Archy's for a moment, but he did not speak a word. The latter pressed his hand and he seemed to return a slight pressure.

"Farewell, Jules!" said Archy to him. "Farewell, my brother! Imperious duties oblige me to leave you; may we both see better days!"

And sighing deeply, he rejoined his companions.

"Now, my boys," said Lochiel, after having thrown a rapid glance over the plain, and listened to the confusion of sounds which rose from it, "now, my boys, no false delicacy; the battle is lost without resource; let us now shew the agility of our Highland legs, if we wish to have the good fortune of being present at other battles; forward then, and do not lose sight of me."

Taking advantage of all the irregularities of the ground, and listening from time to time to the cries of the French who were eagerly pursuing the English, whom they wished to drive back on the river St. Charles, Lochiel had the good fortune of entering Quebec without having lost another man. This gallant company had already suffered enough; the half had remained on the field of battle, and Lochiel was the only one of the officers who survived.

Honor to unsuccessful valor! Honor to the shades of the English soldiers whose bodies were buried pell-mell with those of their enemies, the 28th of April, 1760! Honor to those, the heaps of whose bones still repose in peace in an eternal embrace, beside Dumont's mill! Will these soldiers have forgotten their inveterate hatred during this long sleep? or will they be ready to cut each other's throats anew, when the trump of the last judgment shall sound the last call of the man of war in the valley of Jehoshaphat?

Honor to the memory of the French soldiers whose bodies lie buried on the Plains of Abraham, on the field of that disastrous battle of the preceding year! Will they, after their long sleep remember their last struggle to prevent their native soil passing under the yoke of the stranger? Will they, on awaking, seek for their arms, in order to reconquer that ground which their desperate courage could not keep?

Honor to unsuccessful valor! If those who celebrate the anniversary of a great and bravely-disputed victory, had a particle of generous feeling in their souls, they would append to the brilliant national standard, a dark-colored flag, bearing this inscription; "Honor to unsuccessful valor!" Among the celebrated

soldiers whom history mentions, there was but one who, on the morrow of a memorable victory, uncovered his head respectfully before the captives, and, in the presence of his staff, pronounced these noble words, “Honor, gentlemen, to unsuccessful valor!” He doubtless wished, that in their future triumphs, the French should ascribe a share of glory to the vanquished who merited it; he knew that his words would remain forever recorded on the pages of history. Great soldiers are often to be met with, but nature, sparing of her gifts, takes centuries to bring forth a hero!

The field of battle presented a most doleful appearance after the victory of the French; blood, water and mud adhered to the clothes, hair, and even faces of the dead and wounded, who were stretched about on their icy bed; great efforts were necessary to disengage them from it. The Chevalier de Lévis caused the greatest care to be taken of the wounded of both nations, the greater number of whom were taken to the Convent of the Ladies of the General Hospital. The hospital and out-buildings were filled to over-flowing. All the linen in the house was torn up for bandages[24]; all that the good nuns had left to them were the clothes they wore on the day of the battle. Always thirsting for opportunities of exercising Christian charity, they now had a rare opportunity of fulfilling the painful duties which this charity imposes on those, who, by pronouncing their vows, make at once a creed and a profession of it.

General Murray, who, after his defeat, had re-entered Quebec, which he fortified in a formidable manner, offered a vigorous resistance to the Chevalier de Lévis, who had no other materials for a siege than twenty guns with which to fortify his batteries. It was more an investment than a regular siege, and it was prolonged by the French whilst waiting for the re-enforcements, which never arrived from the mother country.

The Chevalier de Lévis, who wished to show the care that was taken of the enemy’s wounded, had listened favorably to the English general’s request that one of his officers might three times a week visit his sick countrymen who had been taken to the General Hospital. Lochiel knew that his friend must be in that hospital with the officers of both nations; but he had had no news of him. Although very uneasy, he had refrained from asking anything about him, so as not to lay himself open to ill-natured remarks, on account of the false position in which his former relations with the Canadians had placed him.

Still it was natural that he should wish to pay a visit to his fellow-countrymen, but with true Scottish caution, he did not let this appear; and it was only on the tenth day after the battle, when his turn came naturally, that he went to the hospital, escorted by a French officer. The conversation, between the two young men, did not flag on the way.

“I do not know,” said Lochiel at last, “if it would be an indiscretion on my

part to ask to speak in private with the superior of the convent?”

“I see no indiscretion in it,” answered the Frenchman, “but I fear to infringe my orders by permitting you to do so; I am told to conduct you to your countrymen, and nothing more.”

“I am sorry for it,” said the Scotchman indifferently. “It is rather disagreeable for me, but let us say no more about it.”

The French officer kept silence for a few minutes, and thought to himself, that this British officer, speaking the French language like a Parisian, had probably become acquainted with some of the Canadian families who were shut up in Quebec; that perhaps he was charged with some message from the relations or friends of the superior, and that it would be cruel to deny his request. After a time, he resumed:

“As I feel sure that neither you nor the lady superior have any intention of blowing up our batteries, I think that after all I shall not be failing in my duty, if I allow the private conversation you have asked for.”

Lochiel, who counted upon this interview to effect a reconciliation between himself and his friend, could hardly repress a joyful exclamation, but yet he answered in an indifferent manner:

“Thank you, sir, for your courtesy to me and to this good lady. Your batteries, protected by French valor,” he added smiling, “are in perfect safety, even supposing we had sinister designs on them.”

The passages of the hospital through which they were obliged to pass before entering the superior’s parlour were literally strewn with the wounded. But Archy, seeing none of his fellow-countrymen, hastened onwards. After having rung the bell, he walked up and down in that same parlour where the good superior, Jules’ aunt, had so often had luncheon served them formerly, during the frequent visits which he made to the convent, with his friend, during his long sojourn at the Jesuits’ College at Quebec.

The superior received him with cold civility, and said to him:

“I am sorry to have kept you waiting, pray take a seat, sir.”

“I fear, madam, that you do not know me,” said Archy.

“I beg your pardon,” replied the superior, “you are Monsieur Archibald Cameron of Lochiel.”

“You used to call me Archy,” said the young man.

“The times are much altered, Monsieur Lochiel,” replied the nun, “and many events have taken place since then.”

Lochiel echoed these words, and sighing, repeated:

“The times are much altered, and many events have taken place since then.

But, at any rate, how is my brother, Jules d'Haberville?"

"He, whom you used formerly to call your brother, Monsieur Lochiel, is now, I hope, out of danger."

"God be praised!" replied Lochiel. "Then all hope is not dead within me! If I were speaking to an ordinary person, there would be nothing more for me to do now than to take my leave after having thanked the superior for the interview she has deigned to grant me; but I have the honor of speaking to the sister of a brave soldier, to the heiress of a name famous in history by high deeds of arms, and by the noble actions of a lady of the house of Haberville; and if she will allow me, if she will for a moment forget the ties of affection which bind her to her family, if the superior will act as an impartial judge between me and that family, I can then venture to broach a justification of my conduct, with some hope of success."

"Speak, Monsieur Lochiel," replied the superior, "speak; I am listening to you, not as a d'Haberville, but as a perfect stranger to the name; it is my duty as a Christian to do so, it is my wish to listen with impartiality, to all which can palliate your cruel and barbarous conduct towards a family who had loved you so well!"

A sudden flush, followed by a ghastly pallor, passed over the young man's features, and made the superior fear that he was going to faint. With both hands, he laid hold of the grating which separated him from his interlocutor, and leaned his head against it for some moments; then, conquering his feelings, he told what the reader already has become acquainted with in the preceding chapters.

Archy entered into the minute details. He mentioned his regret at having entered the English army, when he learnt that his regiment was to take part in the expedition against Canada; he spoke of the hereditary hatred of the Montgomerys for the Camerons of Lochiel; he mentioned how eager the major was to ruin him, and how he was a spy on all his actions, hoping to succeed in doing so; he accused himself of cowardice, in not having sacrificed even honor to the gratitude which he owed the family who had adopted him in his exile. He omitted nothing; he related the scene at the old man's at Ste. Anne's; his humanity in forewarning the unhappy Canadian families of the fate which threatened them; his anguish and despair on the hill at Port-Joli before setting fire to the manor house; his ineffectual attempts to soften his cruel enemy; his curses and projects of vengeance against Montgomery, after having completed the barbarous work of destruction; his anguish at the sight of the smoking ruins he had made; his capture by the Abenaquis; his painful self-reproach. He related the scene on the Plains of Abraham; his terrible anguish of mind when he saw Jules, whose wounds he feared might be mortal. He omitted nothing,

and added nothing in his own defence. In laying bare the anguish of his soul and describing the storm of passions which had raged in his breast during those fatal days, Lochiel could add nothing in his own justification before such a judge. What pleading could indeed be more eloquent than the faithful recital of all that had troubled his soul! What pleading could be more eloquent than the simple and uncolored recital of the indignation which tortured a noble spirit, obliged to execute the cruel orders of a ferocious leader, whose heart was dead to every feeling of humanity! Lochiel, without himself perceiving it, was sublime in his eloquence when pleading his cause before this noble lady, whose sentiments were as lofty as his own.

She had, indeed, sentiments as lofty as his own, for it was she who had one day said to her brother Captain d'Haberville:

"My brother, as it is, you have sufficient means worthily to uphold the honor of our house with dignity; but it will not be so if you share our father's inheritance with me; to-morrow, I shall enter a convent, and here is the act of renunciation which I have executed in your favor."

The superior had listened to him with ever-increasing emotion; she clasped her hands and held them out entreatingly toward the young Scotchman when he repeated his curse, imprecations, and threats of vengeance against Montgomery. Tears flowed from her eyes when Lochiel, a prisoner amongst the Indians, and doomed to a frightful death, looked into his own heart, bowed beneath God's hand, and prepared himself for the death of a repentant sinner; and she raised her hands to heaven to show her gratitude.

"My dear Archy!" said the saintly woman.

"Ah! thank you! a hundred times thank you! madam, for those generous words," exclaimed Lochiel.

"My dear Archy," replied the nun, "I exonerate you completely; you have fulfilled the duties of a soldier (which are so often distressing) by executing the orders of a superior officer; sacrificing yourself for the sake of our family, would have irretrievably ruined you, and without preventing my brother's ruin. Yes, I quite exonerate you from all blame, but I hope that now you will forgive your enemy likewise."

"My enemy, madam, or rather he who was so formerly, has had to seek pardon from Him who will judge us all; he was one of the first to take flight from the field of battle which was so disastrous to us; a shot stretched him mortally wounded on the ice, without even a stone on which to rest his head; a tomahawk put an end to his sufferings, and his bloody scalp now hangs at the belt of an Abenaquis Indian. May God pardon him," continued Archy raising his hands, "as I do from the bottom of my heart!"

A ray of joy lighted up the superior's countenance. Naturally vindictive like her brother Captain d'Haberville, a religion of love and charity had subdued her natural inclinations, and put into her heart love and charity for all men. For a moment she seemed to be praying, and then she resumed:

"I have every reason to believe that it will be easy for you to become reconciled to Jules. He has been at death's door; and, during his delirium, he was incessantly mentioning your name, sometimes addressing you in a threatening voice, and reproaching you most bitterly, but more frequently seeming to converse affectionately with you. Often has he said to me: 'I love men, and am always ready to render them any service, but if it were necessary to give my life to-morrow for my brother Archy, I should die with a smile on my lips, for I should have given him the only proof of my affection which was worthy of him.' Such feelings are not suddenly extinguished in so noble a heart as that of my nephew, without superhuman efforts. On the contrary, he will be glad to hear your justification from me; and rest assured, my dear Archy, that I shall spare no efforts to bring about a reconciliation between you and your brother. He has never mentioned your name since he has been getting better, and as he is still too weak to be spoken to on a subject which might agitate him, I will wait till he is a little stronger, and I hope to give you good news at our next interview. In the meantime I will bid you farewell; indispensable duties oblige me to leave you."

"Pray for me, madam, I have great need of it," said Archy.

"I do so every day," replied the nun. "They say, perhaps wrongly, that people in the world have more need of prayers than we have, and most of all young officers; as for you Lochiel, you must have altered a good deal if you are not one of those who have but little need of them!" added the superior smiling kindly. "Farewell, once more; may God bless you, my son."

It was not till a fortnight afterwards that Lochiel again visited the hospital, where Jules, to whom the superior had given satisfactory explanations, waited with nervous anxiety to show him that he felt the same warm affection for him, of which he had in former days given so many proofs. They agreed to make no allusions to certain events, as it would be too painful a subject of conversation for both of them.

When Lochiel entered the little room which Jules occupied as nephew to the superior, in preference to other officers of a higher grade, Jules held out his arms to him, and made a vain effort to rise from the arm-chair in which he was seated. Archy threw himself into his arms, and they were both some time before they could speak a word. D'Haberville, after a great effort to regain his composure, was the first to break silence:

"The moments are precious, my dear Archy, and it is of consequence to me

to unveil the future, if it be possible. We are no longer children; we are soldiers fighting under glorious banners, brothers in affection, but enemies on the field of battle. I have aged ten years during my illness. I am no longer the young, broken-hearted madman who flung himself on the enemy's battalions praying for death. Let us live in hopes of better times. Those were your last words, when you confided me to the care of my grenadiers. Those were your last words, and they make me hope that happier times are in store for those who have never ceased to be brothers at heart.

"You know, as well as I do, the precarious state of this colony; all depends on a throw of the dice. If France leaves us to our own resources, as there is every reason to believe she will, and if, on the other hand, your ministers, who set so high a value on the conquest of this country, send re-enforcements in the spring, the siege of Quebec will necessarily be raised, and we shall have to leave Canada to you finally. If the other supposition proves true, we shall retake Quebec, and keep the colony. Now, my dear Archy, I want to know what you will do, under the one or the other of these circumstances."

"In either case," said Lochiel, "I cannot honorably retire from the army, whilst the war lasts; but when peace is proclaimed, I think of selling the wreck of my Scotch patrimony, buying land in America, and settling there. My warmest affections are here. I love Canada, I love the gentle and straightforward manners of your good habitants; and, after a peaceful but laborious life, I should at least lay my head beneath the same soil as you, my brother Jules."

"My position is very different from yours," replied Jules. "You are the absolute master of your own actions; I am the slave of circumstances. If we lose Canada, it is most likely that the Canadian nobility will emigrate to France, where they will find friends and protection. If my family is among the number of these, I cannot leave the army. In the other case, I shall return after some years service, to live and die with my kinsfolk and friends; and like you, rest my head beneath the soil I love so well. Everything makes me hope that after the stormy life of our youth is passed, we shall live to see many happy days afterwards."

The two friends separated after a long and affectionate conversation, the last they were to have in that colony which was as yet called New France. When the reader sees them again some years later, the colony will have changed its name and masters.

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[24] See Appendix E.

CHAPTER XV

THE WRECK OF THE AUGUSTE

THE predictions of the sorceress were fulfilled. The once opulent family of d'Haberville, after the capitulation of Quebec, had been only too happy to accept the hospitality, which Monsieur d'Egmont offered them in his cottage, whose seclusion had saved it from being burnt. "The good gentleman" and "my uncle Raoul," assisted by the faithful Francœur, had at once set to work; they had partitioned off bedrooms in the garret, so as to leave the ground floor to the women. The men, in order to raise the courage of those unhappy ladies, affected a gaiety which they were far from feeling; and their songs might often be heard, mingled with the smart strokes of the hatchet, the creaking of the saw, and the shrill whistling of the plane. By means of hard work and perseverance, they succeeded, not only in sheltering themselves from the inclemency of the climate, but also in being tolerably well lodged; and if it had not been for the anxiety they felt for Captain d'Haberville and his son, exposed to the chances of war, they would have passed the winter agreeably enough in their solitude. Their greatest difficulty was to obtain food, for the dearth of provisions in the country was frightful. The greater number of the habitants for want of a mill to grind what little wheat they had harvested, ate it boiled[25]. The only resource was hunting and fishing. Monsieur d'Egmont and his servant were rather too old to devote themselves to these sports during a severe winter. Uncle Raoul, although lame, took charge of the provision department. He set snares for hares and partridges, and his charming niece assisted him. She had made herself a costume adapted for these pursuits, and looked most charming in her half-Indian, half-French habiliments. Her petticoat was of blue cloth, and came nearly to her ankles; she wore scarlet gaiters, and moccasins embroidered with beads and porcupine quills of bright and picturesque colors. She was very charming, when, on her little snow-shoes, with her complexion heightened by exercise, she arrived at the house, laden with hares and partridges. As, during this scarcity, the habitants frequented the Trois-Saumons lake, they had beaten a hard road on the snow, and along this the chevalier managed to travel in an Indian sleigh, drawn by a large dog. He always returned with an ample provision of excellent trout and partridge. This game and fish were their only resources during the long winter. The *manna* of wild-pigeons, which appeared the following spring, saved the colony. They were in

such numbers, that they could be knocked down with sticks.

When Captain d'Haberville returned to his seigniory, he was completely ruined, having only saved his plate from the wreck of his property. He did not for an instant think of claiming the considerable arrears of rent, owed him by his impoverished tenants; but made haste to come to their aid, by rebuilding his mill on the Trois-Saumons river, and he and his family lived there for several years, until he had sufficient means to build a new manor house.

These tiny rooms in a mill formed but a small lodging for the formerly so opulent family of the d'Habervilles. However, they bore up bravely under the privations to which they were exposed; only Captain d'Haberville, though exerting himself energetically, could not resign himself to the loss of his fortune; his misfortunes preyed upon his mind, and for six years no smile was seen on his face. It was only when the manor house was rebuilt, and a certain air of comfort again pervaded the household, that he resumed his natural gaiety.

On the 22nd of February, 1762, at about nine o'clock in the evening, a shabby-looking stranger entered the mill and asked hospitality for the night. Captain d'Haberville was sitting, as he was wont to do, when unemployed, in a corner of the room with his head bent down and his mind absorbed in sad reflections.

The stranger's voice made Captain d'Haberville start, without his knowing why; he was some time without answering, but at last said:

"My friend you are welcome; you shall sup and breakfast here and the miller will give you a bed in his part of the house."

"Thank you," said the stranger, "but I am tired, give me a glass of brandy."

Monsieur d'Haberville hardly felt inclined to give to an utter stranger, a sort of vagabond, a single glass of the provision of wine and spirit, which was contained in a small cellaret and which he kept for cases of sickness or of absolute necessity; he therefore replied by a refusal, saying that he had none.

"If you knew me, d'Haberville," replied the stranger, "you certainly would not refuse me a glass of brandy, even if it were the last you had in the house[26]."

The captain's first impulse, on hearing himself addressed thus familiarly by a sort of vagabond, was that of anger; but there was something in the stranger's hollow voice which again startled him, and he restrained himself. Just then Blanche appeared with a light and all the family were horror-struck at the sight of the man, looking like a spectre, who, standing with folded arms, gazed sadly at them. Looking at him as he stood there motionless, his appearance was so cadaverous, that one could almost have fancied that a vampire had sucked all

the blood from his veins. The stranger looked as if his bones were almost protruding from his skin, which was as yellow as that of an Egyptian mummy; his eyes dull and sunk in their sockets appeared to be without “speculation” like those of Banquo’s ghost at the supper of Macbeth.

After a moment’s hesitation, Captain d’Haberville threw himself into the stranger’s arms, exclaiming:

“You here, my dear Saint Luc! The sight of my bitterest enemy could not horrify me so much! Speak! and tell us that all our relations and friends, passengers in the *Auguste* are engulfed in the waves, and you alone, having escaped death, bring us the sad news.”

The unbroken silence of Monsieur St. Luc de Lacorne, the grief depicted on his countenance sufficiently confirmed his friend’s conjectures.

“Cursed be the tyrant,” exclaimed Captain d’Haberville, “who, in his hatred for the French, exposed the lives of so many worthy people, in an old vessel that was not seaworthy, and during the stormy season of the year.”

“Instead of cursing your enemies,” said Monsieur de St. Luc, in a hoarse voice, “thank God that you and your family obtained a respite of two years, before being obliged to go to France. Now give me some brandy and a little soup; I have suffered so much from hunger that my stomach refuses all solid food. Let me take a little repose, also, before relating the sad occurrences, whose recital will make you shed many tears.”

After the expiration of about half an hour, for this man of steel required but a short time to recruit his strength, Monsieur de St. Luc began his tale:

“Notwithstanding the British governor’s impatience to send from New France those who had so gallantly defended it, the authorities had placed only two vessels at our disposal; and they were insufficient to carry the large number of French and Canadians who were compelled to embark for Europe. I remarked this to General Murray, and proposed buying one at my own expense. He refused me; but two days afterwards placed at our disposal the *Auguste*, which had been hastily got ready for the purpose. By means of the sum of five hundred Spanish dollars, I obtained from the English captain the exclusive use of his cabin for myself and my family.

“I then made General Murray aware of the danger to which we should be exposed, in the stormy season, with a captain who did not know the St. Lawrence river, offering to engage a river pilot at my own expense. His answer was that we should not be more exposed than the others. However, he at length despatched a little boat, with orders to escort us to the last anchorage.

“We were all sad and discouraged, and we were a prey to dismal forebodings, when we raised the anchor on the 15th of last October. A great

many among us, obliged to sell their movables and immovables in a hurry, had done so at an immense sacrifice, and only looked forward to a very sad future, even on the soil of their mother country. Our hearts were very full then, when, sailing along with a favorable wind, we saw disappearing from our view the scenes so long familiar to us, which recalled such sacred memories.

"I will speak briefly of the dangers, which we encountered at the commencement of our voyage, and come at once to the great disaster, from which only I and six other men escaped alive. On the 16th we were within a hair's breadth of shipwreck, near Ile-aux-Coudres, towards which we were blown by a strong breeze, after having lost our large anchor.

"On the 4th of November, we were overtaken by a frightful storm, which lasted two days and did us great damage. On the 7th, a fire, which we had much trouble in extinguishing, broke out for the third time in the galley, and we were nearly being burnt up on the open sea. It would be difficult to paint the scenes of distress which took place during our efforts to obtain a mastery over the flames.

"On the 11th, we were nearly perishing off the coast of Ile Royale, on an enormous rock, which we passed within gunshot, and which we did not see till the ship was, so to speak, dashing herself against it.

"From the 13th to the 15th we were driven at the mercy of a violent storm, without knowing where we were. We were obliged, as we best could, to take the place of the crew; for the men, worn out with fatigue, had taken refuge in their hammocks and would not leave them. Threats, promises, even blows had been tried in vain. Our mizzen mast being broken, our sails torn to shreds and incapable of being clewed up or lowered, the first mate proposed, as a last resource in this extremity, to run the vessel to shore. It was a desperate act; the fatal moment arrived! The captain and mate looked sadly at me with clasped hands. I but too well understood this mute language of men, who from their profession were accustomed to brave death. We made the land to starboard, where we perceived the mouth of a river, which might prove to be navigable. Without concealing anything, I informed the passengers of both sexes of this manœuvre, which was for life or death! How many prayers were then offered to the Supreme Being! How many vows made! But, alas! the prayers and the vows were ineffectual.

"Who could describe the fury of the waves! The storm had burst upon us in all its fury; our masts seemed to reach up to the clouds, and then to plunge into the abyss. A terrible shock announced to us that the ship had touched the bottom. We then cut away the cordage and masts to lighten her, but the force of the waves turned her over on her side. We had run aground, about a hundred and fifty feet from the shore, in a little sandy cove, at the entrance of the little

river, where we had hoped to find shelter. As the ship was already leaking in every part, the passengers all rushed on deck; some, thinking themselves in easy reach of land, threw themselves into the sea and perished.

"Just then Madame de Mézière arrived on deck, holding her young infant in her arms; her hair and her clothes were in disorder; she was the very picture of despair personified. She knelt down; then perceiving me, she exclaimed: 'My dear de St. Luc, it seems that we must die!'

"I was running to her assistance, when an enormous wave broke over the deck, and washed her away."

"My poor friend! Companion of my childhood," exclaimed Madame d'Haberville, sobbing violently. "My poor sister, nursed at the same bosom as myself! They tried to make me believe, that I was a prey to nervous over-excitement, brought on by anxiety of mind, when, in my sleep on the 17th of November, I saw you bathed in tears, on the deck of the *Auguste*, with your child in your arms, and then I saw you disappear beneath the waves, I was not mistaken. Poor sister! she wished to bid me farewell, before mounting to heaven with the angel she was holding in her arms!"

After some little time had been spent in indulging the painful emotions, which this recital had given rise to, Monsieur de Lacorne went on with his narrative:

"The crew and passengers had lashed themselves to the shrouds and spars in order to resist the waves, which, breaking over the ship, were every moment snatching fresh victims as their prey. What else, indeed, could be expected from enfeebled men and weak women! Our only remaining resource was the two boats, the larger of which was carried away by a wave and dashed in pieces. The other was lowered into the water, and a servant named Étienne sprang into it, as well as the captain and several others. I only perceived it when one of my children, whom I was holding in my arms, and the other who was fastened to my belt, called out to me: 'Try to save us, the boat is in the water.' I hastily seized a rope, and, taking a tremendous leap, fell into the boat. My life was saved, but a wave carried away my two children."

The narrator broke down at the remembrance of his cruel loss, but made a great effort to conquer the emotion, which his friends had shared in, and resumed:

"Although we were under the lee of the ship, a wave nearly filled the boat; a second wave bore us away from the vessel, a third threw us on the sand. It would be difficult to describe the horror of this terrible disaster, the cries of those still on board the ship, and the harrowing spectacle presented by those who, having thrown themselves into the waves, were making useless efforts to

gain the shore.

"Of the seven living men, who now found themselves on the shore of that unknown land, I was, so to speak, the only sound one. I had just lost my brother and my children, and I had to crush back my grief into the depths of my heart, to occupy myself in saving the companions of my misfortunes. I succeeded in reviving the captain, who had fainted. The others were benumbed with cold, for a chilling rain was falling in torrents. Not wishing to lose sight of the ship, I gave them my powder-flask, tinder, flint and steel; enjoining them to light a fire at the entrance of the wood, which was a short distance from the shore. But they could not manage it; they had hardly strength even to come and tell me so, so overpowered were they with cold and fatigue. After many attempts, I succeeded in lighting a fire. It was time; for these unfortunate men could neither speak nor move; it was I who saved their lives.

"I at once returned to the shore so as not to lose sight of the vessel, which was given up to all the fury of the storm. I was in hopes of being able to succor some of the unfortunate creatures that the sea was continually throwing up on the shore, for every wave which broke over the wreck carried off some fresh victim. I remained, therefore, on the beach from three o'clock in the afternoon, when we went aground, till six o'clock in the evening, when the vessel went to pieces. It was a heart-rending sight, which presented itself when the hundred and fourteen corpses were stretched on the sand, many of them with arms and legs broken or bearing other marks of the fury of the elements.

"We passed a sleepless and nearly silent night, so great was our consternation. On the morning of the 16th, we returned to the beach, where the bodies of the unfortunate companions of our shipwreck were lying. Several had taken off their clothes to try to swim to land; all more or less bore the marks of the fury of the waves. We passed the day in performing their funeral rites, as far as our sad situation and strength permitted.

"The next day we had to leave the mournful and inhospitable shore and penetrate into the interior of this unknown land. The winter had come in all its severity, and we had to travel through snow up to our knees. Often we were obliged to go a long distance about, in order to pass rivers which intercepted our way. My companions were completely disheartened; and often I was obliged to make rude foot-gear for their bleeding feet.

"We thus dragged ourselves along, or rather I took them as one might say in tow (for neither my courage nor my strength failed me), till the 4th of December, when we met with two Indians. To picture the joy, the ecstasy of my companions, who every moment had been expecting that death would put an end to their sufferings, would be beyond any powers of description. The aborigines did not recognize me at first, seeing me with a long beard, and so

altered as I was by so many sufferings. I had formerly rendered great service to their nation, and you know these children of nature are never wanting in gratitude. They received me with the liveliest demonstrations of joy; all of us were saved. I then learnt that we were on Cape Breton island, thirty leagues from Louisbourg.

"I at once decided on leaving my companions at the first Acadian settlement we passed, quite sure that they would receive every attention, and on proceeding myself to Quebec to give General Murray the first news of the shipwreck. It is useless, my dear friends, to relate to you all the particulars of my journey since then; my crossing from the island to the mainland in a birch canoe, in the midst of the ice, where I was nearly perishing; my marches and counter-marches through the woods; let it suffice to say, that, according to my reckoning, I have travelled five hundred and fifty leagues on snow-shoes. I was often obliged to change guides; for at the end of a week's march the strength of Acadian and Indian alike was exhausted."

After this affecting narrative the d'Haberville family passed a part of the night in mourning the loss of so many relations and friends, who had been expelled from their new country by a barbarous mandate; of so many French and Canadians, who were hoping to console themselves for their losses in the land of their forefathers.

Monsieur de St. Luc took only a few hours rest, as he wished to be the first to communicate the catastrophe of the *Auguste* to the English general, and to present himself before him as a living protest against the sentence of death, which seemed to have been pronounced in cold blood against so many unfortunate victims, against so many brave soldiers, whose valor on the field of battle he ought to have appreciated, and whom he must have esteemed had his heart been capable of exalted feeling. Perhaps his defeat of the preceding year rankled too deeply in that heart to leave room for any other feelings than those of hatred and revenge.

"Do you know, d'Haberville," said Monsieur de St. Luc during breakfast, "who the powerful protector is, who has obtained for you from General Murray a respite of two years to enable you to sell your property to better advantage? Do you know to whom you and your family owe your lives, which you would probably have lost in our wreck?"

"No," said Monsieur d'Haberville, "I am quite unaware who this protector can be, who is sufficiently powerful to obtain such a favor for me; but, on my honor as a gentleman, I shall be everlastingly grateful to him for it."

"Well, my friend, it is to the young Scotchman, Archibald Lochiel, that you owe this debt of gratitude."

“I have forbidden,” exclaimed the captain, “that the name of that viper, which I warmed in my bosom, should be pronounced in my presence!”

And Monsieur d’Haberville’s large black eyes flashed fire.

“I presume,” said Monsieur de St. Luc, “that this prohibition does not extend to me. I am the friend of your childhood, your brother in arms, and I know the whole extent of the duties to which honor obliges us; and you shall not answer me as you answered your sister, the superior of the General Hospital, when she wished to plead the cause of an innocent young man: ‘Enough, my sister; you are a holy woman, obliged by your vows to pardon your bitterest enemies, even those who are sullied by the blackest ingratitude towards you; but I, my sister, you well know never forget an injury. I cannot help it; it is a part of my nature. Enough, my sister, never pronounce his name in my presence, or I shall cease to hold any communication with you.’ No, my dear friend,” continued Monsieur de St. Luc, “you will not answer me thus, and you will listen to what I am going to say.”

Monsieur d’Haberville knew too well the duties of hospitality to attempt to impose silence on his friend beneath his own roof. He knit his thick eyebrows, lowered his eyelids, so as to hide his eyes and resigned himself to listen with the amiable look of a criminal to whom the judge undertakes to prove, in a very eloquent discourse, that he has deserved the sentence he is going to pronounce on him.

Monsieur de St. Luc gave a concise account of Lochiel’s conduct, whilst striving against his implacable enemy Major Montgomery. He spoke forcibly of the duty of a soldier, who must obey even the frequently unjust orders of his superior officer. He drew a touching picture of the young man’s anguish, and added:

“As soon as Lochiel was informed that you had received the order to embark with us for Europe, he requested an audience with the English general, which was at once granted.

“ ‘*Captain* Lochiel,’ said Murray presenting him with the commission of this new rank, ‘I was just going to send for you. A witness of your exploits on our glorious field of battle in 1759, I hastened to ask the command of a company for you; and I must add that your subsequent conduct has also proved to me that you are worthy of the favors of the British government, and of all that I individually can do to obtain them for you.’

“ ‘I am happy, general,’ replied Lochiel, ‘that your recommendation has been the cause of my obtaining promotion, far above my feeble services, and I beg you to accept my thanks for this favor, which emboldens me to ask you another service, since you assure me of your good wishes.’

" 'Speak, captain,' said Murray, 'for I am willing to do a great deal for you.'

" 'Were it for myself,' replied Archy, 'I could desire nothing further; but it is for others that I have to ask a favor and not for myself personally. The family of d'Haberville, ruined like so many others by our conquest, has received orders from Your Excellency to depart very soon for France. They have been unable to sell, even at a very great sacrifice, the small property which remains to them from the wreck of a fortune, that was formerly a handsome one. I beg you, general, to grant them two years to put their affairs a little in order. Your Excellency knows that I owe much to this family, who heaped kindnesses on me during ten year's residence in this colony. It was I, who, obeying the orders of my superior officer, completed their ruin by setting fire to their property of St. Jean-Port-Joli. General, I ask as a favor for a two years' respite for them, and by granting it you will relieve my conscience of a heavy burden!'

" 'Captain Lochiel,' said General Murray in a severe tone of voice, 'I am surprised to hear you intercede for the d'Haberville's, who have shown themselves our most determined enemies.'

" 'It is only doing them justice, general,' replied Archy, 'to acknowledge that they fought bravely in defence of their country, as we also did to conquer it; and it is with confidence that I plead to a brave and gallant soldier for brave and gallant enemies.'

"Lochiel had touched a wrong chord, for the defeat of the previous year rankled in Murray's heart, and besides he was not a man of refined feelings. He therefore replied sharply:

" 'It is impossible, sir; I cannot revoke the order I have already given; the d'Habervilles will leave to-morrow.'

" 'In that case,' said Archy, 'will Your Excellency be so kind as to accept my resignation.'

" 'What, sir!' exclaimed the general turning white with anger.

" 'Will Your Excellency,' replied Lochiel quite coolly, 'be so kind as to accept my resignation, and allow me to serve as a private soldier. Those who seek to point their finger in scorn at the monster of ingratitude, who, after having been loaded with kindness by a whole family, aliens to him by birth, completed its ruin without being able to mitigate its woes, will have more trouble in recognizing him in the ranks, in the uniform of a private, than at the head of honorable men.'

"Murray changed from white to red alternately, turned on his heel as on a pivot, bit his lip, passed his hand several times across his forehead, muttered

something like an oath between his teeth, appeared to be considering for a moment whilst walking up and down the room, and then suddenly becoming calm, held out his hand to Archy, and said to him:

" 'Captain Lochiel, I appreciate the feelings which prompt your conduct. Our sovereign must not be deprived of services, which a man, who is ready to sacrifice his future for the sake of a debt of gratitude, would be capable of rendering him. Your friends shall remain.'

" 'I thank you; a thousand times, I thank you, General,' said Archy. 'Rely upon my devotion whenever you put it to the proof, even if you tell me to walk up to the cannon's mouth alone. I have had a great weight on my heart, but now I feel as light as one of our mountain deer.' "

Of all the passions, which torture man's heart, revenge and jealousy are the most difficult to overcome; it is indeed very rarely that they are entirely extirpated. Captain d'Haberville, after having listened to Monsieur Lacorne's recital, said with knitted brows:

"I see that Monsieur Lochiel's services have been appreciated at their full value; as for me, I was not at all aware that I owed so much to him."

And he changed the conversation.

Monsieur de St. Luc looked from one to the other of the family, who, with heads bent down, had not dared to take part in the conversation, and rising from table, added:

"This respite, d'Haberville, is a very fortunate circumstance for you; for you may rest assured that, in two years time from now, you will be free to stay in Canada or go to France. The English governor has too much to answer for to his government, in having devoted to almost certain death, so many distinguished people, so many gentlemen allied to the most illustrious families, both of the Continent and of England, not to seek, by conciliating the Canadians, to conceal the consequences of this deplorable catastrophe.

"Now, farewell, my dear friends. It is only the weakminded, who allow themselves to be cast down by misfortune. One great consolation remains to us. We did all that brave men could do; and, if it had been possible to have saved our country, our hearts and our arms would have done so."

It was late at night when, on arriving in Quebec, Monsieur de St. Luc presented himself at the gate of Château St. Louis, where entrance was refused him; but he begged so earnestly, saying he was the bearer of news of the greatest importance, that at last an aide-de-camp consented to awaken the governor, who had long been in bed. At first Murray did not recognize Monsieur de St. Luc, and angrily asked him how he had dared to disturb him, and what pressing affair he had to communicate to him at so unseasonable an

hour.

"A very important affair, indeed, sir, for I am Captain de St. Luc and my being here tells you the rest."

A livid paleness spread over the general's features. He had some refreshments served, treated Monsieur Lacorne with the greatest consideration, and made him relate every detail of the wreck of the *Auguste*. He was no longer the same man who had so heartlessly devoted to death (so to speak) all those brave officers at whose uniforms he had taken umbrage.

Monsieur de Lacorne's predictions were verified. Governor Murray,[27] considerably softened after the *Auguste* catastrophe, treated the Canadians more kindly, even with more consideration, and all who wished to stay in the colony had liberty to do so. Above all, Monsieur de St. Luc, whose revelations perhaps he feared, became the object of his attentions. This worthy man, who, like so many others, had suffered great losses through the conquest of Canada, applied himself energetically to repairing his fortunes by embarking in profitable speculations.

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[25] See Appendix F.

[26] This scene between Monsieur de St. Luc, who had escaped from the shipwreck of the *Auguste* and my grandfather Ignace Aubert de Gaspé, captain of a detachment of marines, is related exactly as it was told to me fifty years ago by my paternal aunt, Madame Bailly de Messein, who was twelve years old at the time of the conquest.

[27] The author, whilst recording the traditions of his youth, must remark that there must have been a great prejudice against Governor Murray, and that most probably calumny did not spare him. M. de St. Luc, in his journal, speaks more in his praise than otherwise, but report says that this leniency arose from the governor's subsequent conduct towards the Canadians; particularly from the high favor in which he, M. de St. Luc, was held by Murray.

CHAPTER XVI

LOCHIEL AND BLANCHE

AFTER enduring cruel privations for the space of seven long years, peace and even happiness began to dawn again on the d'Haberville family. It is true that a house of a somewhat humble appearance had replaced the large and opulent manor house, which this family had occupied before the conquest; but it was a palace compared to the mill, which they had left that spring. The d'Habervilles had suffered less than many others in the same position. Loved and respected by their tenants, they had never been exposed to the humiliations, which the vulgar delight to heap upon their superiors when in distress. The d'Habervilles had suffered less, in their comparative poverty, than many others in the same circumstances. All vied in offers of service; and when it was decided to rebuild the manor house and its out-buildings, the whole parish at once sent volunteer relays of men to help on the work; and from the zeal with which all worked, it seemed as if each of them was rebuilding his own dwelling. All these noble-hearted people tried to make their seigneur forget the misfortunes, which they themselves had likewise experienced, but which they seemed to think they alone had deserved. With that delicate tact of which only Frenchmen are capable, they never entered the private rooms of the family at the mill without being invited. If they were affectionate and polite to their seigneur in his day of opulence, it was a sort of worship which they paid him now that the iron hand of misfortune had crushed him down.

Only those who have experienced great reverses of fortune, who have been exposed to long and painful privations can appreciate the contentment, joy, and even happiness of those who have partly repaired their losses, who begin once more to have some hope of a happy future. Up to this time every one had respected the grief which preyed upon Captain d'Haberville. The members of his household spoke in low tones; and French light-heartedness had seemed forever banished from this melancholy dwelling. Now all was changed as if by enchantment. The captain, who was naturally gay, laughed and joked about his misfortunes; the ladies sang incessantly whilst busied with household cares, and "my uncle Raoul's" sonorous voice again woke the echoes of the hillside on the calm of fine evenings.

The faithful José was in every place at once, to prove his zeal in his

master's service. By way of recreation he related to the neighbors, who always came to spend part of the evening, the untoward meeting (as he called it) of his defunct father with the goblins of the Isle of Orleans, his troubles with La Corriveau, and other tales of which his audience were never tired.

About the end of August of that same year, 1767, Captain d'Haberville, who was returning in the morning from the river Port-Joli with his gun on his shoulder and a game-bag well filled with plover, woodcock and teal, noticed that a boat, putting off from a vessel which had anchored close at hand, seemed to be rowing towards his domain. He sat down on the edge of a rock to wait for it, thinking it must contain sailors in search of vegetables, milk, and other refreshments. He hastened to meet them, when they neared the shore, and saw, with surprise, that one of them, very well-dressed, gave a packet to a sailor, pointing out the manor house to him, but at sight of Monsieur d'Haberville he seemed at once to alter his mind; advanced towards him, handed the packet to him and said:

"I should not have ventured to deliver this packet to you myself, Captain d'Haberville, although it contains news which will please you very much."

"And why, sir," replied the captain, racking his memory to find out who this person could be, whom he thought he had seen before. "Why, sir, would you not have ventured to deliver this packet into my own hand, if chance had not made me go to meet you?"

"Because, sir," said the speaker hesitating, "because I should have feared that it might have been disagreeable to you to receive it from my hand. I know that Captain d'Haberville never forgets a kindness nor an injury."

Monsieur d'Haberville looked fixedly at the stranger, knit his eyebrows, shut his eyes close, and for some time kept silence, a prey to an inward struggle; but regaining his self-possession he answered him with the greatest politeness:

"Let us leave the wrongs of the past to be settled by our consciences. You are my guest, Captain Lochiel, and, besides, being the bearer of letters from my son you have a right to be well received by me. All my family will be glad to see you again. You will receive at my house—a cordial hospitality."

He was about to say with bitterness, a princely hospitality, but kept back the ungracious words.

The lion was only half appeased.

Archy acting on a natural impulse put out his hand to shake that of his old friend, but the one he clasped remained cold and unfeeling in his grasp.

A deep sigh escaped from Lochiel. Overpowered by painful emotions, for some moments he seemed undecided what to do, but at last said in a broken

voice:

“Captain d’Haberville may harbor resentment against a young man, whom he formerly loved and loaded with favors, but he is too high-souled and kind-hearted wantonly to inflict on him a punishment beyond his strength; to see once more the spots which recall such sad remembrances to his mind will of itself be sufficiently painful, without meeting there only the cold reception that hospitality towards a stranger demands.

“Farewell, Captain d’Haberville; farewell forever to him whom I formerly called my father, though he now no longer looks on me as a son; though that son has always felt for him the affectionate gratitude due to a tender father. I take heaven to witness, Monsieur d’Haberville, that my life has been embittered by remorse, ever since the fatal day when the imperious duty of a subaltern compelled me to perform acts of vandalism at which my very soul revolted; that a crushing weight was on my heart as much amid the intoxication of military triumph and the delirious joys of balls and feastings, as in the silence of my long sleepless nights.

“Farewell, forever; for I see that you have refused to listen to the account of the good superior of my remorse, my anguish, my despair, before and after the ruthless tasks, which, as a soldier subject to military discipline, I was obliged to perform. Farewell for the last time; and since all intercourse must cease between us, tell me, oh! tell me, I beg of you, that your excellent family are again enjoying peace and happiness. And now all I can do, is on my knees to pray God to shed His blessings on a family that I love so dearly! To offer to repair the losses I have caused, by means of my fortune, which is now considerable, would be an insult to the noble d’Haberville!”

If Monsieur d’Haberville had refused to listen to the explanations offered by his sister, still he had not been insensible to Monsieur St. Luc’s recital of how Lochiel, in his sublime self-devotion, was ready to sacrifice his fortune and his future to his exalted ideas of gratitude. Thence arose the half-cordial reception which he had at first offered him. It can easily be imagined that otherwise he would at once have turned his back on him.

The words hinting at reparation for his losses first made Monsieur d’Haberville shudder as if he had been scorched with a hot iron; but deeply occupied with other thoughts and other internal struggles, it had but a transient effect. He clutched at his breast with both hands, turned two or three times first towards Lochiel, and then in a contrary direction, made a sign for him to remain where he was, then walked quickly up and down the sandy shore. At last returning to Lochiel, he said to him:

“I have done all I can, Archy, to get rid of the last vestige of ill-feeling; but you know me; it will be the work of time to efface the last traces. All that I can

tell you is, that in my heart I forgive you. My sister, the superior, has told me all. I made up my mind to listen to her after my friend St. Luc had told me of your intercession with the governor on my behalf. I have thought that one who was ready to sacrifice rank and fortune for his friends must have acted under restraint in the circumstances to which I allude for the last time. If from time to time you remark some coldness in my demeanor towards you, do not pay any attention to it but let time do its own work."

And he cordially pressed Lochiel's hand. The lion was entirely tamed.

"As it is likely," said Monsieur d'Haberville, "that this calm weather will last some time, send away your sailors after I have sent them some refreshment; and if by chance a favorable wind springs up, I will have you taken to Quebec in six hours, on my celebrated mare Lubine, that is to say, if your business prevents your giving us as long a time as we should be happy to keep you beneath our roof. That is settled, is it not?"

And passing his arm familiarly within Archy's, they took the road to the house.

"Now, Archy," said the captain, "how comes it that you are encharged with these letters from my son, which, you have just said, contain good news?"

"I left Jules in Paris," replied Archy, "seven weeks ago, after having passed a month with him at the house of his uncle, Monsieur de Germain, who did not wish to separate me from my friend during my stay in France; but as it will be more agreeable to you to learn all about this good news from his own hand, allow me now to say no more."

If Lochiel was grieved at seeing what used to be called before the conquest the hamlet of Haberville replaced by three or four buildings, nearly similar to those belonging to wealthy habitants, yet he was agreeably surprised at the smiling aspect of the domain. The new and recently white-washed buildings, the garden, enamelled with flowers, the two orchards filled with the finest fruit, the haymakers returning from the meadow, with two carts loaded with fragrant hay, all helped to dissipate the feeling of sadness which he had at first experienced.

With the exception of a sofa, twelve mahogany arm-chairs and some little articles of furniture, which had been saved from the fire, the interior of the house was furnished very simply. The tables, chairs and other pieces of furniture were of common wood; the partitions were unpainted and the floors uncarpeted. The family portraits, which were the pride of the d'Habervilles, no longer occupied their proper place in the dining-room. The only ornaments of the new rooms consisted of some fir-boughs placed in the corners and an abundance of flowers in baskets made by the natives of the country. Still there

was a charm, even in this absence of costly furniture; the fragrance of these fir-boughs, flowers and new resinous wood, which one inhaled freely, seemed to strengthen the body and rejoice the sight. Everywhere there was a spotless cleanliness, which more than compensated for the absence of more sumptuous furniture.

All the family had seen Monsieur d'Haberville coming accompanied by a stranger and had assembled in the drawing-room to receive him. With the exception of Blanche, no one recognized Archy, whom they had not seen for ten years. The young girl turned pale and trembled at the sight of the friend of her childhood, whom she thought she would never see again; but quickly recovering her composure with that strength of mind with which women conceal even their liveliest emotions, she, like the other two ladies, made him the deep courtesy she would have made to a stranger. As for Uncle Raoul, he bowed with cold politeness. He did not like the English, and since the conquest had been in the habit of swearing against them with an unction that was far from edifying to pious ears.

"May an Iroquois broil me," said the captain addressing Archy, "if a single one of them knows you. See! look well at this gentleman; ten years cannot have effaced him from your memory. I recognized him immediately. Speak, Blanche, you, being by far the youngest, ought to have better eyes than the others."

"I think," said she in a low voice, "that it is Monsieur Lochiel."

"Why! yes!" said Monsieur d'Haberville, "it is Archy, who has recently seen Jules in Paris; and he brings us letters which contain good news. What are you doing, Archy, that you do not embrace your old friends?"

All the family, who till then had not been aware of the captain's change in favor of Archy (whose name they had never ventured to pronounce in his presence), all the family who were only waiting for the head of the family's permission to give Archy the most friendly reception, now showed their joy in a manner which moved Archy to tears.

Jules' last letter contained the following passage:

"I have been drinking the waters of Barèges for my wounds, and, although I am still weak, I am rapidly getting well. The doctors say that repose is necessary for me, and that the exertions of war will long be beyond my strength. I have an indefinite leave of absence to give me time to regain my strength. My relative, the minister, and all my friends advise me to leave the army, to return to Canada, my family's new country, and to establish myself there after having taken the oath of allegiance to the English crown; but I do not like to do anything without consulting you. My brother Archy, who has

powerful friends in England, has remitted me a letter of introduction to your governor, Guy Carleton, who is said to be very attentive to the Canadian nobility, whose glorious antecedents he well knows. If, therefore, I decide on settling in Canada, I shall have hopes of being of use to my poor countrymen. God willing, I shall have the happiness of embracing you all towards the end of next September. Oh! what a pleasure, after such a long separation."

Jules added in a postscript:

"I was forgetting to tell you, that I have been presented to the king, who received me kindly; and even complimented me very highly on what he called my noble conduct, naming me Knight of the Grand Cross of the right honorable royal and military order of St. Louis. I do not know what sorry jester of a grand personage got this favor for me; as if, every Frenchman, who wore a sword, had not made use of it at least as well as I did. I could mention ten officers of my division who deserved being decorated instead of me. It is true that I had the precious advantage over them of having got myself slashed up like an idiot at every encounter with the enemy. It is really a pity that the order of fools has not been instituted, for then I should have been more justly entitled to my rank of knight, than I am to that which his Most Christian Majesty has just conferred on me. Still I hope this act will not close the gates of paradise against him; and that St. Peter will find some other peccadilloes to object to, for otherwise I should be in despair."

Archy could not help smiling at the words "Most Christian Majesty." He thought he saw his friend's satirical look when writing this phrase!

"Always the same!" said Monsieur d'Haberville.

"Only thinking of others!" they all cried in chorus.

"I will wager my head against a shilling," said Archy, "that he would have been far better pleased to see one of his friends decorated."

"What a son!" said the mother.

"What a brother!" added Blanche.

"Ah! yes! what a brother," said Archy, with much feeling.

"And what a nephew have I fashioned," exclaimed Uncle Raoul, cutting the air up and down with his cane, as if it were a cavalry sabre.

"That is a prince who knows how to appreciate merit and reward it. His Majesty of France is no fool. He knows that with a hundred officers like Jules he could resume the offensive, overrun Europe with victorious armies, cross the straits like another William, crush proud Albion, and retake its colonies!"

And Uncle Raoul again cut the air with his cane, to the imminent peril of those about him. The chevalier then looked at every one with a proud and well-satisfied look, and, with the assistance of his cane, went and seated himself in an arm-chair to repose himself.

Lochiel's arrival with Jules' letters gave the greatest pleasure to all this excellent family. They were never tired of questioning him about one so dear to them; about relatives and friends that they had little hope of ever seeing again; about the Faubourg St. Germain; about the French Court, and about his own adventures after he left Canada.

Archy then wished to see the servants. He found the mulatto Lisette busied in the kitchen preparing the dinner; she threw her arms around his neck, as she used to do of old when he arrived at the manor house during the college vacation in company with Jules, whom she had nursed; and her voice was broken by her sobs.

This mulatto, whom the captain had bought when she was only four years old, was, in spite of her faults, very much attached to all the family. The master was the only one of whom she was the least afraid; as for the mistress, going on the principle that she herself was of longer standing in the house, she only obeyed her in proper time and place. Blanche and her brother were the only ones who, by kindness, made her do as they wished; and although Jules often put her out of temper, she only laughed at his tricks, and was besides always ready to hide his peccadilloes and to take his part when his parents scolded him.

Monsieur d'Haberville, quite out of patience, had emancipated her long ago, but "she just cared *that* for her emancipation," she would say, snapping her fingers, "for she had just as much right to stay in the house, where she had been brought up, as he or his had." If her exasperated master put her out at the north door, she immediately entered by the south one.

This woman, whose temper was so ungovernable, had nevertheless been as affected by her master's misfortunes as if she had been his own daughter; and, what was strange, all the time that she saw the captain brooding over the gloomy thoughts which preyed on his mind, she was tractable and obedient to all the orders she received, doing her utmost to do the work of two servants. When she was alone with Blanche, she often fell on her neck sobbing, and that noble girl had to make a truce with her own sorrows in order to console the poor slave. But no sooner had happiness been restored to the family than Lisette again became as self-willed as before.

Lochiel on leaving the kitchen ran to meet José, who was coming out of the garden singing, loaded with vegetables and fruit.

“Excuse me,” said José to him, “if I give you my left hand, I left the other on the Plains of Abraham. I cannot say anything against the short petticoat (saving your presence) who rid me of it. He did it conscientiously, for he cut it off so neatly, just at the wrist-joint, that he did half the work of the surgeon who had the dressing of it. I may say with truth, that that short petticoat and myself are about quits; for, ducking down, I caught up my gun, which I had dropped, and ran my bayonet through his body. After all it was for the best, for what could I do with my right hand, now that there is no fighting? Why, there’s no more war going on, now that the English are the masters of the land,” added José, sighing.

“It seems, my dear José,” answered Lochiel, laughing, “that you know very well how to do without your right hand so long as you have your left one.”

“It’s true,” said José. “It will do in cases of emergency, like that of my skirmish with the short petticoat; but to tell you the truth I have regretted much being one-handed! Both hands would not have been too many to serve my good master with; the times have been hard, but thank God the worst is over.”

And tears shone in the eyes of the faithful José.

Lochiel then went to the haymakers, who were raking up and loading the hay. They were all old acquaintances, who greeted him warmly; for, with the exception of the captain, the whole family, and Jules also before his departure for Europe, had made it their duty to exculpate him.

The dinner, served with the greatest plainness, was a bountiful one, thanks to the game with which the shore and woods abounded at that season of the year. The plate consisted of only what was barely necessary; besides the spoons, forks, and necessary goblets, there was but one tankard, of antique form, which, engraved with the d’Haberville arms, bore witness to the former opulence of the family. The dessert, consisting entirely of the fruit in season, was served on maple leaves, or in the *cassots* and baskets which showed the industry of the aborigines. A small glass of black-currant liqueur to sharpen the appetite, spruce-beer made from the branches of that tree, some Spanish wine, which they almost always drank diluted, were the only liquors which the Seigneur d’Haberville’s hospitality enabled him to offer his guest. But this did not prevent the greatest cheerfulness from reigning during the meal; for after their long privations and sufferings this family seemed to have commenced a new life. If Monsieur d’Haberville had not feared wounding Archy’s feelings, he would not have failed to have made some playful allusion to the champagne being replaced by sparkling spruce beer.

“Now that we are a complete family party,” said the captain, smiling at Archy, “let us talk about my son’s future prospects. As for myself, prematurely old and worn out by the fatigues of war, I have a good excuse for not serving

the new government; besides, at my age, I could not draw a sword against France, the country I served for thirty years; a hundred times rather would I die!"

"And," broke in Uncle Raoul, "we can all say like Hector of Troy:

> *. . . . 'Si Pergama dextra*
> *Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.' "*

"Never mind Hector of Troy," said Monsieur d'Haberville, who, not being of so literary a turn as his brother, did not much enjoy his quotations. "Never mind Hector of Troy, who cannot take much interest in our family affairs, but let us talk about my son. His state of health compels him, perhaps for some little time, perhaps even for always, to retire from the service; his dearest affections are centred here where he was born. Canada is his native land, and he cannot have the same attachment to that of his ancestors. Besides, his position is very different from mine; that which would be cowardice in me, on the border of the grave, is a positive duty for him, since he is now only commencing life. He has gloriously discharged his debt to the land of his ancestors. He retires with honor from a service which the physicians have pronounced incompatible with his state of health. Let him now consecrate his talents and his energies to the service of his fellow-Canadians. The new governor is already well disposed towards us. He receives favorably such of our fellow-countrymen as have business with him. On several occasions, he has expressed himself as sympathising in the misfortunes of those brave officers whom he had met face to face on the field of battle, and whom fortune, and not their own courage, had betrayed. At all the assemblies at the Château St. Louis, he shows the same consideration to Canadians as to his own countrymen, to those among us who have lost everything, as to those more fortunate ones who can still present themselves there with a certain display. Under his administration, and furnished besides with the introductions that our friend Lochiel has procured him, Jules has every hope of holding a high position in the colony. Let him tender his oath of allegiance to the British crown, and my last words to him in my dying hour shall be: 'Serve your English sovereign with as much zeal, devotion and loyalty, as I have served the French monarch, and receive my last blessing.' "

Every one was struck with this sudden change of feeling on the part of the head of the family. They had not considered that misfortune is a hard master and makes the most intractable dispositions bend beneath his iron hand. Captain d'Haberville, though too proud and too loyal to acknowledge openly how badly Louis XV had treated subjects whose devotion had amounted even to heroism, did not the less resent the ingratitude of the court of France. Although wounded to his heart's core by this neglect, he would still have been

ready to shed the last drop of his blood for that voluptuous monarch who was entirely given up to his mistresses' caprices, but his abnegation went no further than this. For himself he would have refused any favor from the new government, but he was too right-minded to allow over-sensitiveness to interfere with his son's prospects.

"Now let every one give his opinion frankly," said the captain, smiling, "and let the majority decide." The ladies only answered this appeal by throwing themselves into his arms and weeping for joy. Uncle Raoul seized hold of his brother's hand and wrung it heartily, saying:

"Nestor of old could not have spoken more wisely."

"Nor could we have been more glad," said Archy, "if we had had the advantage of listening to that venerable personage's words."

As the tide was high and the evening fine, Lochiel proposed to Blanche that they should walk on the shore indented with sandy coves, which stretches from the manor as far as the little river of St. Jean-Port-Joli.

"I find everywhere," said Archy, when they were walking beside the river on which glanced the rays of the setting sun, "objects and spots which recall memories of the past. It was here that when a child you used to play with the shells which I would pick up along the shore; it was in this cove that I gave my brother Jules his first lessons in the art of swimming; here are the same strawberry plants and raspberry bushes where we used to gather the fruit which you were so fond of; it is here that you used to sit on a rock with a book in your hand, awaiting your brother's and my return from shooting in order to congratulate us on our prowess or laugh at us when our game-bag was empty. There is not a tree, or a bush, or a fragment of rock that is not an old acquaintance, and which I do not revisit with pleasure. Childhood and youth are happy seasons! Always enjoying the present, oblivious of the past, careless of the future, life flows on as calmly as the water of the little brook we are now crossing! It was then that Jules and I were truly wise, for our ambitious dreams were confined to passing our days together on this domain, only occupied by rural labors and amusements."

"This peaceable and monotonous life," interrupted Blanche, "is that to which we are condemned by the weakness of our sex. God, in giving strength and courage to man, appointed a nobler destiny for him. What excitement a man must feel when he is in the midst of a battle! What spectacle can be more sublime than that of the soldier facing death a hundred times in the conflict for the sake of all he holds dearest on earth! What intoxication the warrior must feel when the clarion announces victory!"

That noble young girl knew no other glory but that of the soldier. Her

father, who was nearly always under arms, was, when with his family, constantly relating to them his fellow-countrymen's exploits, and Blanche, who was but a child, would be in raptures at the recital of their almost fabulous deeds of arms.

"These, alas!" said Archy, "are but sad triumphs, when we think of the disasters they are the cause of; of the tears shed by the widow and the orphan, bereaved of those dearest to them on earth; of their painful privations, of their often utter destitution! But here we are at the Port-Joli river. It is well named with its smiling banks covered with wild roses and thickets of fir and spruce. How many memories this charming river recalls to my mind! I think I can still see your excellent mother and your good aunt seated on the grass on a fine August evening, whilst we, in our little green canoe, would paddle up the river to the little island of Babin, repeating the burden of your pretty song in chorus, and keeping time with our oars,

'We will on the river row, row;
We will on the island play.'

I think I can hear your mother's voice calling out: 'Are you ever going to bring Blanche back, you naughty boys? It is supper time, and you know your father insists on punctuality at meals.' And Jules, paddling hard towards her, would call out: 'Do not be afraid of my father's being out of temper; I will take it all on myself, and will make him laugh by telling him that, like His Majesty Louis XIV, he expected to have to wait. You know I am always spoiled during the holidays.' "

"Dear Jules!" said Blanche, "and yet he was sad enough, Archy, when you and I found him in the thicket of firs, where he had hidden himself, after his escapade, until my father's first ebullition of wrath should be over."

"He had only been guilty of some childish prank," said Archy laughing.

"Let us enumerate his misdeeds," said Blanche, counting them on her fingers. "First, he had infringed my father's orders by harnessing to the carriage a wild three year old horse which shied and was perfectly unmanageable even in a sleigh; secondly, the said horse after a tremendous fight with the rash driver had taken the bit between its teeth, and, as the first fruits of its liberty, had run over the cow of our neighbor, the widow Maurice."

"A fortunate accident for the said widow," replied Archy, "for, in the place of the old animal she had lost, your excellent father gave her the two finest heifers of his stock. I cannot recall unmoved," continued Lochiel, "the poor woman's vexation when she found out that some officious passer-by had informed your father of the accident of which his son had been the cause. How comes it, that it is those very people whom Jules has tormented the most that are the most attached to him. By what charm does he make himself beloved by

every one! We certainly gave the widow Maurice no peace during our holidays, and yet she always wept heartily when she bade your brother farewell."

"The reason is quite simple," said Blanche. "It is that every one knows how good-hearted he is. And besides, Archy, you know by experience that he always prefers teasing those that he likes best. But let us go on with the list of his misdeeds on that unlucky day; thirdly, the horrid horse shied, and, breaking the wheel of the carriage against the fence, threw the driver at least fifteen feet into the adjacent meadow; but Jules, like a cat which always lands on its feet, was happily not the least injured by his fall. Fourthly, the mare after having broken the carriage into splinters against the stones in the Trois-Saumons river, ended by breaking her leg on the shingles at L'Islet."

"Yes," resumed Archy, "and I remember your eloquent pleading in favor of the criminal, who, in desperation at having displeased so kind a father, might perhaps be driven to extremities! 'What, dear papa!' you said, 'should you not rather feel happy and thank Heaven which has watched over your son's life when he was exposed to so much danger? What signifies the loss of a horse, of a cow, of a carriage? You ought to shudder when you think that the bleeding body of your only son might have been brought home!'

" 'Come and let us have done with it,' said Monsieur d'Haberville, 'and go and find your rascal of a brother, for of course you and Archy know where he has hidden himself after his deeds of valor!'

"I think I still see," continued Archy, "Jules' serio-comic look of contrition, when he knew the storm had passed. 'What! father,' he ended by saying, after having submitted to a pretty severe scolding, 'would you have preferred that, like another Hippolytus, I had been dragged to my death by the horse fed by your hand?' 'Come, let us go to supper,' said the captain, 'since there is a protecting deity who watches over madcaps like you.'

" 'That is what I call speaking to the point,' Jules replied.

" 'Did you ever see such a fellow!' your father ended by saying laughingly.

"I could never understand," added Archy, "why your father, who is generally so implacable, always pardoned Jules so easily without appearing even to remember his offences?"

"My father," said Blanche, "knows that his son adores him, that he always acts on the impulse of the moment, without reflecting on the consequences of his thoughtlessness, and that he would support the severest privations himself to spare him the slightest grief."

"Now," replied Archy, "that we have recalled so many agreeable recollections, let us seat ourselves on this bank, where we have so often rested

formerly, and let us speak of graver matters. I have made up my mind to settle in Canada. I have recently sold an inheritance bequeathed to me by one of my cousins. Although my fortune would be but moderate in Europe, it would be considerable when invested here in this colony, where I have passed my happiest days, and where I hope to live and die near my friends. What do you say about it, Blanche?"

"Nothing in the world would give me so much pleasure. Oh! how happy Jules will be, for he loves you so! How happy we shall all be!"

"Yes, very happy, without doubt; but Blanche, my happiness cannot be perfect unless you deign to complete it by accepting my hand. I have . . ."

The noble girl leaped to her feet as if a viper had stung her; and pale with anger, and with trembling lip, exclaimed:

"You are insulting me, Captain Archibald Cameron of Lochiel! You do not consider how humiliating and painful your offer is! How can you make such a proposal to me now when the incendiary torch, which you and yours have sent through my unhappy country, is hardly extinguished! When the smoke is still rising from our ruined dwellings, do you offer me the hand of one of the incendiaries? It would be too bitter an irony to light the hymeneal torch at the smoking ashes of my unfortunate country! It would be said, Captain Lochiel, that, now that you are rich, you have bought the poor Canadian girl's hand with your gold; and a d'Haberville could never submit to such a humiliation! O Archy! Archy! I should never have expected this from you, the friend of my childhood! You surely cannot have considered the offer you were about to make me!"

And Blanche, overpowered with emotion, sat down sobbing.

The noble Canadian girl had never appeared so beautiful in Archy's eyes, as at the moment when, with proud contempt, she rejected the offer of marriage from one of her unhappy country's conquerors.

"Be calm, Blanche," replied Lochiel. "I admire your patriotism and I appreciate your high-minded delicacy, though you are not just towards me, your childhood's friend. Surely you cannot think that a Cameron of Lochiel would insult any noble young lady whatever, and still less the sister of Jules d'Haberville and the daughter of his benefactor. You know, Blanche, that I never act without reflection. You used all formerly to call me the grave philosopher and consider that I had sound judgment. It is perhaps only natural for a d'Haberville indignantly to reject an Anglo-Saxon's hand so soon after the conquest; but, Blanche, you know that I have long loved you. In spite of my silence you cannot have been ignorant of it, but the poor and proscribed exile would have been wanting in honor had he declared his love for the

daughter of his rich benefactor.

“And because I am now rich,” continued Lochiel, “and because the fortune of war made us the victors in the terrible struggle that we had with your countrymen, and because fate made me an involuntary instrument in the work of destruction, am I to crush back into my heart forever one of the noblest feelings of our nature, and acknowledge myself vanquished without making an effort to obtain her, whom I have loved with so much constancy? No, Blanche, you cannot think so; you spoke unreflectingly; say that you already regret the unkind words that escaped you, and which you surely could not have meant for your old friend. Speak, Blanche, and say that you do not mean them, that you are not regardless of feelings of which you must have long been aware.”

“I will be frank with you, Archy,” replied Blanche, “as candid as a young country girl who has studied neither her sentiments nor her answer in books, as a rustic who knows nothing of the manners of a society which she has long ceased to frequent and which might impose a conventional reserve on her; and I will open my whole heart to you. Lochiel, you had everything which might have captivated a young girl of fifteen; illustrious birth, intellect, athletic strength, a generous and high-minded disposition. What more was wanting to fascinate a romantic and susceptible young girl! Therefore, Archy, if the poor and prescribed young man had asked my hand of my parents, and if they had promised it you, I should have been proud and happy to have obeyed them; but, Captain Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, there is now a gulf between us, which I can never pass.”

And the noble young lady’s voice was choked with sobs.

“But I beg of you, my brother Archy,” she continued, “not to let this alter your intention of settling in Canada. Buy a property near this seigniory, so that we may see each other often, very often. And if, in the ordinary course of nature (for you are eight years older than I), I have the misfortune of losing you, rest assured, dear Archy, that your sister Blanche will water your tomb with tears as abundant and as bitter, as she could have shed had she been your wife.”

And affectionately taking his hand in hers she added:

“It is late, Archy, let us return home.”

“You will not surely be so cruel to me, to yourself,” replied Archy, “as to persist in your refusal. Yes, towards yourself, Blanche; for the love of a heart such as yours does not become extinct like a common love; it survives the lapse of time and the vicissitudes of life. On his return from Europe, Jules shall plead my cause and his sister cannot refuse him the first favor which he asks for their mutual friend. Ah! say that I can, that I may be allowed to hope!”

"Ah! say that I can, that I may be allowed to hope."

"Never," said Blanche, "never, my dear Archy. The women, as well as the men of my family have never failed in what duty required of them; they have never shrunk from any sacrifice, however painful it might be. Two of my aunts, who were then quite young, said to my father one day: 'As it is, d'Haberville, your fortune is barely sufficient to keep up the rank and dignity of our house: our marriage portion,' they added smiling, 'would make a considerable breach in it; to-morrow we shall enter the convent where everything is prepared for us.' The prayers, threats, and frightful anger of my father could not alter their determination; they entered the convent where they have edified every one by their constant practice of those virtues that befit that holy state.

“As for me, Archy, I have to fulfil very different duties, duties which are very congenial to me; they consist in rendering my dear parents’ lives comfortable, so as, if possible, to make them forget their misfortunes, and in watching over their declining years with tender affection, so that their last sigh may be breathed in my arms. After receiving their dying blessing, I will incessantly pray that God may grant them that repose, which he refused them in this world of sorrow. My brother Jules will marry, and I will watch over his children with the tenderest care and share his good and evil fortune like an affectionate sister.”

Lochiel and Blanche silently took the path that led homewards. The rays of the setting sun, which were mirrored in the calm waters, and the silvery sands on the shore lent a fresh charm to the glorious landscape; but they had suddenly become indifferent to the beauties of nature.

The next day, a favorable wind sprang up towards evening. The vessel which had brought Lochiel immediately weighed anchor, and Monsieur d’Haberville entrusted José with taking his young friend to Quebec.

On the way the conversation did not flag between the two travellers; their subjects were inexhaustible. About five o’clock in the morning, having come to the Beaumont hills, Lochiel said to José:

“I am as sleepy as a dormouse. We sat up late last night, and I was so feverish that I passed the rest of the night without sleeping. Do be so kind as to sing me something to keep me awake.”

He well knew how hoarse and out of tune his companion’s voice was, and this gave him great confidence in the anti-soporific effects of his singing.

“It is not for me to refuse you,” said José, who, like nearly every one who sings out of tune, prided himself on being a good singer. “It is not for me to refuse you; and, besides, you run some risk of breaking your head against the stones which, since La Corriveau passed over them, have hardly ever been able to keep their places; but, I do not quite know where to begin. Would you like a song on the taking of Berg-op-Zoom[28]?”

“Let us have Berg-op-Zoom,” said Archy, “though the English were pretty badly treated there.”

“Ah, well!” said José, “anyway it was just a little retaliation on the enemy, who pitched into us pretty well in ’59.”

And he struck up the following song:

‘Here’s to the man who took Berg-op-Zoom;
Here’s to the man who took Berg-op-Zoom.
He’s a regular mill to grind out a *Te Deum*;
He’s a regular mill to grind out a *Te Deum*.
I can tell you, indeed, he’s a wonderful man
And dispatches his sieges as fast as he can.’

“But that is quite charming in its simplicity,” exclaimed Lochiel.

“Is it not so, captain,” said José, quite proud of his success.

“Oh! yes, my good José, but do please go on, I am longing to hear the end of it; you surely will not leave off in the middle just as you are getting on so well.”

“As you wish, captain,” said José, touching his hand to his cap.

‘Like Alexander he is quite small (*repeat*)
But his intelligence beats all, (*repeat*)
And like him he’s very valiant,
And like Cæsar very prudent.’

“ ‘But his intelligence beats all,’ ” repeated Archy, “is a most happily turned phrase! where did you get that song?”

“A grenadier, who had been at Berg-op-Zoom, used to sing it to my defunct father. He said that there was pretty hot work there, never fear, and he bore the marks of it; he had only one eye remaining, and from his forehead to his jaw all the skin had been carried away; but as all this damage was on his left side, he could still take aim well enough on his right side. But only let him alone he’d do; that fellow was no fool, and I feel quite easy in my mind about him. Now let us go on to the third verse, which is the last:

‘He curry-combed the English there, (*repeat*)
Though to show fight they thought they’d dare;
Though to show fight they thought they’d dare;
But they soon found they’d soldiers met
When such a dressing they did get.’

“Upon my word that’s delicious!” exclaimed Lochiel. “Those English who ‘thought they’d dare to show fight!’ Those soldiers who gave them a ‘dressing’! Altogether charming in its simplicity! Yes,” he continued, “these quiet and peaceable English who take it into their heads to show fight and get such a good dressing; now I had thought that the English were always quarrelsome and wicked! But it is charming! perfectly charming!”

“Well! but you see, captain,” said José, “it is the song that says all that; for my own part, I have always found the English pretty boorish and crabbed; and besides not always easy to give a dressing to, like our horse Lubine who is sometimes full of whims and out of temper when he is curried too hard; for instance there’s the first battle on the Plains of Abraham.”

“Was it the English who used the curry-comb there?” said Archy.

José by way of answer only pointed to the stump of his arm, around which he had wound the thong of his whip.

The two travellers continued on their way for some time in silence; but José, perceiving that his companion was nearly overpowered by sleep, called out to him:

“Come, come, captain! you are falling asleep. Take care, or, you must excuse me, you will break your neck. I think you must want another song to keep you awake. Would you like me to sing you Biron’s lament?”

“What Biron is that?” said Lochiel.

“Ah! well! ‘my uncle Raoul,’ who is a very learned man, says that he was a prince, a great warrior, the relative and friend of the defunct king Henry IV, to whom he had rendered great services; which, however, did not prevent his having him put to death as if he had been less than nothing. And when I pitied his fate, he and Monsieur d’Haberville told me that he had been a traitor to his kind, and never to sing the lament in their presence. It seemed strange to me, but I have obeyed them.”

“I have never heard of this lament, and, as I am not quite so sensitive as your masters with regard to the kings of France, be so kind as to sing to it me.”

José then entoned the following lament, in a voice like thunder:

“Thus spake unto the king, one of his men-at-arms,
His name it was La Fin, the captain of the guards;
‘Sire, of young de Biron, I beg you to beware,
For to plot treason ’gainst you, he, alas! doth dare.

“No sooner had he spoken, than Biron entered there,
Bowing low unto him, with courtesy so fair;
And saying, ‘May it please you, Sire, with me at dice to play
For a thousand Spanish doubloons, that I have won to-day?’

“ ‘If you have them there, Biron, go straight unto the Queen,
Go straight unto the Queen, that she with you may play,
For your worldly goods from you, I fear, ere long will pass away.’

“He had thrown but only twice, when the provost enter’d in
Bowing low unto him, with courtesy so fair
And saying: ‘Will it please you, Prince, with me to come away
For this evening at the Bastille, you will have to stay.’

“ ‘If my sword were at my side, or my bayonet to my hand,
If I had but my sabre, or my gilded dagger fair
There’s not a provost in the land, who me to arrest, would dare.’

“He had been there a month, e’en six weeks had passed away,
And not a single knight or dame, a visit did him pay,
There only came three justices, pretending to know naught
They said to him: ‘My noble Prince, by whom were you here brought!’

“ ‘I was brought here by those who had full power to treat me so;
It was the King and Queen themselves whom I have served so long,
And they give me as my recompense a traitorous death to die.

“ ‘Does not the King recall the wars, we fought in fair Savoy,
When I myself received a wound from a ball that came whizzing by,
Yet he gives me for a recompense, a traitor’s death to die.

“ ‘Oh! let the King remember well, though I am doom’d to die,
That yet another will be left of the Biron lineage high;
A brother do I leave behind, the next in age to me,
Who’ll have me in his memory, when he the King shall see.’ ”

For once Lochiel was completely aroused; José’s stentorian voice would have aroused the Sleeping Beauty of the Wood, who for a century was plunged in a profound slumber; which, by-the-by, was a pretty good nap, even for a princess who might be supposed to have carte blanche in indulging her fancies.

“But, sir,” said José, “perhaps you, who are nearly as learned as the Chevalier d’Haberville, can tell me something about this wicked king who caused this Biron to be put to death, though he had rendered him so many important services.”

“My dear José, kings never forget a personal affront; and like many other

people never forget others' misdeeds, even after they have been expiated, but have very short memories for the services that have been rendered them."

"Well, that seems funny, for I thought God had not refused them anything; a short memory, that is very funny!"

Archy replied, smiling at his companion's simplicity:

"King Henry IV had nevertheless a very good memory, although it played him false on that particular occasion. He was an excellent prince who loved his subjects as his own children and who did everything in his power to make them happy; it is not surprising, therefore, that his memory should still be so dear to every good Frenchman, even after the lapse of a hundred and fifty years."

"Well," said José, "that is not surprising, if subjects have better memories than princes! Still it was cruel of him to hang poor Monsieur Biron!"

"The nobility in France were not hung," said Archy. "That was one of their great privileges; their heads were cut off."

"That was a privilege worth having, for though, perhaps, it was more painful, it was more glorious to die by the sabre than by the halter."

"To return to Henry IV," said Archy, "we must not condemn him too severely; he lived in difficult times, during a period of civil war; Biron, his relative, formerly his friend, had betrayed him and doubly deserved death."

"Poor Monsieur Biron," said José, "how well, he speaks in his lament."

"It is not always those who speak the best, who are the oftenest in the right," said Archy. "Nothing is more like an honest man, than an eloquent knave."

"What you are saying is very true, Monsieur Archy. We have a poor thief in our part of the country, and as he has nothing to say for himself, every one tears him to pieces, whilst his brother, who is a hundred times worse than him, manages, by means of his smooth tongue, to pass for a saint. In the mean time, here is the city of Quebec, but no more with the white flag waving over it," added José, sighing.

And to compose his countenance, he felt in all his pockets for his pipe, murmuring the usual burthen of his song:

"Our good folk will come back."

José stayed two days in Quebec, and returned loaded with all the presents that Lochiel thought he would be most pleased with. He would have liked to have sent some handsome presents to the d'Haberville family, and under other circumstances he would not have failed to have done so, but he feared to wound their feelings. He therefore only said to José, when bidding him

farewell:

“I have left my prayer-book at the manor house. Beg of Miss Blanche to keep it till my return. It was a keepsake.”

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[28] Bergen-op-zoom, the maiden, taken September 16th, 1747, by Count de Lowendhall, who was commanding the French army.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HOME CIRCLE

MANY sad events had happened since the day when Jules' relatives and friends, seated around Captain d'Haberville's hospitable board, had bade him farewell before his departure for France. Time had done its usual work of destruction on the old men; the enemy had carried fire and sword into the dwellings of the peaceable habitants of the colony; famine had claimed many victims; the soil had been drenched with the best blood of its gallant defenders; and the waves had swallowed up a great many of those officers of noble extraction, who had been spared by the chances of war. All the elements of destruction were drunk with the blood of the best families in New France. The prospects for the future were sombre enough, particularly for those gentlemen who had been already ruined by the enemy's depredations; for those who, in laying down the sword, their only resource and their only means of support for their families, knew they would be exposed to the greatest privations; for those who, looking into the future, saw their impoverished descendants vegetating on the very ground which had been rendered illustrious by their noble ancestors.

The city of Quebec, which, firmly seated on its rock, had formerly seemed to brave the thunders of artillery and the assaults of the most valiant cohorts,—the proud city of Quebec, still covered with rubbish, was hardly rising from its ruins. The British flag waved triumphantly over the lofty citadel; and the Canadian, who, from habit, raised his eyes to the summit thinking still to see there the fleur-de-lys flag of old France, soon cast them down again sadly, saying to himself with a heavy heart: "Still we shall see the old folks back again."

We hope, that after so many disasters, the reader will be pleased to meet his old acquaintances again at a little party given by Monsieur d'Haberville to celebrate his son's arrival. Even "the good gentleman," although nearly a hundred years old, had responded to the appeal. Captain des Ecors, a companion-in-arms of Monsieur d'Haberville, a brave officer, who had been ruined by the conquest, his family and a few other friends were also present at the little gathering. A small inheritance, which had come to Jules whilst he was in France from one of his relatives who had perished in the wreck of *Auguste*, by making the family easier in their circumstances, allowed them once more to

exercise that hospitality which they had so long been unable to practise.

All the guests had taken their places at table, after having in vain waited for Archibald Lochiel, whose absence no one could account for, as he was generally so punctual on every occasion.

“Well, my dear friends,” said Monsieur d’Haberville at dessert, “what is your opinion of the omens which troubled my mind so much ten years ago? First give us your opinion, curé, of the mysterious warnings, which seemed as if sent me by Heaven itself?”

“I think,” replied the curé, “that all nations have had, or have thought they had had their warnings even in the most remote ages. In times comparatively modern, Roman history abounds with prodigies and omens. The most insignificant occurrences were looked on as good or bad omens; the augurs consulted the flight of birds, the entrails of the victims offered for sacrifice. They say that these veracious and holy persons never met each other without laughing.”

“And what conclusion do you draw from that?” said Monsieur d’Haberville.

“That we should not attach too much importance to such things,” replied the curé; “that even, supposing it pleased Heaven, under certain exceptional circumstances, to give some visible signs of what was going to happen, it would be only adding one more misery to the already innumerable ones to which poor humanity is exposed. A man who was naturally superstitious would be in a constant state of dread, which would be a hundred times more unbearable than the threatened misfortune.”

“Well,” said Monsieur d’Haberville, who, like many other people, only asked others their opinion for form’s sake, “I myself think, judging by my own experience, that generally we ought to attach credit to them. All I can say is, that omens have never misled me. Besides those of which you yourself have been an eye-witness, I could mention a great many others.

“About fifteen years ago, I was commanding an expedition against the Iroquois, consisting of Canadians and Huron Indians. We were on our march, when all at once I felt a pain in my thigh, as if some hard body had struck it; the pain was sufficiently sharp to stop me for a moment. I mentioned it to my Indian warriors; they looked at one another uneasily, anxiously searched the horizon, drew a deep breath, turning in every direction, like dogs in search of game. And satisfied that there were no enemies near us, they resumed their march. I asked Petit-Étienne (Little Stephen), the Huron chief, who was looking uneasy, whether he feared some surprise.”

“Not that I know of,” said he, “but the first time we meet the enemy, you

will be wounded in the place where you have just felt the pain."

"I only laughed at the idea; but that made no difference, for two hours afterwards an Iroquois ball went through my thigh at that very place, though fortunately without fracturing the bone. No, gentlemen, warnings have never deceived me."

"And what do you think about the matter, Chevalier?" said the curé.

"My opinion is," said Uncle Raoul, "that the wine has been placed on the table, and we ought to attack it at once."

"An excellent decision," echoed from all parts of the table.

"Wine is the most infallible of omens," said Jules, "for it announces joy, open-hearted gaiety, and happiness; and as a proof of its infallibility, here is our friend Lochiel coming up the avenue. I will go and meet him."

"You see, my dear Archy," said the captain welcoming him, "that we have treated you unceremoniously, as if you were one of ourselves, by sitting down to table after waiting for you only half an hour. Knowing your military punctuality, we feared that some important business had prevented you from coming."

"I should have been very sorry had you treated me otherwise than as one of yourselves," replied Archy. "I had made all arrangements so as to arrive here early this morning; but I had not allowed for that delightful swamp of Cap St. Ignace. First, my horse fell into a morass, and, in getting him out, I broke the harness, which I had to patch up as I best could. Then, I broke one of my wheels in a bog, and had to seek assistance at the nearest dwelling, at half a league's distance; and I arrived there half dead with fatigue, having several times sunk up to my knees in the marsh."

"Ah! my dear Archy," said Jules, who, as usual, turned everything into a joke: "*quantum mutatus ab illo*, as dear Uncle Raoul would have said, if he had spoken first, or as you yourself would say. What have you done with those long legs of which you used to be so proud when we had to cross that same swamp! Have they lost their strength and agility since the 28th of April, 1760? You made precious good use of them then in the retreat, as I had foretold."

"That's true," said Archy, laughing heartily, "they certainly did not fail me in the retreat of 1760, as you call it out of regard for my feelings; but, my dear Jules, you should also sing the praises of your own legs, though they are short, for you made good use of them in the retreat of 1759. One good turn deserves another, you know; with due respect to your soldierly modesty."

"My dear fellow, you have not hit it yet; you are a little out in your reckoning. A scratch that I had received from an English ball, which just grazed my ribs, was considerably slackening my pace in retreating, when a

grenadier, who had taken a strange liking to me (I am sure I cannot tell why), threw me over his shoulder, treating his superior officer with no more respect than if he were a knapsack, and never stopped running till he had deposited me within the very walls of Quebec. It was about time; for, in his haste, the stupid animal had carried me with my head hanging down his back, like a calf that is being carried to the butcher's, so that I was nearly suffocated when he put me down. Only think of the rascal having the impudence, some time afterwards, to ask me for something to drink for himself and his friends, who were glad to see their little grenadier on his legs once more, and I was fool enough to stand treat for him and his companions. I never could owe anyone a grudge in my life," said Jules quite seriously. "But see, here is your dinner smoking hot, for your friend Lisette has kept it warm on her stove; you deserve to have your dinner given you on the block[29] to punish you for the anxiety you caused us (as the party would not have been complete without you) but for the present I will grant you an amnesty. Here is José bringing you the *coup d'appétit* (appetizer) which is taken by all civilized nations; the poor old fellow is so pleased to see you that he is grinning from ear to ear. I assure you he is not backward when he has to offer a glass to his friends; nor when, like his defunct father, he has to take one himself."

"The young master," said José putting the empty plate under his arm so as to take the hand that Archy held out to him, "has always something funny to say; but Monsieur Lochiel knows well that if I had but one glass of brandy left I would offer it to him, with my whole heart, rather than drink it myself. As for my defunct father, he was a steady-going man; he took so many glasses a day and no more. I do not mean when there were weddings and merry-makings, for he could do as others did and made little slips from time to time, the worthy man! But all I can say is that when he saw his friends he did not keep the bottle under the table."

In that masterpiece of Goldsmith's, The Vicar of Wakefield, the author makes the vicar say: "I cannot say whether we had more wit amongst us than usual; but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well." We may say the same of the guests at this gathering, where there reigned triumphantly that delightful French light-heartedness, which now, alas! is gradually disappearing in "these degenerate days," as Homer would have said.

"My dear neighbor," said Monsieur d'Haberville to Captain des Ecors, "if your little affair with General Murray has not silenced you forever, do pray set us a good example by singing us something."

"I heard," said Archy, "that you had had some difficulty in extricating yourself from the clutches of our crabbed general, but I do not know the details

of the affair."

"When I think of it, my friend," said Monsieur des Ecors, "I feel a sort of strangling sensation in the bronchial regions, but still I cannot complain too much, for the general acted conscientiously towards me; instead of hanging me at once, he came to the sage conclusion that the more regular course was to bring the prisoner to trial first and not to put him to death till after conviction. The fate of the unhappy Nadeau, the miller, whose prison I shared, and who was accused of the same crime as myself, that of having furnished the French army with provisions, and whose trial only took place after he was executed,—the sad fate of that worthy man, of whose innocence he was convinced when too late, made him consider, I believe, that it would be better to begin by putting me on trial than to hang me first of all; a determination I decidedly approved of, and which I advise all governors present and future to adopt as their rule of conduct under similar circumstances. During my captivity I passed many sad moments, for I was forbidden all external communication and had no means of learning what fate was reserved for me. Every day I asked the sentinel, who was on guard just under my window, if there were any news; and my only answer was generally just a downright g. . .m. At last, a less unapproachable and more good-natured soldier, who could jabber a little French, answered me one evening: '*Vous pendar sept heures matingue.*' I think that this good fellow must have taught this gibberish to all the guard, for afterwards I always received the same decisive answer to all the questions I put: '*Vous pendar sept heures matingue*' (you will be hung at seven o'clock in the morning). Faulty, as the language was, it was nevertheless easy for me to understand that I was to be hung at seven o'clock in the morning, without finding out, however, which day was fixed on for my execution. My prospects were sad enough; for three mortal days, had I seen the body of the unfortunate Nadeau, hanging on a yard of his own windmill, the plaything of wind and weather; and every morning I expected to take his place on that newly invented gibbet."

"But that was infamous," said Archy. "And the man was innocent!"

"So it was shown by the evidence," replied Monsieur des Ecors, "at the inquest that took place after the execution. I ought to add that General Murray seemed to repent bitterly of the murder he had committed at an angry moment. He loaded the family of Nadeau with benefits and adopted the two young orphan girls, whose father he had killed, taking them with him to England. Poor Nadeau!"

And every one sighing repeated after him:

"Poor Nadeau!"

"Alas!" said Captain des Ecors, philosophically, "if we are to pity the fate

of all who lost their lives by. . . But let us quit this distressing subject."

And he sang the following song:

"A new Narcissus do I pine,
Every one admires me;
'Tis not in water but in wine
That I my image see;
And when I view the color bright
That mantles in my cheek,
With love transfixed at the sight,
To drink it down I seek.

"All that's in this world below
To thee doth homage pay!
Even the winter's frost and snow
Is forc'd to own thy sway!
The earth herself to nourish thee
Lavishes her wealth!
The sun but shines to ripen thee!
I but live to drink thy health!"

Songs, accompanied by choruses, succeeded each other rapidly. Madame Vincelot's heightened still more the gaiety which was already noisy enough:

Madame Vincelot's song.

"At this joyous fête
Every one can see (*repeat*)
That the hospitable host
Welcomes us with glee, (*repeat*)
Bidding us aloud make merry
Charivari! charivari! charivari!

"Pour me out a brimming glass (*repeat*)
Of this sparkling wine,
I'll drink it to the hostess fair
Of this fête divine, (*repeat*)
For she bids us all make merry
Charivari! charivari! charivari!"

Madame d'Haberville's verse:

"If this little joyous fête
Really pleases you (*repeat*)
Welcome will you be, my friends,
Its pleasures to renew, (*repeat*)
And I bid you now make merry,
Charivari! charivari! charivari!"

Jules' verse:

"Without a little jealousy
Love soon dies away; (*repeat*)
But a little of this folly
Strengthens much his sway: (*repeat*)
Love and Bacchus here make merry
Charivari! charivari! charivari!"

At the end of each verse, every one rapped the table or the plates, with their hands, knives, or forks, so as to make the greatest possible uproar.

Blanche being requested to sing "Blaise and Babet," her favorite song, tried to excuse herself by proposing to sing another, but the young ladies insisted, exclaiming: "Blaise and Babet! the minor part is so beautiful!"

"I must say," said Jules, "that that minor, with its 'I shall love eternally,' must touch a very sensitive chord in the feminine heart, which is so noted for its constancy! Do, give us that beautiful minor part, and rejoice the heart of these charming young ladies."

"We will pay you off at blind-man's buff," said one, "or at forfeits," said another.

"Look out for yourself! old fellow," added Jules, "for you have no more chance against these good ladies than a cat without claws would have in the lower regions. But no matter, please sing, my dear sister; perhaps your voice, like that of Orpheus, may calm my enemy's wrath; according to all accounts, that virtuoso's voice must have been of wonderful power, when he visited the infernal regions."

"What a shame," exclaimed the young ladies, "to compare us to . . . No matter; we will pay you off for everything together; but in the meantime, Blanche, do please sing."

She still hesitated; but fearing to draw everyone's attention on herself by a refusal, she sang the following verses in a plaintive voice; it was the despairing cry of the purest love which seemed to burst from her in spite of her efforts to crush it back into her heart:

"From out the blossoms in my bower,
I've culled dear Blaise, this bouquet rare,
Of blushing rose, of orange flower,
Of jessamine white and lily fair;
Let not the rose thy emblem be,
Her beauty blooms but for a day;
But I will love eternally,
Till life itself shall pass away.

"Nor like the fickle butterfly
That roams about from flower to flower;
Do thou for ev'ry maiden sigh
That dwells in humble village bow'r;
Let not the rose thy emblem be,
Her beauty blooms but for a day;
Whilst I shall love eternally,
Till life itself shall pass away.

"And when my beauty and my youth
Beneath the hand of time depart,
Think on my past unchanging truth,
Think on my constant loving heart;
Nor let the rose thy emblem be,
Her beauty blooms but for a day;
Whilst I shall love eternally,
Till life itself shall pass away."

Every one was struck by Blanche's plaintive accents, of the real cause of which they were in ignorance, attributing them to the emotion she felt at seeing her dearly-loved brother, who, having escaped death in so many battles, had now returned to those whom he held dearest on earth. To make a diversion, Jules exclaimed:

"I have brought a very pretty song from France."

"Let us hear your pretty song," was heard from every one.

"Ah! no," said Jules, "I keep it for my fair friend, Mademoiselle Vincelot, to whom I am going to teach it."

Now the said young lady, who was already a little elderly, had for some years expressed herself as being opposed to marrying. She professed, indeed, to have a very decided taste for celibacy; but every one knew that a certain widower, who was only waiting for a decent time to elapse before marrying again, had overcome the repugnance of this tigress, and that the wedding-day was already fixed. This declared enemy of marriage was in no hurry to thank Jules, whose love of tricks she well knew, and she was therefore silent; but every one called out:

"The song! the song! you can afterwards give it to Élise."

"As you will," said Jules; "it is short, but not wanting in wit:

"Maidens are very like young birds,
Who dearly love the shelt'ring cage,
They've lived in from their earliest age,
At least, if you believe their words;
But open wide that cage so dear,
And very soon they'll disappear,
Nor evermore return again,
Nor evermore return again."

They all laughed heartily at Élise's expense, and she, like all prudes, did not know how to take a joke in good part. Madame d'Haberville, perceiving this, gave the accustomed signal, and rising from table they adjourned to the drawing-room. Élise, as she passed Jules, pinched him so hard that she drew blood.

"Now then, fair one with the cat-like claws," said the latter, "is that one of the caresses you destine for your future husband, an instalment of which you distribute among your best friends? O happy husband! may heaven long spare him to enjoy his good fortune!"

After the coffee, followed by the customary glass of liqueur, every one went out on the lawn to dance country dances, and play at hunting the hare and *la toilette à Madame* (my lady's toilet). There can be nothing gayer or more picturesque than this last game, when played in the open air on a lawn planted with trees. Each of those who are playing, both ladies and gentlemen, takes his post by a tree, only one remaining in the centre. Every one furnishes his contingent to my lady's toilet; one a gown, another a necklace, another a ring, etc. As soon as the one who directs the game calls for an article, the person who has chosen this article is obliged to leave his post, which another one immediately takes possession of; thus, as each article of my lady's toilet is called out, there commences an animated race from tree to tree, which lasts as long as the person who directs the game, may choose. At last, when "all my lady's toilet" is called out, every one tries to get a tree, for whoever fails in so doing has to pay a forfeit. All this went on amidst the screams and joyous laughter of all present, particularly when any one lost his equilibrium and saluted the ground instead of reaching the desired post.

When the ladies were tired, every one re-entered the house to play at less fatiguing games, such as "how do you like your companion," "hide and seek," etc. They wound up with a game, proposed by Jules, which generally caused great amusement.

The Canadians of old, though terrible on the field of battle, amused themselves like happy, carefree children when they met together. Nearly all being relatives, connections, or friends from infancy, many of those games, which now-a-days would be objected to as not compatible with the refined

manners of the ladies in the higher circles, were then looked on as appropriate. Everything was so well conducted that it was like a family party of brothers and sisters amusing themselves in the jolliest manner.

Jules who had taken Élise's pinch very much to heart, purposely proposed a game by which he hoped to repay her. The game was as follows: A lady, seated in an arm-chair, began by selecting some one for her daughter; she was then blindfolded, and had to guess which was the one she had chosen by feeling only the face and head of those who knelt down before her with their heads covered over with a shawl or table-cover. Every time that she guessed wrong she had to pay a forfeit. It was often a young man or an elderly lady or gentleman who knelt down with covered head, and hence arose many amusing mistakes.

When it came to Élise's turn, she of course chose Jules for her daughter, or rather son, if the reader prefers it, so that she might torment him whilst inspecting him. The game began; as each person in turn knelt before the lady, who was blindfolded, they all sang in chorus:

"Madame, is this your daughter, (*repeat*)
With buckles of silver and buttons of gold?
On their bench sit the watermen bold."

The veiled lady has to answer with the same burden:

"Yes, this is my daughter," (*repeat*)

Or—

"This is not my daughter, (*repeat*)
With buckles of silver and buttons of gold;
On their bench sit the mariners bold."

After feeling several heads, Élise, hearing Jules' stifled laughter from under the shawl, thought she had at last got hold of her victim. She felt the head; it was certainly Jules', or very like it; the face was perhaps rather elongated, but that devil Jules had so many ways of disguising himself. Had he not on one occasion mystified a large party for a whole evening, disguised in a costume of the time of Louis XIV, and passing for an old aunt who had, that very day, arrived from France? Whilst thus disguised had he not even had the impudence to kiss all the pretty ladies there assembled, Élise herself included? How abominable it was of him! Jules is certainly capable of anything! Acting on this impression and trembling with joy, she pinched his ear; a cry of pain was heard, then a low growling, followed by a formidable barking. Élise tore the bandage from her eyes and found herself face to face with a row of threatening teeth. It was Niger. Like Sir Walter Scott's farmer Dinmont, who called all his dogs "Pepper," the d'Habervilles called all their dogs Niger or Nigra, according to their sex, in remembrance of their two ancestors who had

been thus named by Jules, during his early college days, in order to show the progress he was making in Latin.

Élise, without being the least disconcerted, took off her high-heeled shoe, and, falling upon Jules (who, having Niger still in his arms, made use of him to ward off her blows), chased him from room to room followed by the rest of the party laughing frantically.

Happy times! when wild merriment supplied the place of wit, in which, however, the French race were by no means deficient. Happy times! when the host's hearty welcome atoned for the absence of luxury in the furniture, and expense at the tables of the Canadians whom the conquest had ruined. The houses seemed to become larger for the sake of hospitality, like the hearts of those who inhabited them. Dormitories were improvised for the occasion; everything comfortable was given up to the ladies; whilst the rougher sex, consigned to no matter where, put up with whatever they could get.

Men like these, who had passed half their lives bivouacking in the forests during the most rigorous season of the year; who had travelled four or five hundred leagues on snow-shoes, often passing the night in holes which they dug in the snow, as had been the case during their expedition to surprise the English in Acadia; these men of iron could easily dispense with eider-down for their nocturnal couch.

The merriment only ceased whilst they were asleep, for it recommenced in the morning. As every one wore powder in those days, those who were the most handy acted as hair-dressers, and even as barbers to the others. The patient, wrapped in a large sheet, seated himself on a chair; the impromptu hair-dresser generally exceeded his duty either by taking the power-puff to mark out an immense pair of whiskers on those who had none, or by immoderately lengthening one side of the whiskers to the detriment of the other, on those who were provided with these appendages, or by powdering their eyebrows. It often happened that the victims of these jokes perceived nothing of them, till, on their entering the drawing-room, they were greeted by the ladies with shouts of laughter.

The party broke up at the end of three days, notwithstanding Monsieur and Madame d'Haberville's efforts to detain the guests longer. Only Archy, who had promised to pass a month with his old friends, kept his word and remained with the family.

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[29] See Appendix G.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCLUSION

AFTER the departure of their guests, the family party lived on their former terms of intimacy. Jules, who had regained his strength in the bracing air of his native land, passed the greater part of the day hunting and shooting with Lochiel; the abundance of game, at that time of year, rendering it an agreeable pastime. They supped at seven o'clock and went to bed at ten; and the evenings always appeared too short, even without the help of cards.

Jules, who was in ignorance of what had passed between his sister and Lochiel, could not help being struck by his friend's fits of sadness, without, however, being able to penetrate the cause of them. He only received evasive replies to all the questions he put to him on this subject. Thinking that he had at last guessed the cause of it, he, one evening when they were alone together, made up his mind to broach the subject.

"I have remarked, my dear brother," he said, "your fits of melancholy, in spite of your efforts to hide the cause of them from us. You do not do us justice, Archy, nor do you do justice to yourself. Your conscience acquitting you, as to your performance of duties which a soldier cannot shirk, you ought not to think about the past any more. Besides, you have rendered such service to all my family by saving their lives, which they would have lost in the wreck of the *Auguste*, as to have repaid them every obligation. It is we, indeed, who owe you a debt of gratitude of which we shall never be able to acquit ourselves. It was quite natural, that, prejudiced against you by information gathered from those whom the disasters of 1759 had reduced to indigence and forgetting your noble qualities, friends like ourselves even, soured by misfortune, should have believed the slanderous reports; but you know that a little explanation sufficed to dissipate these feelings and to make us give you back our former affection. If my father bore you ill-will for some time, it was only because it is a part of his nature not to listen to any explanations when he once thinks himself insulted. He is now as attached to you as ever; our losses are in a great measure repaired and we live more tranquilly under the British government than we did under French rule. Our habitants, have, as Uncle Raoul says, like Cincinnatus of old, exchanged the musket for the ploughshare. They are opening up fresh lands and in a few years this seigniory will be of great value. By the help of the little property which I have recently inherited,

we shall soon be as well off as before the conquest. Therefore, my dear Archy, do throw off these fits of depression, which it grieves us to witness, and resume your former joyousness."

Lochiel was silent for some little time, and it was only after a painful struggle that he replied:

"My dear brother, it is impossible; the wound is more recent than you think and will bleed for the rest of my life; all my dreams of future happiness are at an end. But let us drop the subject; my noblest feelings have been wounded; an unkind word from you would rankle in my heart."

"An unkind word from me, do you say, Archy? What can you mean? My friend and brother, at whose expense I have often amused myself, well knows that my heart was not in fault and that I was always ready to ask pardon for my offences. You shake your head sadly! What can there be the matter, that you cannot confide to your early friend? May I not say, Archy, to your brother? I have never had anything hidden from you. You never seemed to have any secrets that I did not share. A curse upon those circumstances which have cooled your friendship!"

"Stop, my brother!" said Archy, "stop, the time has come! However painful it may be for me to tell you all, I would rather do so than expose myself to suspicions, which, as coming from you, would be most painful to me. I will speak openly to you, but on the express condition, that, like an impartial judge, you will hear me to the end without interruption. To-morrow, but not till to-morrow, we will return to this painful subject; till then, promise me to keep the secret I am about to confide to you."

"I give you my word," said Jules, pressing his hand.

Lochiel then related to him the conversation he had recently had with Blanche without omitting the smallest particular; then, lighting his candle, he retired to his bedroom, sighing deeply.

Jules passed a very restless night. He, having studied woman only in the drawing-rooms and amidst the frivolous society of the Faubourg Saint Germain, could hardly understand the grandeur and sublimity of the sacrifice which his sister was making; her sentiments appeared to him romantic, or arising from an imagination that was perverted by misfortune. Only too happy at the thought of an alliance which fulfilled his dearest wishes, he made up his mind, having obtained Archy's consent, to have a serious conversation with Blanche, feeling certain he would overrule her objections. "She loves him," he thought to himself, "so I shall gain my cause."

Man, with all his apparent superiority; man, in his absurd egotism, has never yet completely sounded the depths of the female heart, that inexhaustible

store of love, self-denial, and boundless devotion. The poets have sung in varied notes the praises of this Eve, this masterpiece of beauty; but what is this material beauty compared with that of the soul of a virtuous woman, struggling with adversity! See, what a pitiable being is man when he has to face misfortune! It is then that, like a despicable pygmy, he leans, tottering, on his companion, who, like the fabled Atlas carrying the material world on his robust shoulders, bears all the pains and sorrows of suffering humanity without bending under the burden! It is not to be wondered at that Jules, who only knew the lighter qualities of woman, thought he should easily triumph over his sister's scruples.

"Come, Blanche," said Jules to his sister after dinner the day succeeding his conversation with his friend. "Come Blanche, see, there is our Scotch Nimrod setting off with his gun on his shoulder, so as to get us some teal for supper. Let us see if we cannot climb the narrow path that leads to the top of the cliff as quickly as in our childish days!"

"With all my heart, dear Jules. Run on, and you will see that my Canadian legs have not lost any of their agility."

The brother and sister, by the help of the projecting stones and the shrubs which grew in the clefts of the rocks, soon arrived at the summit of the promontory; and there, after a moment's silence, employed in gazing on the magnificent panorama which lay open before their eyes, Jules said to his sister:

"It is not unintentionally that I have brought you here, I want to talk to you privately on a subject of the greatest importance. You love our friend Archy,—you have long loved him; and still for reasons which I cannot understand, arising from exaggerated feelings of delicacy that warp your judgment, you impose a sacrifice on yourself which is against nature, laying up for your future life much unhappiness, as the victim of a love you will never be able to eradicate completely from your heart. As for me, were I to love an English girl and were she to respond to my feelings, I would marry her as willingly as I would marry one of my own country-women."

Blanche's eyes filled with tears; she took her brother's hand, and tenderly pressing it, she replied:

"If you were to marry an English woman, my dear Jules, I would take her to my heart as a beloved sister; but what you could do without the slightest impropriety, it would be cowardly in me to do. You have nobly acquitted yourself of your debt to your country. Your war-cry: 'Follow me, grenadiers!' electrified your soldiers in the thickest of the fight; twice were you borne bleeding from the plains which were still wet with the blood of our enemies, and on the other continent you have received three wounds. Yes, my dear brother, you have nobly acquitted yourself of your debt to your country, and

might indulge yourself by marrying a daughter of Albion! But I, a weak woman; what have I done for this subjugated and now silent land, this land which has so often resounded with my countrymen's shouts of triumph! Shall a d'Haberville be the first to give the example of a double yoke to the noble daughters of Canada? It is natural, and even it is to be wished, that the French and Anglo-Saxon races here, who, after centuries of hatred and strife, have now but the one country and live under the same laws, should become united by the closest bonds, but it would be unworthy of me to be the one to set the example after so many disasters. As I told Archy, it would give people room to believe that the proud Briton, after having conquered and ruined the father, had bought with his gold the hand of the poor Canadian girl, who was only too glad to give it to him at that price. Oh! never! never!"

And the noble girl, leaning her head on her brother's shoulder, wept bitterly.

"No one will ever know," she continued, "even you yourself will never understand the full extent of my sacrifice; but fear not, Jules, that the sacrifice will be beyond my strength. Proud of the honorable sentiments which have prompted my conduct I will devote myself to my parents and my days will flow on peacefully and calmly in the midst of my family. Rest certain," she continued proudly, "that she who has loved the noble Archy Cameron of Lochiel with constancy will never sully her heart with another earthly love. You chose a bad spot for your desired conversation, for from this headland I have often proudly contemplated the splendid manor house of my ancestors, now replaced by yon humble dwelling which has been built at the cost of so many sacrifices and privations. Now let us go down; and, if you love me, never return to this painful subject."

"Yours is a lofty soul!" exclaimed Jules.

Archy, after having lost all hope of marrying Blanche d'Haberville, applied himself in earnest to discharging the debt of gratitude he owed to Dumais. Blanche's rejection of his suit altered his intentions in this matter and left him greater latitude; for he, also, determined to remain single. Archy, whom misfortune had early matured, had, whilst still young, dispassionately studied men and things; and he had come to the wise conclusion that marriages are seldom happy where mutual love does not exist. Far from possessing the self-conceit of almost all young men, who honestly believe that every woman adores them, and that they have only to choose from among the large harvest of hearts at their disposal, Lochiel had but a humble opinion of himself. Gifted with unusual good looks and with all the qualities which captivate women, the simple elegance of his manners was remarked by every one, whenever he appeared in society; but he was as diffident as he was fascinating, and thought,

like Molière's Toinette, that feigned love "was very like the real thing." "I was poor and proscribed," he thought to himself, "and I was loved for myself alone; now that I am rich, how could I tell whether it was not my rank and riches which another woman might love in me, supposing even that my first and only love could be extinguished from my heart." It was for these reasons that he decided to remain single.

The sun was disappearing behind the Laurentian hills when Lochiel arrived at Dumais' farm. He was agreeably surprised with the order and cleanliness that was everywhere visible. The farmer's wife, who was busy in her dairy, assisted in her work by a servant girl, came to meet him without recognising him, and begged him to walk into the house.

"I believe that this is Sergeant Dumais' house," said Archy.

"You are right, sir, and I am his wife. My husband will soon be back from the field with a load of wheat. I will send one of my children to hasten him."

"There is no hurry, madam. I have come here to give you tidings of one Monsieur Archy Lochiel, whom you formerly knew. You may perhaps have forgotten him."

Madame Dumais came nearer to the stranger and after looking silently at him for a short time, said:

"You are certainly something like him. Are you not some relative of his? Forget Monsieur Archy! Do not tell me that he can believe us capable of such ingratitude! Do you not know that he exposed himself to nearly certain death in order to save my husband's life, and we pray God every day to watch over him and bestow every blessing on our benefactor! Forget Monsieur Archy! Oh, sir! you hurt my feelings very much."

Lochiel was much affected. He took Dumais' youngest child, the little Louise, who was seven years old, on his knees and while caressing her said:

"And you, my pretty one, do you know Monsieur Archy?"

"I have never seen him," said the child, "but every day we say a little prayer for him."

"What prayer do you say?" asked Archy.

"O God, pour down Thy blessings upon Monsieur Archy, who saved papa's life, if he is still living; and if he be dead, give him Thy Holy Paradise."

Lochiel went on talking with Madame Dumais till the latter, hearing her husband's voice near the barn, ran to tell him that a strange gentleman was waiting at the house to give him news of Monsieur Archy. Dumais, who was preparing to unload his cart, threw down his pitchfork and made but one bound from the barn to the house. It was sufficiently dark when he entered for him not to be able to distinguish the stranger's features.

“You are welcome,” said he, saluting him, “as you bring me news of one who is very dear to me.”

“You are, of course, Sergeant Dumais,” said Lochiel.

“And you Monsieur Archy!” exclaimed Dumais throwing himself into his arms. “Do you think I could ever forget the voice which called out ‘courage’ to me when I was hanging over the abyss, that same voice, too, which I so often heard during my illness?”

“My dear Dumais,” resumed Archy, towards the end of the evening, “I have come to ask a great service of you.”

“A service!” replied Dumais. “Can I, a poor habitant, be fortunate enough to be of use to a gentleman like you? It would be the happiest day of my life.”

“Well, Dumais, it rests with you to restore me to health; for, as you now see me, I am sick, more sick than you could imagine.”

“You really do look paler and sadder than formerly. But what is the matter with you?”

“Have you ever heard of a sickness,” replied Lochiel, “to which the English are very subject, and which is called the spleen or blue devils?”

“No,” replied Dumais. “I have known several of your Englishmen, who, be it said without offence, seemed to have some sort of a devil in them, but I always thought that they were darker-colored devils.”

Archy began to laugh.

“What we call the blue devils, my dear Dumais, is what you Canadians call *peine d’esprit* (trouble of mind).”

“Now I understand,” said Dumais, “but what I cannot understand is, how a man like you, who has everything he can wish for, possesses so many talents and has so many resources to chase away sad thoughts, can allow himself to be troubled with the blues.”

“My dear Dumais,” said Archy, “I might reply that every one in this world has his troubles, even those that appear the happiest; suffice it to say, that I have the malady, and that I rely on your assistance to cure myself of it.”

“Make what use you can of me, Monsieur Archy; I am at your service night and day.”

“I have tried everything,” continued Archy, “study and literary work; I was better by day, but my nights were sleepless; and even if I had the good fortune to sleep, I awoke as unhappy as ever. I have been thinking that only strong manual labor could cure me, and that after a hard day’s work, I might taste that refreshing slumber which has been so long denied me.”

“That is true,” said Dumais. “When a man has worked hard all day, I defy

him to pass sleepless nights. But what are you thinking of doing? And in what way am I fortunate enough to be able to be of use to you?"

"My dear Dumais, I expect to be cured by you. But listen, without interrupting me, whilst I impart my plans to you. I am now rich, very rich even. My idea is, that, since Providence has sent more riches than I ever hoped for, I ought to employ a part of them in doing good. In this parish and neighborhood, there is an immense extent of waste land to be either sold or granted. My plan is to take a considerable extent of it and not only to superintend the clearing, but work at it myself. You know I have good strong arms; and I could do as well as anyone else at it."

"I know that," put in Dumais.

"There are many poor people," Archy went on, "who would be only too happy to find work, particularly when they would get good wages. You see, Dumais, that I could not see to everything myself and that I must have some one to help me; for what could I do of an evening and in the bad weather all alone in a tent without a friend to keep me company. I should die of dullness."

"Let us set off to-morrow," said Dumais, "and visit all the best lots, with which I am, in fact, already well acquainted."

"I thank you," said Archy, pressing his hand. "But who would take care of your farm during your frequent absences?"

"Do not be uneasy about that, sir. My wife herself could do that very well, even without her brother, an old bachelor, who lives with us. My land has never been any the worse for my absence. I do not know how it is, but it is a sort of malady with me to prefer the musket to the plough. My wife often reproaches me on this head, without our being any the worse friends."

"Do you know," said Archy, "that over there on the edge of the river, near the maple thicket, there is a most charming site for building a house. Yours is old; we will build one large enough to hold us all. I will undertake this on condition that I myself shall be entitled to occupy one half of it during my lifetime; and at my death, well, all shall belong to you. I have vowed to remain single."

"Men like you," said Dumais, "are only too rarely to be met with; it would be a pity that the race should become extinct. But I am beginning to see that instead of thinking of yourself you are thinking of me and my family, and that it is us you are wishing to benefit."

"Now let us speak frankly," resumed Archy, "the only real friends that I have in the world are the d'Haberville family and yours."

"I thank you, sir," said Dumais, "for putting us poor habitants in the same category as that noble and illustrious family."

“I only consider,” said Lochiel, “the virtues and good qualities of men. I certainly love and respect nobility; but that does not prevent my loving and respecting all estimable people and rendering them the justice they deserve. I intend giving you the fourth part of my fortune.”

“Ah! sir,” exclaimed Dumais.

“Now listen well to me, my friend. A gentleman never tells a lie. When I told you that I had trouble of mind, I told you the truth. I have found the remedy for this frightful malady; plenty of occupation and manual labor; and doing good to those I love. My intention then is to give you a fourth of my fortune during my lifetime. Now take care, Dumais! I am an obstinate Scotchman; if you demur, instead of a quarter, I am just the man to give you half. But to speak seriously, my dear Dumais, you would make me very unhappy by refusing me.”

“If it is indeed so,” said Dumais, in a tearful voice, “I accept your gifts, which, anyway, it is only with a bad grace that I could refuse from a man like you.”

Let us now leave Lochiel occupied in enriching Dumais, and go back to our other friends.

Monsieur d’Egmont, “the good gentleman,” almost a centenarian, lived only a year after Jules’ arrival. He died surrounded by his friends, after having had every affectionate care bestowed on him by Blanche and her brother during the month that his illness lasted. A few minutes before his death he begged Jules to open the window of his room, and, casting a dying look on the little river, which was flowing calmly before his door, he said to him:

“It was there, my dear friend, under that walnut tree that I related my misfortunes to you; it was there that I gave you advice prompted by the experience which age brings. I die happy, for I see that you have profited by it. After my death take that little taper-stand; whilst recalling to your mind the long sleepless nights of which it has been a witness in my solitary chamber, it will also remind you of the advice I have given you, if by chance it might be fading from your memory.”

“As for you, my dear and faithful André,” continued Monsieur d’Egmont, “it is with deep regret that I leave you behind on this earth, where you have shared all my sorrows. You will be very lonely and solitary after my death! You have promised me to pass the rest of your days with the d’Haberville family; they will take every care of your old age. After your decease you know the poor will be our heirs.”

“My dear master,” said Francœur sobbing, “the poor will not have long to

wait for their inheritance."

"The good gentleman," after bidding all his friends a most affectionate farewell, addressed the curé, begging him to recite the prayers for the dying. And at the words: "Go forth, O Christian soul from this world, in the name of God the Father Almighty who created thee—" he gave his last sigh. Sterne would have said that: "The recording angel of the court of heaven shed a tear on the follies of his youth, and blotted them out forever." The angels are more compassionate than men, for men never forget or pardon the faults of others.

André Francœur was struck with paralysis as they lowered his master's body to its last resting-place, and only survived him three weeks.

When Jules had said to his sister: "Were I to love an English girl, and were I to find that she responded to my feelings, I would as willingly marry her as I would marry one of my country-women," she was far from suspecting her brother's real intentions. In fact, Jules, on his passage across the Atlantic, had made the acquaintance of a young English lady of great beauty. Jules, like another Saint-Preux, had given her other lessons than those in the French language and grammar during their two months voyage. He had likewise shown his good taste; for the young girl, in addition to her great beauty, possessed all those qualities which inspire an ardent and sincere love.

At length, all obstacles being removed and all difficulties surmounted by the two families, Jules, the following year, married the fair daughter of Albion, who very soon captured the hearts of all around her.

Uncle Raoul, who had always owed the English a grudge for having broken his leg in Acadia but who was too gentlemanly to be wanting in good manners, at first shut himself up in his room whenever he wanted to swear at his ease against his beautiful niece's fellow-countrymen; but at the end of a month's time he was so completely won by that charming young woman's attentions and amiability, that he all at once suppressed his oaths, to the great benefit of his soul and of the pious ears he had so often scandalized.

"That rascal Jules," Uncle Raoul would say, "did not show any want of taste in marrying that English girl; and that holy pope was right enough in saying that the young islanders would have been angels, had they only been Christians; *non angli, sed angeli forent, si essent christiani*."

It was quite another thing when the dear uncle, holding a little nephew on one knee and a little niece on the other, danced them to the pretty tunes sung by Canadian voyageurs. How proud he was when their mother called out to him:

"Do pray come to my assistance, my dear uncle, these little wretches will

not go to sleep without you."

Uncle Raoul had announced that he intended himself to look after his nephew's military education. From four years of age, therefore, the embryo soldier, armed with a wooden gun, was perpetually charging furiously at the abdomen of his instructor, who was obliged to defend the attacked part with his cane.

"The little rascal," said the chevalier straightening himself, "will have the d'Haberville's fiery courage, combined with the tenacity and independence of the proud islanders he springs from on his mother's side."

José had at first been very cool towards his young mistress, but he ended by becoming sincerely attached to her. She had soon discovered his vulnerable point; José, like his defunct father, liked wine and brandy, and they certainly took no more effect on his Breton brain than if the liquor he swallowed had been poured on the weathercock which surmounted the seigneur's May-pole, in order to muddle that venerable bird in the performance of its proper functions; the good lady, therefore, was constantly presenting José, sometimes with a glass of brandy to warm him, sometimes with a glass of wine to cool him. José ended by acknowledging that though Englishmen were somewhat boorish, Englishwomen did not at all resemble them.

Monsieur and Madame d'Haberville, after so many vicissitudes, feeling at ease about their children's prospects, passed many peaceful and tranquil years, living to extreme old age. The captain's last words to his son were:

"Serve your new sovereign with as much fidelity as I have served the King of France; and may God bless you, my dear son, for the consolation you have been to me."

Uncle Raoul, whose decease occurred three years before that of his brother, had but one regret in dying; that of quitting this life before his grand-nephew had embraced the military profession.

"There is but one career worthy of a d'Haberville," he incessantly repeated, "that of arms."

However, he found some consolation in the hope that his nephew, who had distinguished himself at college, would be a learned man like himself, so that science would not die out in the family.

José, who had an iron constitution and nerves of steel, who had never had a minute's illness in his life, looked upon death as a somewhat hypothetical event. After the decease of his old master, one of his friends said to him one day:

“Do you know, José, that you are at least eighty years old, and that, to look at you, one would not take you to be more than fifty?”

José leaned on one hip, as a sign of his stability, blew the ashes out of the stem of his pipe, with the only hand he had still remaining fumbled in his breeches pocket for his tobacco-bag, flint and steel, and then without hurrying himself, replied:

“As you already know, I am our defunct captain’s foster-brother; I was brought up at his house; I followed him to all the wars he was at; I have seen his children grow up, and now you see, I have just begun again by taking care of his grandchildren. Well! so long as a d’Haberville is in need of my services, I do not think of leaving!”

“Then you think of living as long as the defunct Methuselah?” said the neighbor.

“Still longer, if necessary,” replied José.

Then, having got all he wanted out of his pocket, he crammed his pipe full, put some lighted tinder on the top of it, and began to smoke, looking at his friend like a person who is thoroughly convinced of the truth of what he has been laying down.

José kept his word for a dozen years; but it was in vain that he tried to withstand old age by busying himself about his usual occupations, in spite of his masters’ orders to the contrary; at last he was obliged to keep the house. All the family were anxious about him.

“What is the matter with you, my dear José?” said Jules.

“Oh! only laziness,” said José, “or perhaps my rheumatics.”

Now José had never had an attack of this malady. It was only a pretext.

“Give the good old fellow, ma’am, his morning glass, it will revive him,” said Archy.

“I am going to fetch you a glass of excellent brandy,” said Madame Jules.

“Not just now,” replied José, “I have always some in my trunk; but this morning I do not seem to want any.”

They then began to be seriously alarmed; this was a bad symptom.

“Then I will make you a cup of tea,” said Madame Jules, “and you will find yourself easier.”

“My English wife,” said Jules, “thinks her tea a sovereign remedy for all ills.”[30]

José drank the tea, declared it was a fine medicine and that he felt better; this did not, however, prevent the faithful servant taking to his bed that same evening, never to leave it again alive.

When the good fellow saw that his end was approaching, he said to Jules, who was sitting up all night with him:

"I have prayed God to prolong my life till your children's next holidays, so that I may see them once more before I die; but I shall not have that consolation."

"You shall see them to-morrow, my dear José."

An hour afterwards Lochiel was on the road to Quebec; and the next evening, all who were dearest on earth to that faithful and affectionate servant, were assembled round his death-bed. After having conversed with them for some time, and bade them the most tender farewell, he collected all his strength to sit up; and Jules, having approached to support him, felt a burning tear fall on his hand. After this last effort of that powerful nature, he, who had shared the d'Haberville's good and evil fortune, was no more.

"Let us pray for the soul of one of the most excellent men that I have known," said Archy, closing his eyes.

Jules and Blanche, in spite of all remonstrances, would not confide to anyone the task of watching beside their old friend during the three days that his body remained at the manor house.

"If one of our family had died," they said, "José would not have allowed anyone but himself to have fulfilled this last duty."

One day, as Archy, during one of his frequent visits at the d'Haberville's, was walking before the manor house with Jules, he saw coming towards him on foot an old man, tolerably well dressed and carrying a seal-skin bag on his back.

"Who is that man?" said he.

"Ah," said Jules, "that is our friend, Monsieur D—, carrying his deeds and papers on his back."

"His deeds and papers? how is that?" said Archy.

"Certainly. He is an itinerant notary. He passes through certain localities every three months, drawing up fresh deeds, and copying and filling up the rough drafts which he always carries with him so as not to be taken unawares. He is an excellent and amiable man, a Frenchman by birth, and very intelligent. On his arrival in Canada, he began by dealing in pictures, but he gained but little at it; afterwards, remembering that he had formerly studied for two years in France with an advocate, he boldly presented himself to the judges, passed an examination, which, if not very brilliant, was sufficiently sound for his new country, and returned home triumphant, with a notary's

commission in his pocket. I assure you, every one gets on very well with his deeds, which are prepared with the most scrupulous honesty; it is this which supplies the place of the purer diction (too often spotted by want of honesty) of more learned notaries."

"Your wandering notary," replied Archy, "arrives very opportunely. I have something for him to do."

In fact, Lochiel, who had already made great progress in the work of clearing he was so actively engaged in for the benefit of his friend Dumais, made over to him, in due form, all the recently acquired domain, only reserving for himself, during his lifetime, the half of the new and spacious house which he had built.

Archy's visits to the d'Haberville manor house became more and more frequent as he advanced in age; and he ended by residing there altogether, when a devoted friendship had replaced the warmer sentiment which had clouded the best days of his youth. Henceforth Archy looked upon Blanche as his sister by adoption; and the sweet name of brother, which Blanche gave him, purified what still remained of love in her noble heart.

Jules had been an affectionate and dutiful son; and his two children were to him what he had been to his good parents.

As long as Monsieur and Madame d'Haberville lived, Jules remained always with them, only absenting himself on indispensable business, or to fulfil a duty to which his father, who, before the conquest had been a strict observer of etiquette, attached much importance,—that of being present, with his wife, at the Queen's ball, on the 31st of December; as well as the next morning at eleven o'clock at a levee, held by the governor, when, as representative of the King, he received the respectful homage of all who had the entree at the Château St. Louis at Quebec.

The author has so much affection for the principal personages in this veracious history, that he cannot bear to make them disappear from the scene; one gets attached to the fruit of one's own labors. He also fears to grieve such of his readers as share in his attachment to his heroes, should he despatch them with a stroke of the pen; time will do its work of death without any assistance from the author.

It is eleven o'clock, on an evening towards the end of October; all the d'Haberville family are assembled in a small drawing-room, which is sufficiently illumined, even without the assistance of the wax candles, by the vivid light shed by an armful of cedar wood, which is blazing in the large chimney. Lochiel, who is now nearly sixty years of age, is playing chess with

Blanche. Jules, seated between his wife and daughter, is teasing both of them, and yet not forgetting the chess-players.

Young Archy d'Haberville, Jules' only son, and Lochiel's godson, appears to be in deep thought, while following with an attentive eye the fantastic figures which his imagination creates in the embers which are slowly dying out on the hearth.

"What are you thinking about, grave philosopher?" said his father to him.

"I have been following with ever-increasing interest," said the young man, "a small group of men, women and children, who are walking, dancing, jumping, ascending and descending; and now, all have disappeared."

The cedar-wood fire had just gone out.

"You are, indeed, your mother's son, the worthy godson of Archy Lochiel," said Jules d'Haberville, rising to wish the family good night.

Like these fantastic figures on which young d'Haberville was gazing, my characters, dear reader, have moved before your eyes for a while, only to disappear suddenly, perhaps forever, with him who set them in action.

Farewell then also, dear reader, ere my hand shall be colder than our Canadian winters and refuse to trace my thoughts.

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[30] See Appendix H.

APPENDIX

A

Speaking here of La Corriveau is a slight anachronism, as she was not really hung out in her iron cage till after April 15th, 1763, as appears from the sentence of the court-martial, dated on that day. Three years after the conquest of Canada, 1763, an atrocious murder was committed in the parish of St. Vallier, in the district of Quebec, and although a century has elapsed since the tragic event, the memory of it is still preserved, surrounded by a number of fantastic tales which gave it all the appearance of a legend. In November, 1749, a woman named Corriveau married a habitant of St. Vallier. After eleven years of matrimony, the man died in that parish on the 27th of April, 1760. There was a vague rumor that La Corriveau had got rid of her husband by pouring melted lead into his ear whilst he was asleep.

There is no evidence to show that the justice of that day took any steps to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the accusation; and three months after the decease of her first husband, La Corriveau was again married, on the 20th of July, 1760, to Louis Dodier, another habitant of St. Vallier. After having lived together three years, it is related that at the end of the month of January, 1763, La Corriveau took advantage of her husband being in a sound sleep, and broke his skull, by striking it repeatedly with a *broc*, which is a sort of three-pronged pitchfork. To conceal her crime, she dragged the corpse into the stable and placed it at the heels of a horse, so as to make it appear that the wounds inflicted with the pitchfork had been caused by the animal kicking. La Corriveau was in consequence, jointly with her father, accused of murder.

GENERAL ORDER.

QUEBEC, APRIL 10th, 1763

The Court-martial, whereof Lt.-Col. Morris was president, having tried Joseph Corriveau and Marie Josephte Corriveau, Canadians, for the murder of Louis Dodier, as also Isabelle Sylvain, a Canadian, for perjury on the same trial, the Governor doth ratify and confirm the following sentence: That Joseph Corriveau having been found guilty of the charge brought against him, he is therefore adjudged to be hung for the same.

The Court is likewise of opinion that Marie Josephte Corriveau, his

daughter, and widow of the late Dodier, is guilty of knowing of the said murder, and doth therefore adjudge her to receive sixty lashes with a cat-o'-nine tails, on her bare back, at three different places, viz: under the gallows, upon the market-place of Quebec, and in the parish of St. Vallier; twenty lashes at each place, and to be branded in the left hand with the letter M.

The Court doth also adjudge Isabelle Sylvain to receive sixty lashes, with a cat-o'-nine tails, on her bare back, in the same manner, and at the same time and places as Marie Josephte Corriveau, and to be branded in the left hand with the letter P.

Fortunately these sentences were not carried out, and this is how the true state of the case became known. The unfortunate Corriveau having made up his mind to die for his daughter, sent for Father de Glassion, then Superior of the Jesuits at Quebec, to prepare him for death. After his confession, the condemned man requested an interview with the authorities. He then said he could not conscientiously accept death under the circumstances, since he was not guilty of the murder imputed to him. He then gave the authorities means to arrive at the truth and to exonerate Isabelle Sylvain of the supposed crime of perjury, of which she was innocent. After the usual proceedings, the following Order came out:

GENERAL ORDER.

QUEBEC, APRIL 15th, 1763

The Court-martial, whereof Lt.-Col. Morris was president, is dissolved. The General Court-martial having tried Marie Josephte Corriveau, for the murder of her husband, Dodier, the Court finding her guilty, the Governor (Murray) doth ratify and confirm the following sentence: That Marie Josephte Corriveau do suffer death for the same, and her body to be hung in chains wherever the Governor shall think fit.

(Signed) THOMAS MILLS,
Town Major.

Conformably to the sentence, Marie Josephte Corriveau was hung near the Plains of Abraham, at the place called "les Buttes" at Nepveu, formerly the usual place of execution. Her body was put in an iron cage, and this cage suspended on a stake at the crossroads in Pointe-Lévis, near the place where the Temperance Monument now stands, [1862]. . . .

The inhabitants of Pointe-Lévis not much liking this spectacle asked of the authorities to have it taken away, as the sight of the cage and rumored nocturnal noises and apparitions frightened the women and children. As nothing was done, some courageous young men went during the night, and taking down La Corriveau and her cage, deposited them in the ground at the end of the cemetery, outside the enclosure.

This mysterious disappearance, and the tales told by those who, during the night, had heard the grating of the iron hooks, and the rattling of the bones, made La Corriveau pass into the regions of the supernatural. After the burning of Pointe-Lévis church in 1830, they enlarged the cemetery, and this was how the cage was within the enclosure when it was found by the grave-digger in 1850. The cage, which then only contained the bone of one leg, was made of strong iron bars. It was in the form of a human being, having legs and arms, with a round box for the head. It was in good preservation, and was deposited in the sacristy cellar. This cage was secretly taken away some little time afterwards and shown at Quebec as a curiosity. It was afterwards sold to Barnum's Museum.

B

Madame Couillard, seigneuress of St. Thomas, South River, who has now been dead sixty years, described a somewhat similar scene to me. "My Father," she said, "was lying very ill, when I saw a detachment of English soldiers approaching; I rushed out, as if I were out of my senses, and throwing myself at the feet of the officer in command, said to him, sobbing: 'Mr. Englishman, do not kill my old father, I entreat you! He is on his death-bed; do not cut short the few days he has got to live!' "

This officer was the quarter-master, Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester.

"He raised me from the ground with great kindness," she went on to say, "treated me with the greatest respect, and, in order to allay my fears, posted a sentinel before the house."

Lord Dorchester, having afterwards become the governor of Lower Canada, would often ask Madame Couillard, when she was visiting the Château St. Louis, "whether she was still very much afraid of the English."

"No," the lady would answer, "but you must acknowledge, my lord, that the Canadians had good reason to fear your fellow-countrymen, as they were not nearly as humane as yourself."

C

The Indians had a horror of the halter; they preferred the stake, where their enemies would often torture them for days together. A young Indian having killed two Englishmen, a few years after the conquest, his tribe would only give him up to the government on the express condition that he should not be hung. When he was convicted of the murder he was shot. The country must have been under military law at that time; no ordinary criminal court could have legally substituted a bullet for a halter in a case of murder.

There is a tradition in my family that my maternal great-grandfather, the second Baron de Longueuil, being at that time governor of Montreal had an Iroquois prisoner hung; and that this stern act of justice had the salutary effect of preventing these barbarians torturing the French prisoners they took afterwards, as the Baron de Longueuil had announced to them that he would have two Indian prisoners hung for every Frenchman that they burnt.

D

The Montgomery of this work is an imaginary personage, but at the time of the conquest, his namesake did really commit many acts of cold-blooded and wanton barbarity against the Canadians. The memoirs of Colonel Malcolm Fraser, at that time lieutenant in the 78th or Fraser's Highlanders, bear witness to this: "There were several of the enemy killed and wounded, and a few taken prisoners, all of whom the barbarous Captain Montgomery, who commanded us, ordered to be butchered in a most inhuman and cruel manner."

E

My grand-aunt, Mother St. Alexis, who was for many years the superior of the General Hospital, and whose name is still revered there, would often say to me, when speaking of this subject:

"All the linen of our house, including even our own body-linen, was torn up to dress the wounds of those who were brought to us of both nations; we had nothing left but the clothes we wore the day of the battle. We had not been rich and we were reduced to the most extreme poverty; for not only our linen, which was a most precious commodity in a hospital, but also our provisions and farm-animals were placed at the disposal of the sick. After the conquest, the English government refused to indemnify us."

"In this extremity," she added, "we had no other resource than to close our house and disperse among the other convents in this colony, but Providence came to our assistance. One morning our chaplain found in his room, a purse containing a hundred portugaises (a gold coin worth eight dollars) and, as we could never discover from what charitable hand we had received it, we have

always thought God worked a miracle in our favor."

F

Many of the old habitants have often told me that they had to eat their corn boiled, for want of mills to grind it.

Even during my childhood, mills were not very numerous. I remember that, one severe winter, my father's on the Trois-Saumons river not proving sufficient for the tenants' wants, they were obliged to take their corn either to St. Thomas, a distance of eighteen or twenty miles, or to Kamouraska, a distance of forty miles; and they were frequently detained for three or four days before being able to get their flour.

G

Formerly the habitant's children used not to eat at the same table as their father and mother till after their first communion. In a family in easy circumstances, there was always a little low table for their use; generally, however, the children took their meals on the block. There were always several of these in the kitchen, which room frequently was the habitants' only one; these blocks would often make up for the scarcity of chairs, and it was on these also that the meat was cut up and minced to make into pies and pasties for holidays. All that was necessary was to turn over the block, according to what it was wanted for. During their quarrels, elder children would often say to younger ones: "You still only eat on the block," which was a cutting reproach to the little ones.

H

The Canadians used to dislike tea. The ladies sometimes took it as a sudorific during their illness, giving the preference, however, to camomile tea.

When the author's mother, who had been brought up in towns, where she frequented English society, introduced tea into her father-in-law's family after her marriage, seventy-eight years ago, the old people used to laugh at her, saying that she only took such trash to imitate the English, and could not possibly find any flavor in it.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

Some illustrations were moved to facilitate page layout.

[The end of *Seigneur D'Haberville (The Canadians of Old)—A Romance of the Fall of New France* by Phillippe Aubert De Gaspé]