

The Seats Of The Mighty, Volume 5.

Gilbert Parker

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THE SEATS OF THE MIGHTY

BEING THE MEMOIRS OF CAPTAIN ROBERT MORAY,
SOMETIME AN OFFICER IN THE VIRGINIA REGIMENT,
AND AFTERWARDS OF AMHERST'S REGIMENT

By Gilbert Parker

Volume 5.

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XXV

IN THE CATHEDRAL

I awoke with the dawn, and, dressing, looked out of the window, seeing the brindled light spread over the battered roofs and ruins of the Lower Town. A bell was calling to prayers in the Jesuit College not far away, and bugle-calls told of the stirring garrison. Soldiers and stragglers passed down the street near by, and a few starved peasants crept about the cathedral with downcast eyes, eager for crumbs that a well-fed soldier might cast aside. Yet I knew that in the Intendant's Palace and among the officers of the army there was abundance, with revelry and dissipation.

Presently I drew to the trap-door of my loft, and, raising it gently, came down the ladder to the little hallway, and softly opened the door of the room where Labrouk's body lay. Candles were burning at his head and his feet, and two peasants sat dozing in chairs near by. I could see Labrouk's face plainly in the flickering light: a rough, wholesome face it was, refined by death, yet unshaven and unkempt, too. Here was work for Voban's shears and razor. Presently there was a footstep behind me, and, turning, I saw in the half-light the widowed wife.

"Madame," said I in a whisper, "I too weep with you. I pray for as true an end for myself."

"He was of the true faith, thank the good God," she said sincerely. She passed into the room, and the two watchers, after taking refreshment, left the house. Suddenly she hastened to the door, called one back, and, pointing to the body, whispered

something. The peasant nodded and turned away. She came back into the room, stood looking at the face of the dead man for a moment, and bent over and kissed the crucifix clasped in the cold hands. Then she stepped about the room, moving a chair and sweeping up a speck of dust in a mechanical way. Presently, as if she again remembered me, she asked me to enter the room. Then she bolted the outer door of the house. I stood looking at the body of her husband, and said, "Were it not well to have Voban the barber?"

"I have sent for him and for Gabord," she replied. "Gabord was Jean's good friend. He is with General Montcalm. The Governor put him in prison because of the marriage of Mademoiselle Duvarney, but Monsieur Doltaire set him free, and now he serves General Montcalm.

"I have work in the cathedral," continued the poor woman, "and I shall go to it this morning as I have always gone. There is a little unused closet in a gallery where you may hide, and still see all that happens. It is your last look at the lady, and I will give it to you, as you gave me to know of my Jean."

"My last look?" I asked eagerly.

"She goes into the nunnery to-morrow, they say," was the reply. "Her marriage is to be set aside by the bishop to-day--in the cathedral. This is her last night to live as such as I--but no, she will be happier so."

"Madame," said I, "I am a heretic, but I listened when your husband said, 'Mon grand homme de Calvaire, bon soir!' Was the cross less a cross because a heretic put it to his lips? Is a marriage less a marriage because a heretic is the husband? Madame, you loved your Jean; if he were living now, what would you do to keep him. Think, madame, is not love more than all?"

She turned to the dead body. "Mon petit Jean!" she murmured, but made no reply to me, and for many minutes the room was silent. At last she turned, and said, "You must come at once, for soon the priests will be at the church. A little later I will bring you some breakfast, and you must not stir from there till I come to fetch you--no."

"I wish to see Voban," said I.

She thought a moment. "I will try to fetch him to you by-and-bye," she said. She did not speak further, but finished the sentence by pointing to the body.

Presently, hearing footsteps, she drew me into another little room. "It is the grandfather," she said. "He has forgotten you already, and he must not see you again."

We saw the old man hobble into the room we had left, carrying in one arm Jean's coat and hat. He stood still, and nodded at the body and mumbled to himself; then he went over and touched the hands and forehead, nodding wisely; after which he came to his armchair, and, sitting down, spread the coat over his knees, put the cap on it, and gossiped with himself:

"In eild our idle fancies all return,

The mind's eye cradled by the open grave."

A moment later, the woman passed from the rear of the house to the vestry door of the cathedral. After a minute, seeing no one near, I followed, came to the front door, entered, and passed up a side aisle towards the choir. There was no one to be seen, but soon the woman came out of the vestry and beckoned to me nervously. I followed her quick movements, and was soon in a narrow stairway, coming, after fifty steps or so, to a sort of cloister, from which we went into a little cubiculum, or cell, with a wooden lattice door which opened on a small gallery. Through the lattices the nave amid choir could be viewed distinctly.

Without a word the woman turned and left me, and I sat down on a little stone bench and waited. I saw the acolytes come and go, and priests move back and forth before the altar; I smelt the grateful incense as it rose when mass was said; I watched the people gather in little clusters at the different shrines, or seek the confessional, or kneel to receive the blessed sacrament. Many who came were familiar--among them Mademoiselle Lucie Lotbiniere. Lucie prayed long before a shrine of the Virgin, and when she rose at last her face bore signs of weeping. Also I noticed her suddenly start as she moved down the aisle, for a figure came forward from seclusion and touched her arm. As he half turned I saw that it was Juste Duvarney. The girl drew back from him, raising her hand as if in protest, and it struck me that her grief and her repulse of him had to do with putting Alixe away into a nunnery.

I sat hungry and thirsty for quite three hours, and then the church became empty, and only an old verger kept a seat by the door, half asleep, though the artillery of both armies was at work, and the air was laden with the smell of powder. (Until this time our batteries had avoided firing on the churches.) At last I heard footsteps near me in the dark stairway, and I felt for my pistols, for the feet were not those of Labrouk's wife. I waited anxiously, and was overjoyed to see Voban enter my hiding-place, bearing some food. I greeted him warmly, but he made little demonstration. He was like one who, occupied with some great matter, passed through the usual affairs of life with a distant eye. Immediately he handed me a letter, saying:

"M'sieu', I give my word to hand you this--in a day or a year, as I am able. I get your message to me this morning, and then I come to care for Jean Labrouk, and so I find you here, and I give the letter. It come to me last night."

The letter was from Alixe. I opened it with haste, and, in the dim light, read:

MY BELOVED HUSBAND: Oh, was there no power in earth or heaven to bring me to your arms to-day?

To-morow they come to see my marriage annulled by the Church. And every one will say it is annulled--every one but me. I, in God's name, will say no, though it break my heart to oppose myself to them all.

Why did my brother come back? He has been hard--O, Robert, he has been hard upon me, and yet I was ever kind to him! My father,

too, he listens to the Church, and, though he likes not Monsieur Doltaire, he works for him in a hundred ways without seeing it. I, alas! see it too well, and my brother is as wax in monsieur's hands. Juste loves Lucie Lotbiniere--that should make him kind. She, sweet friend, does not desert me, but is kept from me. She says she will not yield to Juste's suit until he yields to me. If--oh, if Madame Jamond had not gone to Montreal!

...As I was writing the foregoing sentence, my father asked to see me, and we have had a talk--ah, a most bitter talk!

"Alixé," said he, "this is our last evening together, and I would have it peaceful."

"My father," said I, "it is not my will that this evening be our last; and for peace, I long for it with all my heart."

He frowned, and answered, "You have brought me trouble and sorrow. Mother of God! was it not possible for you to be as your sister Georgette? I gave her less love, yet she honours me more."

"She honours you, my father, by a sweet, good life, and by marriage into an honourable family, and at your word she gives her hand to Monsieur Auguste de la Darante. She marries to your pleasure, therefore she has peace and your love. I marry a man of my own choosing, a bitterly wronged gentleman, and you treat me as some wicked thing. Is that like a father who loves his child?"

"The wronged gentleman, as you call him, invaded that which is the pride of every honest gentleman," he said.

"And what is that?" asked I quietly, though I felt the blood beating at my temples.

"My family honour, the good name and virtue of my daughter."

I got to my feet, and looked my father in the eyes with an anger and a coldness that hurts me now when I think of it, and I said, "I will not let you speak so to me. Friendless though I be, you shall not. You have the power to oppress me, but you shall not slander me to my face. Can not you leave insults to my enemies?"

"I will never leave you to the insults of this mock marriage," answered he, angrily also. "Two days hence I take command of five thousand burghers, and your brother Juste serves with General Montcalm. There is to be last fighting soon between us and the English. I do not doubt of the result, but I may fall, and your brother also, and, should the English win, I will not leave you to him you call your husband. Therefore you shall be kept safe where no alien hands may reach you. The Church will hold you close."

I calmed myself again while listening to him, and I asked, "Is there no other way?"

He shook his head.

"Is there no Monsieur Doltaire?" said I. "He has a king's blood in his veins!"

He looked sharply at me. "You are mocking," he replied. "No, no, that is no way, either. Monsieur Doltaire must never mate with daughter of mine. I will take care of that; the Church is a perfect if gentle jailer."

I could bear it no longer. I knelt to him. I begged him to have pity on me. I pleaded with him; I recalled the days when, as a child, I sat upon his knee and listened to the wonderful tales he told; I begged him, by the memory of all the years when he and I were such true friends to be kind to me now, to be merciful--even though he thought I had done wrong--to be merciful. I asked him to remember that I was a motherless girl, and that if I had missed the way to happiness he ought not to make my path bitter to the end. I begged him to give me back his love and confidence, and, if I must for evermore be parted from you, to let me be with him, not to put me away into a convent.

Oh, how my heart leaped when I saw his face soften! "Well, well," he said, "if I live, you shall be taken from the convent; but for the present, till this fighting is over, it is the only safe place. There, too, you shall be safe from Monsieur Doltaire."

It was poor comfort. "But should you be killed, and the English take Quebec?" said I.

"When I am dead," he answered, "when I am dead, then there is your brother."

"And if he speaks for Monsieur Doltaire?" asked I.

"There is the Church and God always," he answered.

"And my own husband, the man who saved your life, my father," I urged gently; and when he would have spoken I threw myself into his arms--the first time in such long, long weeks!--and, stopping his lips with my fingers, burst into tears on his breast. I think much of his anger against me passed, yet before he left he said he could not now prevent the annulment of the marriage, even if he would, for other powers were at work; which powers I supposed to be the Governor, for certain reasons of enmity to my father and me--alas! how changed is he, the vain old man!--and Monsieur Doltaire, whose ends I knew so well. So they will unwed us to-morrow, Robert; but be sure that I shall never be unwed in my own eyes, and that I will wait till I die, hoping you will come and take me--oh, Robert, my husband--take me home.

If I had one hundred men, I would fight my way out of this city, and to you; but, dear, I have none, not even Gabord, who is not let come near me. There is but Voban. Yet he will bear you this, if it be possible, for he comes to-night to adorn my fashionable brother. The poor Mathilde I have not seen of late. She has vanished. When they began to keep me close, and carried me off at last into the country, where we were captured by the English, I could not see her, and my heart aches for her.

God bless you, Robert, and farewell. How we shall smile, when all this misery is done! Oh, say we shall, say we shall smile, and

all this misery cease. Will you not take me home? Do you still love thy wife, thy

ALIXE?

I bade Voban come to me at the little house behind the church that night at ten o'clock, and by then I should have arranged some plan of action. I knew not whether to trust Gabord or no. I was sorry now that I had not tried to bring Clark with me. He was fearless, and he knew the town well; but he lacked discretion, and that was vital.

Two hours of waiting, then came a scene which is burned into my brain. I looked down upon a mass of people, soldiers, couriers of the woods, beggars, priests, camp followers, and anxious gentlefolk, come from seclusion, or hiding, or vigils of war, to see a host of powers torture a young girl who by suffering had been made a woman long before her time. Out in the streets was the tramping of armed men, together with the call of bugles and the sharp rattle of drums. Presently I heard the hoofs of many horses, and soon afterwards there entered the door, and way was made for him up the nave, the Marquis de Vaudreuil and his suite, with the Chevalier de la Darante, the Intendant, and--to my indignation--Juste Duvarney.

They had no sooner taken their places than, from a little side door near the vestry, there entered the Seigneur Duvarney and Alixe, who, coming down slowly, took places very near the chancel steps. The Seigneur was pale and stern, and carried himself with great dignity. His glance never shifted from the choir, where the priests slowly entered and took their places, the aged and feeble bishop going falteringly to his throne. Alixe's face was pale and sorrowful, and yet it had a dignity and self-reliance that gave it a kind of grandeur. A buzz passed through the building, yet I noted, too, with gladness that there were tears on many faces.

A figure stole in beside Alixe. It was Mademoiselle Lotbiniere, who immediately was followed by her mother. I leaned forward, perfectly hidden, and listened to the singsong voices of the priests, the musical note of the responses, heard the Kyrie Eleison, the clanging of the belfry bell as the host was raised by the trembling bishop. The silence which followed the mournful voluntary played by the organ was most painful to me.

At that moment a figure stepped from behind a pillar, and gave Alixe a deep, scrutinizing look. It was Doltaire. He was graver than I had ever seen him, and was dressed scrupulously in black, with a little white lace showing at the wrists and neck. A handsomer figure it would be hard to see; and I hated him for it, and wondered what new devilry was in his mind. He seemed to sweep the church with a glance. Nothing could have escaped that swift, searching look. His eyes were even raised to where I was, so that I involuntarily drew back, though I knew he could not see me.

I was arrested suddenly by a curious disdainful, even sneering smile which played upon his face as he looked at Vaudreuil and Bigot. There was in it more scorn than malice, more triumph than active hatred. All at once I remembered what he had said to me the day before: that he had commission from the King through La Pompadour to take over the reins of government from the two

confederates, and send them to France to answer the charges made against them.

At last the bishop came forward, and read from a paper as follows:

"Forasmuch as a well-beloved child of our Holy Church, Mademoiselle Alixe Duvarney, of the parish of Beauport and of this cathedral parish, in this province of New France, forgetting her manifest duty and our sacred teaching, did illegally and in sinful error make feigned contract of marriage with one Robert Moray, captain in a Virginian regiment, a heretic, a spy, and an enemy to our country; and forasmuch as this was done in violence of all nice habit and commendable obedience to Mother Church and our national uses, we do hereby declare and make void this alliance until such time as the Holy Father at Rome shall finally approve our action and proclaiming. And it is enjoined upon Mademoiselle Alixe Duvarney, on peril of her soul's salvation, to obey us in this matter, and neither by word or deed or thought have commerce more with this notorious and evil heretic and foe of our Church and of our country. It is also the plain duty of the faithful children of our Holy Church to regard this Captain Moray with a pious hatred, and to destroy him without pity; and any good cunning or enticement which should lure him to the punishment he so much deserves shall be approved. Furthermore, Mademoiselle Alixe Duvarney shall, until such times as there shall be peace in this land, and the molesting English are driven back with slaughter--and for all time, if the heart of our sister incline to penitence and love of Christ--be confined within the Convent of the Ursulines, and cared for with great tenderness."

He left off reading, and began to address himself to Alixe directly; but she rose in her place, and while surprise and awe seized the congregation, she said:

"Monseigneur, I must needs, at my father's bidding, hear the annulment of my marriage, but I will not hear this public exhortation. I am but a poor girl, unlearned in the law, and I must needs submit to your power, for I have no one here to speak for me. But my soul and my conscience I carry to my Saviour, and I have no fear to answer Him. I am sorry that I have offended against my people and my country and Holy Church, but I repent not that I love and hold to my husband. You must do with me as you will, but in this I shall never willingly yield."

She turned to her father, and all the people breathed hard; for it passed their understanding, and seemed most scandalous that a girl could thus defy the Church, and answer the bishop in his own cathedral. Her father rose, and then I saw her sway with faintness. I know not what might have occurred, for the bishop stood with hand upraised and a great indignation in his face, about to speak, when out of the desultory firing from our batteries there came a shell, which burst even at the cathedral entrance, tore away a portion of the wall, and killed and wounded a number of people.

Then followed a panic which the priests in vain tried to quell. The people swarmed into the choir and through the vestry. I saw Doltaire with Juste Duvarney spring swiftly to the side of Alixe, and, with her father, put her and Mademoiselle Lotbiniere into the pulpit, forming a ring round it, and preventing the crowd

from trampling on them, as, suddenly gone mad, they swarmed past. The Governor, the Intendant, and the Chevalier de la Darante did as much also for Madame Lotbiniere; and as soon as the crush had in a little subsided, a number of soldiers cleared the way, and I saw my wife led from the church. I longed to leap down there among them and claim her, but that thought was madness, for I should have been food for worms in a trice, so I kept my place.

XXVI

THE SECRET OF THE TAPESTRY

That evening, at eight o'clock, Jean Labrouk was buried. A shell had burst not a dozen paces from his own door, within the consecrated ground of the cathedral, and in a hole it had made he was laid, the only mourners his wife and his grandfather, and two soldiers of his company sent by General Bougainville to bury him. I watched the ceremony from my loft, which had one small dormer window. It was dark, but burning buildings in the Lower Town made all light about the place. I could hear the grandfather mumbling and talking to the body as it was lowered into the ground. While yet the priest was hastily reading prayers, a dusty horseman came riding to the grave, and dismounted.

"Jean," he said, looking at the grave, "Jean Labrouk, a man dies well that dies with his gaiters on, aho! ... What have you said for Jean Labrouk, m'sieu'?" he added to the priest.

The priest stared at him, as though he had presumed.

"Well?" said Gabord. "Well?"

The priest answered nothing, but prepared to go, whispering a word of comfort to the poor wife. Gabord looked at the soldiers, looked at the wife, at the priest, then spread out his legs and stuck his hands down into his pockets, while his horse rubbed its nose against his shoulder. He fixed his eyes on the grave, and nodded once or twice musingly.

"Well," he said at last, as if he had found a perfect virtue, and the one or only thing that could be said, "well, he never eat his words, that Jean."

A moment afterwards he came into the house with Babette, leaving one of the soldiers holding his horse. After the old man had gone, I heard him say, "Were you at mass to-day? And did you see all?"

And when she had answered yes, he continued: "It was a mating as birds mate, but mating was it, and holy fathers and Master Devil Doltaire can't change it till cock-pheasant Moray come rocketing to 's grave. They would have hanged me for my part in it, but I repent not, for they have wickedly hunted this little lady."

"I weep with her," said Jean's wife.

"Ay, ay, weep on, Babette," he answered.

"Has she asked help of you?" said the wife.

"Truly; but I know not what says she, for I read not, but I know her pecking. Here it is. But you must be secret."

Looking through a crack in the floor, I could plainly see them. She took the letter from him and read aloud:

"If Gabord the soldier have a good heart still, as ever he had in the past, he will again help a poor friendless woman. She needs him, for all are against her. Will he leave her alone among her enemies? Will he not aid her to fly? At eight o'clock to-morrow night she will be taken to the Convent of the Ursulines, to be there shut in. Will he not come to her before that time?"

For a moment after the reading there was silence, and I could see the woman looking at him curiously. "What will you do?" she asked.

"My faith, there's nut to crack, for I have little time. This letter but reached me with the news of Jean, two hours ago, and I know not what to do, but, scratching my head, here comes word from General Montcalm that I must ride to Master Devil Doltaire with a letter, and I must find him wherever he may be, and give it straight. So forth I come; and I must be at my post again by morn, said the General."

"It is now nine o'clock, and she will be in the convent," said the woman tentatively.

"Aho!" he answered, "and none can enter there but Governor, if holy Mother say no. So now goes Master Devil there? 'Gabord,' quoth he, 'you shall come with me to the convent at ten o'clock, bringing three stout soldiers of the garrison. Here's an order on Monsieur Ramesay, the Commandant. Choose you the men, and fail me not, or you shall swing aloft, dear Gabord.' Sweet lovers of hell, but Master Devil shall have swinging too one day." He put his thumb to his nose, and spread his fingers out.

Presently he seemed to note something in the woman's eyes, for he spoke almost sharply to her: "Jean Labrouk was honest man, and kept faith with comrades."

"And I keep faith too, comrade," was the answer.

"Gabord's a brute to doubt you," he rejoined quickly, and he drew from his pocket a piece of gold, and made her take it, though she much resisted.

Meanwhile my mind was made up. I saw, I thought, through "Master Devil's" plan, and I felt, too, that Gabord would not betray me. In any case, Gabord and I could fight it out. If he opposed me, it was his life or mine, for too much was at stake, and all my plans were now changed by his astounding news. At that moment Voban entered the room without knocking. Here was my cue, and so, to prevent explanations, I crept quickly down, opened the door, came in on them.

They wheeled at my footsteps; the woman gave a little cry, and Gabord's hand went to his pistol. There was a wild sort of look in his face, as though he could not trust his eyes. I took no notice of the menacing pistol, but went straight to him and held out my hand.

"Gabord," said I, "you are not my jailer now."

"I'll be your guard to citadel," said he, after a moment's dumb surprise, refusing my outstretched hand.

"Neither guard nor jailer any more, Gabord," said I seriously. "We've had enough of that, my friend."

The soldier and the jailer had been working in him, and his fingers trifled with the trigger. In all things he was the foeman first. But now something else was working in him. I saw this, and added pointedly, "No more cage, Gabord, not even for reward of twenty thousand livres and at command of Holy Church."

He smiled grimly, too grimly, I thought, and turned inquiringly to Babette. In a few words she told him all, tears dropping from her eyes.

"If you take him, you betray me," she said; "and what would Jean say, if he knew?"

"Gabord," said I, "I come not as a spy; I come to seek my wife, and she counts you as her friend. Do harm to me, and you do harm to her. Serve me, and you serve her. Gabord, you said to her once that I was an honourable man."

He put up his pistol. "Aho, you've put your head in the trap. Stir, and click goes the spring."

"I must have my wife," I continued. "Shall the nest you helped to make go empty?"

I worked upon him to such purpose that, all bristling with war at first, he was shortly won over to my scheme, which I disclosed to him while the wife made us a cup of coffee. Through all our talk Voban had sat eying us with a covert interest, yet showing no excitement. He had been unable to reach Alixe. She had been taken to the convent, and immediately afterwards her father and brother had gone their ways--Juste to General Montcalm, and the Seigneur to the French camp. Thus Alixe did not know that I was in Quebec.

An hour after this I was marching, with two other men and Gabord, to the Convent of the Ursulines, dressed in the ordinary costume of a French soldier, got from the wife of Jean Labrouk. In manner and speech though I was somewhat dull, my fellows thought, I was enough like a peasant soldier to deceive them, and my French was more fluent than their own. I was playing a desperate game; yet I liked it, for it had a fine spice of adventure apart from the great matter at stake. If I could but carry it off, I should have sufficient compensation for all my miseries, in spite of their twenty thousand livres and Holy Church.

In a few minutes we came to the convent, and halted outside, waiting for Doltaire. Presently he came, and, looking sharply at us

all, he ordered two to wait outside, and Gabord and myself to come with him. Then he stood looking at the building curiously for a moment. A shell had broken one wing of it, and this portion had been abandoned; but the faithful Sisters clung still to their home, though urged constantly by the Governor to retire to the Hotel Dieu, which was outside the reach of shot and shell. This it was their intention soon to do, for within the past day or so our batteries had not sought to spare the convent. As Doltaire looked he laughed to himself, and then said, "Too quiet for gay spirits, this hearse. Come, Gabord, and fetch this slouching fellow," nodding towards me.

Then he knocked loudly. No one came, and he knocked again and again. At last the door was opened by the Mother Superior, who was attended by two others. She started at seeing Doltaire.

"What do you wish, monsieur?" she asked.

"I come on business of the King, good Mother," he replied seriously, and stepped inside.

"It is a strange hour for business," she said severely.

"The King may come at all hours," he answered soothingly: "is it not so? By the law he may enter when he wills."

"You are not the King, monsieur," she objected, with her head held up sedately.

"Or the Governor may come, good Mother?"

"You are not the Governor, Monsieur Doltaire," she said, more sharply still.

"But a Governor may demand admittance to this convent, and by the order of his Most Christian Majesty he may not be refused: is it not so?"

"Must I answer the catechism of Monsieur Doltaire?"

"But is it not so?" he asked again urbanely.

"It is so, yet how does that concern you, monsieur?"

"In every way," and he smiled.

"This is unseemly, monsieur. What is your business?"

"The Governor's business, good Mother."

"Then let the Governor's messenger give his message and depart in peace," she answered, her hand upon the door.

"Not the Governor's messenger, but the Governor himself," he rejoined gravely.

He turned and was about to shut the door, but she stopped him. "This is no house for jesting, monsieur," she said. "I will arouse the town if you persist.--Sister," she added to one standing near, "the bell!"

"You fill your office with great dignity and merit, Mere St. George," he said, as he put out his hand and stayed the Sister. "I commend you for your discretion. Read this," he continued, handing her a paper.

A Sister held a light, and the Mother read it. As she did so Doltaire made a motion to Gabord, and he shut the door quickly on us. Mere St. George looked up from the paper, startled and frightened too.

"Your Excellency!" she exclaimed.

"You are the first to call me so," he replied. "I thought to leave untouched this good gift of the King, and to let the Marquis de Vaudreuil and the admirable Bigot untwist the coil they have made. But no. After some too generous misgivings, I now claim my own. I could not enter here, to speak with a certain lady, save as the Governor, but as the Governor I now ask speech with Mademoiselle Duvarney. Do you hesitate?" he added. "Do you doubt that signature of his Majesty? Then see this. Here is a line from the Marquis de Vaudreuil, the late Governor. It is not dignified, one might say it is craven, but it is genuine."

Again the distressed lady read, and again she said, "Your Excellency!" Then, "You wish to see her in my presence, your Excellency?"

"Alone, good Mother," he softly answered.

"Your Excellency, will you, the first officer in the land, defy our holy rules, and rob us of our privilege to protect and comfort and save?"

"I defy nothing," he replied. "The lady is here against her will, a prisoner. She desires not your governance and care. In any case, I must speak with her; and be assured, I honour you the more for your solicitude, and will ask your counsel when I have finished talk with her."

Was ever man so crafty? After a moment's thought she turned, dismissed the others, and led the way, and Gabord and I followed. We were bidden to wait outside a room, well lighted but bare, as I could see through the open door. Doltaire entered, smiling, and then bowed the nun on her way to summon Alixe. Gabord and I stood there, not speaking, for both were thinking of the dangerous game now playing. In a few minutes the Mother returned, bringing Alixe. The light from the open door shone upon her face. My heart leaped, for there was in her look such a deep sorrow. She was calm, save for those shining yet steady eyes; they were like furnaces, burning up the colour of her cheeks. She wore a soft black gown, with no sign of ornament, and her gold-brown hair was bound with a piece of black velvet ribbon. Her beauty was deeper than I had ever seen it; a peculiar gravity seemed to have added years to her life. As she passed me her sleeve brushed my arm, as it did that day I was arrested in her father's house. She started, as though I had touched her fingers, but only half turned toward me, for her mind was wholly occupied with the room where Doltaire was.

At that moment Gabord coughed slightly, and she turned quickly to him. Her eyes flashed intelligence, and presently, as she passed in, a sort of hope seemed to have come on her face to lighten its painful pensiveness. The Mother Superior entered with her, the door closed, and then, after a little, the Mother came out again. As she did so I saw a look of immediate purpose in her face, and her hurrying step persuaded me she was bent on some project of espial. So I made a sign to Gabord and followed her. As she turned the corner of the hallway just beyond, I stepped forward silently and watched her enter a room that would, I knew, be next to this we guarded.

Listening at the door for a moment, I suddenly and softly turned the handle and entered, to see the good Mother with a panel drawn in the wall before her, and her face set to it. She stepped back as I shut the door and turned the key in the lock. I put my finger to my lips, for she seemed about to cry out.

"Hush!" said I. "I watch for those who love her. I am here to serve her--and you."

"You are a servant of the Seigneur's?" she said, the alarm passing out of her face.

"I served the Seigneur, good Mother," I answered, "and I would lay down my life for ma'm'selle."

"You would hear?" she asked, pointing to the panel.

I nodded.

"You speak French not like a Breton or Norman," she added. "What is your province?"

"I am an Auvergnian."

She said no more, but motioned to me, enjoining silence also by a sign, and I stood with her beside the panel. Before it was a piece of tapestry which was mere gauze in one place, and I could see through and hear perfectly. The room we were in was at least four feet higher than the other, and we looked down on its occupants.

"Presently, holy Mother," said I, "all shall be told true to you, if you wish it. It is not your will to watch and hear; it is because you love the lady. But I love her, too, and I am to be trusted. It is not business for such as you."

She saw my implied rebuke, and said, as I thought a little abashed, "You will tell me all? And if he would take her forth, give me alarm in the room opposite yonder door, and stay them, and--"

"Stay them, holy Mother, at the price of my life. I have the honour of her family in my hands."

She looked at me gravely, and I assumed a peasant openness of look and honesty. She was deceived completely, and, without further speech, she stepped to the door like a ghost and was gone. I never saw a human being so noiseless, so uncanny. Our talk had been

carried on silently, and I had closed the panel quietly, so that we could not be heard by Alixe or Doltaire. Now I was alone, to see and hear my wife in speech with my enemy, the man who had made a strong, and was yet to make a stronger fight to unseat me in her affections.

There was a moment's compunction, in which I hesitated to see this meeting; but there was Alixe's safety to be thought on, and what might he not here disclose of his intentions!--knowing which, I should act with judgment, and not in the dark. I trusted Alixe, though I knew well that this hour would see the great struggle in her between this scoundrel and myself. I knew that he had ever had a sort of power over her, even while she loathed his character; that he had a hundred graces I had not, place which I had not, an intellect that ever delighted me, and a will like iron when it was called into action. I thought for one moment longer ere I moved the panel. My lips closed tight, and I felt a pang at my heart.

Suppose, in this conflict, this singular man, acting on a nature already tried beyond reason, should bend it to his will, to which it was, in some radical ways, inclined? Well, if that should be, then I would go forth and never see her more. She must make her choice out of her own heart and spirit, and fight this fight alone, and having fought, and lost or won, the result should be final, should stand, though she was my wife, and I was bound in honour to protect her from all that might invade her loyalty, to cherish her through all temptation and distress. But our case was a strange one, and it must be dealt with according to its strangeness--our only guides our consciences. There were no precedents to meet our needs; our way had to be hewn out of a noisome, pathless wood. I made up my mind: I would hear and see all. So I slid the panel softly, and put my eyes to the tapestry. How many times did I see, in the next hour, my wife's eyes upraised to this very tapestry, as if appealing to the Madonna upon it! How many times did her eyes look into mine without knowing it! And more than once Doltaire followed her glance, and a faint smile passed over his face, as if he saw and was interested in the struggle in her, apart from his own passion and desires.

When first I looked in, she was standing near a tall high-backed chair, in almost the same position as on the day when Doltaire told me of Braddock's death, accused me of being a spy, and arrested me. It gave me, too, a thrill to see her raise her handkerchief to her mouth as if to stop a cry, as she had done then, the black sleeve falling away from her perfect rounded arm, now looking almost like marble against the lace. She held her handkerchief to her lips for quite a minute; and indeed it covered more than a little of her face, so that the features most showing were her eyes, gazing at Doltaire with a look hard to interpret, for there seemed in it trouble, entreaty, wonder, resistance, and a great sorrow--no fear, trepidation, or indirectness.

His disturbing words were these: "To-night I am the Governor of this country. You once doubted my power--that was when you would save your lover from death. I proved it in that small thing--I saved him. Well, when you saw me carried off to the Bastille--it looked like that--my power seemed to vanish: is it not so? We have talked of this before, but now is a time to review all things again. And once more I say I am the Governor of New France. I have had the

commission in my hands ever since I came back. But I have spoken of it to no one--except your lover."

"My husband!" she said steadily, crushing the handkerchief in her hand, which now rested upon the chair-arm.

"Well, well, your husband--after a fashion. I did not care to use this as an argument. I chose to win you by personal means alone, to have you give yourself to Tinoir Doltaire because you set him before any other man. I am vain, you see; but then vanity is no sin when one has fine aspirations, and I aspire to you!"

She made a motion with her hand. "Oh, can you not spare me this to-day of all days in my life--your Excellency?"

"Let it be plain 'monsieur,'" he answered. "I can not spare you, for this day decides all. As I said, I desired you. At first my wish was to possess you at any cost: I was your hunter only. I am still your hunter, but in a different way. I would rather have you in my arms than save New France; and with Montcalm I could save it. Vaudreuil is a blunderer and a fool; he has sold the country. But what ambition is that? New France may come and go, and be forgotten, and you and I be none the worse. There are other provinces to conquer. But for me there is only one province, and I will lift my standard there, and build a grand chateau of my happiness there. That is my hope, and that is why I come to conquer it, and not the English. Let the English go--all save one, and he must die. Already he is dead; he died to-day at the altar of the cathedral--"

"No, no, no!" broke in Alixe, her voice low and firm.

"But yes," he said; "but yes, he is dead to you forever. The Church has said so; the state says so; your people say so; race and all manner of good custom say so; and I, who love you better--yes, a hundred times better than he--say so."

She made a hasty, deprecating gesture with her hand. "Oh, carry this old song elsewhere," she said, "for I am sick of it." There were now both scorn and weariness in her tone.

He had a singular patience, and he resented nothing. "I understand," he went on, "what it was sent your heart his way. He came to you when you were yet a child, before you had learnt the first secret of life. He was a captive, a prisoner, he had a wound got in fair fighting, and I will do him the credit to say he was an honest man; he was no spy."

She looked up at him with a slight flush, almost of gratitude. "I know that well," she returned. "I knew there was other cause than spying at the base of all ill treatment of him. I know that you, you alone, kept him prisoner here five long years."

"Not I; the Grande Marquise--for weighty reasons. You should not fret at those five years, since it gave you what you have cherished so much, a husband--after a fashion. But yet we will do him justice: he is an honourable fighter, he has parts and graces of a rude order. But he will never go far in life; he has no instincts and habits common with you; it has been, so far, a compromise, founded upon the old-fashioned romance of ill-used captive and

soft-hearted maid; the compassion, too, of the superior for the low, the free for the caged."

"Compassion such as your Excellency feels for me, no doubt," she said, with a slow pride.

"You are caged, but you may be free," he rejoined meaningly.

"Yes, in the same market open to him, and at the same price of honour," she replied, with dignity.

"Will you not sit down?" he now said, motioning her to a chair politely, and taking one himself, thus pausing before he answered her.

I was prepared to see him keep a decorous distance from her. I felt he was acting upon deliberation; that he was trusting to the power of his insinuating address, his sophistry, to break down barriers. It was as if he felt himself at greater advantage, making no emotional demonstrations, so allaying her fears, giving her time to think; for it was clear he hoped to master her intelligence, so strong a part of her.

She sat down in the high-backed chair, and I noted that our batteries began to play upon the town--an unusual thing at night. It gave me a strange feeling--the perfect stillness of the holy place, the quiet movement of this tragedy before me, on which broke, with no modifying noises or turmoil, the shouting cannonade. Nature, too, it would have seemed, had forged a mood in keeping with the time, for there was no air stirring when we came in, and a strange stillness had come upon the landscape. In the pause, too, I heard a long, soft shuffling of feet in the corridor--the evening procession from the chapel--and a slow chant:

"I am set down in a wilderness, O Lord, I am alone. If a strange voice call, O teach me what to say; if I languish, O give me Thy cup to drink; O strengthen Thou my soul. Lord, I am like a sparrow far from home; O bring me to Thine honourable house. Preserve my heart, encourage me, according to Thy truth."

The words came to us distinctly yet distantly, swelled softly, and died away, leaving Alixe and Doltaire seated and looking at each other. Alixe's hands were clasped in her lap.

"Your honour is above all price," he said at last in reply to her. "But what is honour in this case of yours, in which I throw the whole interest of my life, stake all? For I am convinced that, losing, the book of fate will close for me. Winning, I shall begin again, and play a part in France which men shall speak of when I am done with all. I never had ambition for myself; for you, Alixe Duvarney, a new spirit lives in me.... I will be honest with you. At first I swore to cool my hot face in your bosom; and I would have done that at any price, and yet I would have stood by that same dishonour honourably to the end. Never in my whole life did I put my whole heart in any--episode--of admiration: I own it, for you to think what you will. There never was a woman whom, loving to-day,"--he smiled--"I could not leave to-morrow with no more than a pleasing kind of regret. Names that I ought to have recalled I forgot; incidents were cloudy, like childish remembrances. I was

not proud of it; the peasant in me spoke against it sometimes. I even have wished that I, half peasant, had been--"

"If only you had been all peasant, this war, this misery of mine, had never been," she interrupted.

He nodded with an almost boyish candour. "Yes, yes, but I was half prince also; I had been brought up, one foot in a cottage and another in a palace. But for your misery: is it, then, misery? Need it be so? But lift your finger and all will be well. Do you wish to save your country? Would that be compensation? Then I will show you the way. We have three times as many soldiers as the English, though of poorer stuff. We could hold this place, could defeat them, if we were united and had but two thousand men. We have fifteen thousand. As it is now, Vaudreuil balks Montcalm, and that will ruin us in the end unless you make it otherwise. You would be a patriot? Then shut out forever this English captain from your heart, and open its doors to me. To-morrow I will take Vaudreuil's place, put your father in Bigot's, your brother in Ramesay's--they are both perfect and capable; I will strengthen the excellent Montcalm's hands in every way, will inspire the people, and cause the English to raise this siege. You and I will do this: the Church will bless us, the State will thank us; your home and country will be safe and happy, your father and brother honoured. This, and far, far greater things I will do for your sake."

He paused. He had spoken with a deep power, such as I knew he could use, and I did not wonder that she paled a little, even trembled before it.

"Will you not do it for France?" she said.

"I will not do it for France," he answered. "I will do it for you alone. Will you not be your country's friend? It is no virtue in me to plead patriotism--it is a mere argument, a weapon that I use; but my heart is behind it, and it is a means to that which you will thank me for one day. I would not force you to anything, but I would persuade your reason, question your foolish loyalty to a girl's mistake. Can you think that you are right? You have no friend that commends your cause; the whole country has upbraided you, the Church has cut you off from the man. All is against reunion with him, and most of all your own honour. Come with me, and be commended and blessed here, while over in France homage shall be done you. For you I would take from his Majesty a dukedom which he has offered me more than once."

Suddenly, with a passionate tone, he continued: "Your own heart is speaking for me. Have I not seen you tremble when I come near you?"

He rose and came forward a step or two. "You thought it was fear of me. It was fear, but fear of that in you which was pleading for me, while you had sworn yourself away to him who knows not and can never know how to love you, who has nothing kin with you in mind or heart--an alien of poor fortune, and poorer birth and prospects."

He fixed his eyes upon her, and went on, speaking with forceful quietness: "Had there been cut away that mistaken sense of duty to him, which I admire unspeakably--yes, though it is misplaced--you and I would have come to each other's arms long ago. Here in your

atmosphere I feel myself possessed, endowed. I come close to you, and something new in me cries out simply, 'I love you, Alixe, I love you!' See, all the damnable part of me is burned up by the clear fire of your eyes; I stand upon the ashes, and swear that I can not live without you. Come--come--"

He stepped nearer still, and she rose like one who moves under some fascination, and I almost cried out, for in that moment she was his, his--I felt it; he possessed her like some spirit; and I understood it, for the devilish golden beauty of his voice was like music, and he had spoken with great skill.

"Come," he said, "and know where all along your love has lain. That other way is only darkness--the convent, which will keep you buried, while you will never have heart for the piteous seclusion, till your life is broken all to pieces; till you have no hope, no desire, no love, and at last, under a cowl, you look out upon the world, and, with a dead heart, see it as in a pale dream, and die at last: you, born to be a wife, without a husband; endowed to be the perfect mother, without a child; to be the admired of princes, a moving, powerful figure to influence great men, with no salon but the little bare cell where you pray. With me all that you should be you will be. You have had a bad, dark dream; wake, and come into the sun with me. Once I wished for you as the lover only; now, by every hope I ever might have had, I want you for my wife."

He held out his arms to her and smiled, and spoke one or two low words which I could not hear. I had stood waiting death against the citadel wall, with the chance of a reprieve hanging between uplifted muskets and my breast; but that suspense was less than this, for I saw him, not moving, but standing there waiting for her, the warmth of his devilish eloquence about him, and she moving toward him.

"My darling," I heard him say, "come, till death...us do part, and let no man put asunder."

She paused, and, waking from the dream, drew herself together, as though something at her breast hurt her, and she repeated his words like one dazed--"Let no man put asunder!"

With a look that told of her great struggle, she moved to a shrine of the Virgin in the corner, and, clasping her hands before her breast for a moment, said something I could not hear, before she turned to Doltaire, who had now taken another step towards her. By his look I knew that he felt his spell was broken; that his auspicious moment had passed; that now, if he won her, it must be by harsh means.

For she said: "Monsieur Doltaire, you have defeated yourself. 'Let no man put asunder' was my response to my husband's 'Whom God hath joined,' when last I met him face to face. Nothing can alter that while he lives, nor yet when he dies, for I have had such a sorrowful happiness in him that if I were sure he were dead I would never leave this holy place--never. But he lives, and I will keep my vow. Holy Church has parted us, but yet we are not parted. You say that to think of him now is wrong, reflects upon me. I tell you, monsieur, that if it were a wrong a thousand times greater I would do it. To me there can be no shame in following till I die the man

who took me honourably for his wife."

He made an impatient gesture and smiled ironically.

"Oh, I care not what you say or think," she went on. "I know not of things canonical and legal; the way that I was married to him is valid in his country and for his people. Bad Catholic you call me, alas! But I am a true wife, who, if she sinned, sinned not knowingly, and deserves not this tyranny and shame."

"You are possessed with a sad infatuation," he replied persuasively. "You are not the first who has suffered so. It will pass, and leave you sane--leave you to me. For you are mine; what you felt a moment ago you will feel again, when this romantic martyrdom of yours has wearied you."

"Monsieur Doltaire," she said, with a successful effort at calmness, though I could see her trembling too, "it is you who are mistaken, and I will show you how. But first: You have said often that I have unusual intelligence. You have flattered me in that, I doubt not, but still here is a chance to prove yourself sincere. I shall pass by every wicked means that you took first to ruin me, to divert me to a dishonest love (though I knew not what you meant at the time), and, failing, to make me your wife. I shall not refer to this base means to reach me in this sacred place, using the King's commission for such a purpose."

"I would use it again and do more, for the same ends," he rejoined, with shameless candour.

She waved her hand impatiently. "I pass all that by. You shall listen to me as I have listened to you, remembering that what I say is honest, if it has not your grace and eloquence. You say that I will yet come to you, that I care for you and have cared for you always, and that--that this other--is a sad infatuation. Monsieur, in part you are right."

He came another step forward, for he thought he saw a foothold again; but she drew back to the chair, and said, lifting her hand against him, "No, no, wait till I have done. I say that you are right in part. I will not deny that, against my will, you have always influenced me; that, try as I would, your presence moved me, and I could never put you out of my mind, out of my life. At first I did not understand it, for I knew how bad you were. I was sure you did evil because you loved it; that to gratify yourself you would spare no one: a man without pity--"

"On the contrary," he interrupted, with a sour sort of smile, "pity is almost a foible with me."

"Not real pity," she answered. "Monsieur, I have lived long enough to know what pity moves you. It is the moment's careless whim; a pensive pleasure, a dramatic tenderness. Wholesome pity would make you hesitate to harm others. You have no principles--"

"Pardon me, many," he urged politely, as he eyed her with admiration.

"Ah no, monsieur; habits, not principles. Your life has been one

long irresponsibility. In the very maturity of your powers, you use them to win to yourself, to your empty heart, a girl who has tried to live according to the teachings of her soul and conscience. Were there not women elsewhere to whom it didn't matter--your abandoned purposes? Why did you throw your shadow on my path? You are not, never were, worthy of a good woman's love."

He laughed with a sort of bitterness. "Your sinner stands between two fires--" he said. She looked at him inquiringly, and he added, "the punishment he deserves and the punishment he does not deserve. But it is interesting to be thus picked out upon the stone, however harsh the picture. You said I influenced you--well?"

"Monsieur," she went on, "there were times when, listening to you, I needed all my strength to resist. I have felt myself weak and shaking when you came into the room. There was something in you that appealed to me, I know not what; but I do know that it was not the best of me, that it was emotional, some strange power of your personality--ah yes, I can acknowledge all now. You had great cleverness, gifts that startled and delighted; but yet I felt always, and that feeling grew and grew, that there was nothing in you wholly honest, that by artifice you had frittered away what once may have been good in you. Now all goodness in you was an accident of sense and caprice, not true morality."

"What has true morality to do with love of you?" he said.

"You ask me hard questions," she replied. "This it has to do with it: We go from morality to higher things, not from higher things to morality. Pure love is a high thing; yours was not high. To have put my life in your hands--ah no, no! And so I fought you. There was no question of yourself and Robert Moray--none. Him I knew to possess fewer gifts, but I knew him also to be what you could never be. I never measured him against you. What was his was all of me worth the having, and was given always; there was no change. What was yours was given only when in your presence, and then with hatred of myself and you--given to some baleful fascination in you. For a time, the more I struggled against it the more it grew, for there was nothing that could influence a woman which you did not do. Monsieur, if you had had Robert Moray's character and your own gifts, I could--monsieur, I could have worshiped you!"

Doltaire was in a kind of dream. He was sitting now in the high-backed chair, his mouth and chin in his hand, his elbow resting on the chair-arm. His left hand grasped the other arm, and he leaned forward with brows bent and his eyes fixed on her intently. It was a figure singularly absorbed, lost in study of some deep theme. Once his sword clanged against the chair as it slipped a little from its position, and he started almost violently, though the dull booming of a cannon in no wise seemed to break the quietness of the scene. He was dressed, as in the morning, in plain black, but now the star of Louis shone on his breast. His face was pale, but his eyes, with their swift-shifting lights, lived upon Alixe, devoured her.

She paused for an instant.

"Thou shalt not commit--idolatry," he remarked in a low, cynical tone, which the repressed feeling in his face and the terrible new

earnestness of his look belied.

She flushed a little, and continued: "Yet all the time I was true to him, and what I felt concerning you he knew--I told him enough."

Suddenly there came into Doltaire's looks and manner an astounding change. Both hands caught the chair-arm, his lips parted with a sort of snarl, and his white teeth showed maliciously. It seemed as if, all at once, the courtier, the flaneur, the man of breeding, had gone, and you had before you the peasant, in a moment's palsy from the intensity of his fury.

"A thousand hells for him!" he burst out in the rough patois of Poitiers, and got to his feet. "You told him all, you confessed your fluttering fears and desires to him, while you let me play upon those ardent strings of feelings, that you might save him! You used me, Tinoir Doltaire, son of a king, to further your amour with a bourgeois Englishman! And he laughed in his sleeve, and soothed away those dangerous influences of the magician. By the God of heaven, Robert Moray and I have work to do! And you--you, with all the gifts of the perfect courtesan--"

"Oh, shame! shame!" she said, breaking in.

"But I speak the truth. You berate me, but you used incomparable gifts to hold me near you, and the same gifts to let me have no more of you than would keep me. I thought you the most honest, the most heavenly of women, and now--"

"Alas!" she interrupted, "what else could I have done? To draw the line between your constant attention and my own necessity! Ah, I was but a young girl; I had no friend to help me; he was condemned to die; I loved him; I did not believe in you, not in ever so little. If I had said, 'You must not speak to me again,' you would have guessed my secret, and all my purposes would have been defeated. So I had to go on; nor did I think that it ever would cause you aught but a shock to your vanity."

He laughed hatefully. "My faith, but it has, shocked my vanity," he answered. "And now take this for thinking on: Up to this point I have pleaded with you, used persuasion, courted you with a humility astonishing to myself. Now I will have you in spite of all. I will break you, and soothe your hurt afterwards. I will, by the face of the Madonna, I will feed where this Moray would pasture, I will gather this ripe fruit!"

With a devilish swiftness he caught her about the waist, and kissed her again and again upon the mouth.

The blood was pounding in my veins, and I would have rushed in then and there, have ended the long strife, and have dug revenge for this outrage from his heart, but that I saw Alixe did not move, nor make the least resistance. This struck me with horror, till, all at once, he let her go, and I saw her face. It was very white and still, smooth and cold as marble. She seemed five years older in the minute.

"Have you quite done, monsieur?" she said, with infinite quiet

scorn. "Do you, the son of a king, find joy in kissing lips that answer nothing, a cheek from which the blood flows in affright and shame? Is it an achievement to feed as cattle feed? Listen to me, Monsieur Doltaire. No, do not try to speak till I have done, if your morality--of manners--is not all dead. Through this cowardly act of yours, the last vestige of your power over me is gone. I sometimes think that, with you, in the past, I have remained true and virtuous at the expense of the best of me; but now all that is over, and there is no temptation--I feel beyond it: by this hour here, this hour of sore peril, you have freed me. I was tempted--Heaven knows, a few minutes ago I was tempted, for everything was with you; but God has been with me, and you and I are no nearer than the poles."

"You doubt that I love you?" he said in an altered voice.

"I doubt that any man will so shame the woman he loves," she answered.

"What is insult to-day may be a pride to-morrow," was his quick reply. "I do not repent of it, I never will, for you and I shall go to-night from here, and you shall be my wife; and one day, when this man is dead, when you have forgotten your bad dream, you will love me as you can not love him. I have that in me to make you love me. To you I can be loyal, never drifting, never wavering. I tell you, I will not let you go. First my wife you shall be, and after that I will win your love; in spite of all, mine now, though it is shifted for the moment. Come, come, Alixe"--he made as if to take her hand--"you and I will learn the splendid secret--"

She drew back to the shrine of the Virgin.

"Mother of God! Mother of God!" I heard her whisper, and then she raised her hand against him. "No, no, no," she said, with sharp anguish, "do not try to force me to your wishes--do not; for I, at least, will never live to see it. I have suffered more than I can bear I will end this shame, I will--"

I had heard enough. I stepped back quickly, closed the panel, and went softly to the door and into the hall, determined to bring her out against Doltaire, trusting to Gabord not to oppose me.

XXVII

A SIDE-WIND OF REVENGE

I knew it was Doltaire's life or mine, and I shrank from desecrating this holy place; but our bitter case would warrant this, and more. As I came quickly through the hall, and round the corner where stood Gabord, I saw a soldier talking with the Mother Superior.

"He is not dead?" I heard her say.

"No, holy Mother," was the answer, "but sorely wounded. He was testing the fire-organs for the rafts, and one exploded too soon."

At that moment the Mother turned to me, and seemed startled by my look. "What is it?" she whispered.

"He would carry her off," I replied.

"He shall never do so," was her quick answer. "Her father, the good Seigneur, has been wounded, and she must go to him."

"I will take her," said I at once, and I moved to open the door. At that moment I caught Gabord's eye. There I read what caused me to pause. If I declared myself now, Gabord's life would pay for his friendship to me--even if I killed Doltaire; for the matter would be open to all then just the same. That I could not do, for the man had done me kindnesses dangerous to himself. Besides, he was a true soldier, and disgrace itself would be to him as bad as the drum-head court-martial. I made up my mind to another course even as the perturbed "aho" which followed our glance fell from his puffing lips.

"But no, holy Mother," said I, and I whispered in her ear. She opened the door and went in, leaving it ajar. I could hear only a confused murmur of voices, through which ran twice, "No, no, monsieur," in Alixe's soft, clear voice. I could scarcely restrain myself, and I am sure I should have gone in, in spite of all, had it not been for Gabord, who withstood me.

He was right, and as I turned away I heard Alixe cry, "My father, my poor father!"

Then came Doltaire's voice, cold and angry: "Good Mother, this is a trick."

"Your Excellency should be a better judge of trickery," she replied quietly. "Will not your Excellency leave an unhappy lady to her trouble and the Church's care?"

"If the Seigneur is hurt, I will take mademoiselle to him," was his instant reply.

"It may not be, your Excellency," she said. "I will furnish her with other escort."

"And I, as Governor of this province, as commander-in-chief of the army, say that only with my escort shall the lady reach her father."

At this Alixe spoke: "Dear Mere St. George, do not fear for me; God will protect me--"

"And I also, mademoiselle, with my life," interposed Doltaire.

"God will protect me," Alixe repeated; "I have no fear."

"I will send two of our Sisters with mademoiselle to nurse the poor Seigneur," said Mere St. George.

I am sure Doltaire saw the move. "A great kindness, holy Mother," he said politely, "and I will see they are well cared for. We will

set forth at once. The Seigneur shall be brought to the Intendance, and he and his daughter shall have quarters there."

He stepped towards the door where we were. I fell back into position as he came. "Gabord," said he, "send your trusted fellow here to the General's camp, and have him fetch to the Intendance the Seigneur Duvarney, who has been wounded. Alive or dead, he must be brought," he added in a lower voice.

Then he turned back into the room. As he did so, Gabord looked at me inquiringly.

"If you go, you put your neck into the gin," said he; "some one in camp will know you."

"I will not leave my wife," I answered in a whisper. Thus were all plans altered on the instant. Gabord went to the outer door and called another soldier, to whom he gave this commission.

A few moments afterwards, Alixe, Doltaire, and the Sisters of Mercy were at the door ready to start. Doltaire turned and bowed with a well-assumed reverence to the Mother Superior. "To-night's affairs here are sacred to ourselves, Mere St. George," he said.

She bowed, but made no reply. Alixe turned and kissed her hand. But as we stepped forth, the Mother said suddenly, pointing to me, "Let the soldier come back in an hour, and mademoiselle's luggage shall go to her, your Excellency."

Doltairé nodded, glancing at me. "Surely he shall attend you, Mere St. George," he said, and then stepped on with Alixe, Gabord and the other soldier ahead, the two Sisters behind, and myself beside these. Going quietly through the disordered Upper Town, we came down Palace Street to the Intendance. Here Doltaire had kept his quarters despite his growing quarrel with Bigot. As we entered he inquired of the servant where Bigot was, and was told he was gone to the Chateau St. Louis. Doltaire shrugged a shoulder and smiled--he knew that Bigot had had news of his deposition through the Governor. He gave orders for rooms to be prepared for the Seigneur and for the Sisters; mademoiselle meanwhile to be taken to hers, which had, it appeared, been made ready. Then I heard him ask in an undertone if the bishop had come, and he was answered that Monseigneur was at Charlesbourg, and could not be expected till the morning. I was in a most dangerous position, for, though I had escaped notice, any moment might betray me; Doltaire himself might see through my disguise.

We all accompanied Alixe to the door of her apartments, and there Doltaire with courtesy took leave of her, saying that he would return in a little time to see if she was comfortable, and to bring her any fresh news of her father. The Sisters were given apartments next her own, and they entered her room with her, at her own request.

When the door closed, Doltaire turned to Gabord, and said, "You shall come with me to bear letters to General Montcalm, and you shall send one of these fellows also for me to General Bougainville at Cap Rouge." Then he spoke directly to me, and said, "You shall guard this passage till morning. No one but myself may pass into

this room or out of it, save the Sisters of Mercy, on pain of death."

I saluted, but spoke no word.

"You understand me?" he repeated.

"Absolutely, monsieur," I answered in a rough peasantlike voice.

He turned and walked in a leisurely way through the passage, and disappeared, telling Gabord to join him in a moment. As he left, Gabord said to me in a low voice, "Get back to General Wolfe, or wife and life will both be lost."

I caught his hand and pressed it, and a minute afterwards I was alone before Alixe's door.

An hour later, knowing Alixe to be alone, I tapped on her door and entered. As I did so she rose from a priedieu where she had been kneeling. Two candles were burning on the mantel, but the room was much in shadow.

"What is't you wish?" she asked, approaching.

I had off my hat; I looked her direct in the eyes and put my fingers on my lips. She stared painfully for a moment.

"Alixe," said I.

She gave a gasp, and stood transfixed, as though she had seen a ghost, and then in an instant she was in my arms, sobs shaking her. "Oh, Robert! oh my dear, dear husband!" she cried again and again. I calmed her, and presently she broke into a whirl of questions. I told her of all I had seen at the cathedral and at the convent, what my plans had been, and then I waited for her answer. A new feeling took possession of her. She knew that there was one question at my lips which I dared not utter. She became very quiet, and a sweet, settled firmness came into her face.

"Robert," she said, "you must go back to your army without me. I can not leave my father now. Save yourself alone, and if--and if you take the city, and I am alive, then we shall be reunited. If you do not take the city, then, whether father lives or dies, I will come to you. Of this be sure, that I shall never live to be the wife of any other man--wife or aught else. You know me. You know all, you trust me, and, my dear husband, my own love, we must part once more. Go, go, and save yourself, keep your life safe for my sake, and may God in heaven, may God--"

Here she broke off and started back from my embrace, staring hard a moment over my shoulder; then her face became deadly pale, and she fell back unconscious. Supporting her, I turned round, and there, inside the door, with his back to it, was Doltaire. There was a devilish smile on his face, as wicked a look as I ever saw on any man. I laid Alixe down on a sofa without a word, and faced him again.

"As many coats as Joseph's coat had colours," he said. "And for once disguised as an honest man--well, well!"

"Beast" I hissed, and I whipped out my short sword.

"Not here," he said, with a malicious laugh. "You forget your manners: familiarity"--he glanced towards the couch--"has bred--"

"Coward!" I cried. "I will kill you at her feet."

"Come, then," he answered, and stepped away from the door, drawing his sword, "since you will have it here. But if I kill you, as I intend--"

He smiled detestably, and motioned towards the couch, then turned to the door again as if to lock it. I stepped between, my sword at guard. At that the door opened. A woman came in quickly, and closed it behind her. She passed me, and faced Doltaire.

It was Madame Cournal. She was most pale, and there was a peculiar wildness in her eyes.

"You have deposed Francois Bigot," she said.

"Stand back, madame; I have business with this fellow," said Doltaire, waving his hand.

"My business comes first," she replied. "You--you dare to depose Francois Bigot!"

"It needs no daring," he said nonchalantly.

"You shall put him back in his place."

"Come to me to-morrow morning, dear madame."

"I tell you he must be put back, Monsieur Doltaire."

"Once you called me Tinoir," he said meaningly.

Without a word she caught from her cloak a dagger and struck him in the breast, though he threw up his hand and partly diverted the blow. Without a cry he half swung round, and sank, face forward, against the couch where Alixe lay.

Raising himself feebly, blindly, he caught her hand and kissed it; then he fell back.

Stooping beside him, I felt his heart. He was alive. Madame Cournal now knelt beside him, staring at him as in a kind of dream. I left the room quickly, and met the Sisters of Mercy in the hall. They had heard the noise, and were coming to Alixe. I bade them care for her. Passing rapidly through the corridors, I told a servant of the household what had occurred, bade him send for Bigot, and then made for my own safety. Alixe was safe for a time, at least--perhaps forever, thank God!--from the approaches of Monsieur Doltaire. As I sped through the streets, I could not help but think of how he had kissed her hand as he fell, and I knew by this act, at such a time, that in very truth he loved her after his fashion.

I came soon to the St. John's Gate, for I had the countersign from Gabord, and, dressed as I was, I had no difficulty in passing. Outside I saw a small cavalcade arriving from Beauport way. I drew back and let it pass me, and then I saw that it was soldiers bearing the Seigneur Duvarney to the Intendance.

An hour afterwards, having passed the sentries, I stood on a lonely point of the shore of Lower Town, and, seeing no one near, I slid into the water. As I did so I heard a challenge behind me, and when I made no answer there came a shot, another, and another; for it was thought, I doubt not, that I was a deserter. I was wounded in the shoulder, and had to swim with one arm; but though boats were put out, I managed to evade them and to get within hail of our fleet. Challenged there, I answered with my name. A boat shot out from among the ships, and soon I was hauled into it by Clark himself; and that night I rested safe upon the Terror of France.

XXVIII

"TO CHEAT THE DEVIL YET."

My hurt proved more serious than I had looked for, and the day after my escape I was in a high fever. General Wolfe himself, having heard of my return, sent to inquire after me. He also was ill, and our forces were depressed in consequence; for he had a power to inspire them not given to any other of our accomplished and admirable generals. He forbore to question me concerning the state of the town and what I had seen; for which I was glad. My adventure had been of a private nature, and such I wished it to remain. The general desired me to come to him as soon as I was able, that I might proceed with him above the town to reconnoitre. But for many a day this was impossible, for my wound gave me much pain and I was confined to my bed.

Yet we on the Terror of France served our good general, too; for one dark night, when the wind was fair, we piloted the remaining ships of Admiral Holmes's division above the town. This move was made on my constant assertion that there was a way by which Quebec might be taken from above; and when General Wolfe made known my representations to his general officers, they accepted it as a last resort; for otherwise what hope had they? At Montmorenci our troops had been repulsed, the mud flats of the Beauport shore and the St. Charles River were as good as an army against us; the Upper Town and citadel were practically impregnable; and for eight miles west of the town to the cove and river at Cap Rouge there was one long precipice, broken in but one spot; but just there, I was sure, men could come up with stiff climbing as I had done. Bougainville came to Cap Rouge now with three thousand men, for he thought that this was to be our point of attack. Along the shore from Cap Rouge to Cape Diamond small batteries were posted, such as that of Lancy's at Anse du Foulon; but they were careless, for no conjectures might seem so wild as that of bringing an army up where I had climbed.

"Tut, tut," said General Murray, when he came to me on the Terror of France, after having, at my suggestion, gone to the

south shore opposite Anse du Foulon, and scanned the faint line that marked the narrow cleft on the cliff side--"tut, tut, man," said he, "'tis the dream of a cat or a damned mathematician."

Once, after all was done, he said to me that cats and mathematicians were the only generals.

With a belligerent pride Clark showed the way up the river one evening, the batteries of the town giving us plunging shots as we went, and ours at Point Levis answering gallantly. To me it was a good if most anxious time: good, in that I was having some sort of compensation for my own sufferings in the town; anxious, because no single word came to me of Alixe or her father, and all the time we were pouring death into the place.

But this we knew from deserters, that Vaudreuil was Governor and Bigot Intendant still; by which it would seem that, on the momentous night when Doltaire was wounded by Madame Cournal, he gave back the governorship to Vaudreuil and reinstated Bigot. Presently, from an officer who had been captured as he was setting free a fire-raft upon the river to run among the boats of our fleet, I heard that Doltaire had been confined in the Intendance from a wound given by a stupid sentry. Thus the true story had been kept from the public. From him, too, I learned that nothing was known of the Seigneur Duvarney and his daughter; that they had suddenly disappeared from the Intendance, as if the earth had swallowed them; and that even Juste Duvarney knew nothing of them, and was, in consequence, much distressed.

This officer also said that now, when it might seem as if both the Seigneur and his daughter were dead, opinion had turned in Alixe's favour, and the feeling had crept about, first among the common folk and afterwards among the people of the garrison, that she had been used harshly. This was due largely, he thought, to the constant advocacy of the Chevalier de la Darante, whose nephew had married Mademoiselle Georgette Duvarney. This piece of news, in spite of the uncertainty of Alixe's fate, touched me, for the Chevalier had indeed kept his word to me.

At last all of Admiral Holmes's division was got above the town, with very little damage, and I never saw a man so elated, so profoundly elated as Clark over his share in the business. He was a daredevil, too; for the day that the last of the division was taken up the river, without my permission or the permission of the admiral or any one else, he took the Terror of France almost up to Bougainville's earthworks in the cove at Cap Rouge and insolently emptied his six swivels into them, and then came out and stood down the river. When I asked what he was doing--for I was now well enough to come on deck--he said he was going to see how monkeys could throw nuts; when I pressed him, he said he had a will to hear the cats in the eaves; and when I became severe, he added that he would bring the Terror of France up past the batteries of the town in broad daylight, swearing that they could no more hit him than a woman could a bird on a flagstaff. I did not relish this foolish bravado, and I forbade it; but presently I consented, on condition that he take me to General Wolfe's camp at Montmorenci first; for now I felt strong enough to be again on active service.

Clark took the Terror of France up the river in midday, running

perilously close to the batteries; and though they pounded at him petulantly, foolishly angry at his contemptuous defiance, he ran the gauntlet safely, and coming to the flagship, the Sutherland, saluted with his six swivels, to the laughter of the whole fleet and his own profane joy.

"Mr. Moray," said General Wolfe, when I saw him, racked with pain, studying a chart of the river and town which his chief engineer had just brought him, "show me here this passage in the hillside."

I did so, tracing the plains of Maitre Abraham, which I assured him would be good ground for a pitched battle. He nodded; then rose, and walked up and down for a time, thinking. Suddenly he stopped, and fixed his eyes upon me.

"Mr. Moray," said he, "it would seem that you, angering La Pompadour, brought down this war upon us." He paused, smiling in a dry way, as if the thought amused him, as if indeed he doubted it; but for that I cared not, it was an honour I could easily live without.

I bowed to his words, and said, "Mine was the last straw, sir."

Again he nodded, and replied, "Well, well, you got us into trouble; you must show us the way out," and he looked at the passage I had traced upon the chart. "You will remain with me until we meet our enemy on these heights." He pointed to the plains of Maitre Abraham. Then he turned away, and began walking up and down again. "It is the last chance!" he said to himself in a tone despairing and yet heroic. "Please God, please God!" he added.

"You will speak nothing of these plans," he said to me at last, half mechanically. "We must make feints of landing at Cap Rouge--feints of landing everywhere save at the one possible place; confuse both Bougainville and Montcalm; tire out their armies with watchings and want of sleep; and then, on the auspicious night, make the great trial."

I had remained respectfully standing at a little distance from him. Now he suddenly came to me, and, pressing my hand, said quickly, "You have trouble, Mr. Moray. I am sorry for you. But maybe it is for better things to come."

I thanked him stumbingly, and a moment later left him, to serve him on the morrow, and so on through many days, till, in divers perils, the camp at Montmorenci was abandoned, the troops were got aboard the ships, and the general took up his quarters on the Sutherland; from which, one notable day, I sallied forth with him to a point at the south shore opposite the Anse du Foulon, where he saw the thin crack in the cliff side. From that moment instant and final attack was his purpose.

The great night came, starlit and serene. The camp-fires of two armies spotted the shores of the wide river, and the ships lay like wild fowl in convoys above the town from where the arrow of fate should be sped. Darkness upon the river, and fireflies upon the shore. At Beauport, an untiring general, who for a hundred days had snatched sleep, booted and spurred, and in the ebb of a losing game,

longed for his adored Candiac, grieved for a beloved daughter's death, sent cheerful messages to his aged mother and to his wife, and by the deeper protests of his love foreshadowed his own doom. At Cap Rouge, a dying commander, unperturbed and valiant, reached out a finger to trace the last movements in a desperate campaign of life that opened in Flanders at sixteen; of which the end began when he took from his bosom the portrait of his affianced wife, and said to his old schoolfellow, "Give this to her, Jervis, for we shall meet no more."

Then, passing to the deck, silent and steady, no signs of pain upon his face, so had the calm come to him, as to Nature and this beleaguered city, before the whirlwind, he looked out upon the clustered groups of boats filled with the flower of his army, settled in a menacing tranquillity. There lay the Light Infantry, Bragg's, Kennedy's, Lascelles's, Anstruther's Regiment, Fraser's Highlanders, and the much-loved, much-blamed, and impetuous Louisburg Grenadiers. Steady, indomitable, silent as cats, precise as mathematicians, he could trust them, as they loved his awkward pain-twisted body and ugly red hair. "Damme, Jack, didst thee ever take hell in tow before?" said a sailor from the Terror of France to his fellow once, as the marines grappled with a flotilla of French fire-ships, and dragged them, spitting destruction, clear of the fleet, to the shore. "Nay, but I've been in tow of Jimmy Wolfe's red head; that's hell-fire, lad!" was the reply.

From boat to boat the General's eye passed, then shifted to the ships--the Squirrel, the Leostaff, the Seahorse, and the rest--and lastly to where the army of Bougainville lay. Then there came towards him an officer, who said quietly, "The tide has turned, sir." For reply the general made a swift motion towards the maintop shrouds, and almost instantly lanterns showed in them. In response the crowded boats began to cast away, and, immediately descending, the General passed into his own boat, drew to the front, and drifted in the current ahead of his gallant men, the ships following after.

It was two by the clock when the boats began to move, and slowly we ranged down the stream, silently steered, carried by the current. No paddle, no creaking oarlock, broke the stillness. I was in the next boat to the General's, for, with Clark and twenty-two other volunteers to the forlorn hope, I was to show the way up the heights, and we were near to his person for over two hours that night. No moon was shining, but I could see the General plainly; and once, when our boats almost touched, he saw me, and said graciously, "If they get up, Mr. Moray, you are free to serve yourself."

My heart was full of love of country then, and I answered, "I hope, sir, to serve you till your flag is hoisted in the citadel."

He turned to a young midshipman beside him, and said, "How old are you, sir?"

"Seventeen, sir," was the reply.

"It is the most lasting passion," he said, musing.

It seemed to me then, and I still think it, that the passion he

meant was love of country. A moment afterwards I heard him recite to the officers about him, in a low clear tone, some verses by Mr. Gray, the poet, which I had never then read, though I have prized them since. Under those frowning heights, and the smell from our roaring thirty-two-pounders in the air, I heard him say:

"The curfew tolls, the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

I have heard finer voices than his--it was as tin beside Doltaire's--but something in it pierced me that night, and I felt the man, the perfect hero, when he said:

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour--
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Soon afterwards we neared the end of our quest, the tide carrying us in to shore; and down from the dark heights there came a challenge, satisfied by an officer who said in French that we were provision-boats for Montcalm: these, we knew, had been expected! Then came the batteries of Samos. Again we passed with the same excuse, and we rounded a headland, and the great work was begun.

The boats of the Light Infantry swung in to shore. No sentry challenged, but I knew that at the top Lancy's tents were set. When the Light Infantry had landed, we twenty-four volunteers stood still for a moment, and I pointed out the way. Before we started, we stooped beside a brook that leaped lightly down the ravine, and drank a little rum and water. Then I led the way, Clark at one side of me, and a soldier of the Light Infantry at the other. It was hard climbing, but, following in our careful steps as silently as they might, the good fellows came eagerly after. Once a rock broke loose and came tumbling down, but plunged into a thicket, where it stayed; else it might have done for us entirely. I breathed freely when it stopped. Once, too, a branch cracked loudly, and we lay still; but hearing nothing above, we pushed on, and, sweating greatly, came close to the top.

Here I drew back with Clark, for such honour as there might be in gaining the heights first I wished to go to these soldiers who had trusted their lives to my guidance. I let six go by and reach the heights, and then I drew myself up. We did not stir till all twenty-four were safe; then we made a dash for the tents of Lancy, which now showed in the first gray light of morning. We made a dash for them, were discovered, and shots greeted us; but we were on them instantly, and in a moment I had the pleasure of putting a bullet in Lancy's heel, and brought him down. Our cheers told the general the news, and soon hundreds of soldiers were climbing the hard way that we had come.

And now while an army climbed to the heights of Maitre Abraham, Admiral Saunders in the gray dawn was bombarding Montcalm's encampment, and boats filled with marines and soldiers drew to the Beauport flats, as if to land there; while shots, bombs, shells, and carcasses were hurled from Levis upon the town, deceiving

Montcalm. At last, however, suspecting, he rode towards the town at six o'clock, and saw our scarlet ranks spread across the plains between him and Bougainville, and on the crest, nearer to him, eyeing us in amazement, the white-coated battalion of Guienne, which should the day before have occupied the very ground held by Lancy. A slight rain falling added to their gloom, but cheered us. It gave us a better light to fight by, for in the clear September air, the bright sun shining in our faces, they would have had us at advantage.

In another hour the gates of St. John and St. Louis emptied out upon this battlefield a warring flood of our foes. It was a handsome sight: the white uniforms of the brave regiments, Roussillon, La Sarre, Guienne, Languedoc, Bearn, mixed with the dark, excitable militia, the sturdy burghers of the town, a band of coureurs de bois in their rough hunter's costume, and whooping Indians, painted and furious, ready to eat us. At last here was to be a test of fighting in open field, though the French had in their whole army twice the number of our men, a walled and provisioned city behind them, and field-pieces in great number to bring against us.

But there was bungling with them. Vaudreuil hung back or came tardily from Beauport; Bougainville had not yet arrived; and when they might have pitted twice our number against us, they had not many more than we. With Bougainville behind us and Montcalm in front, we might have been checked, though there was no man in all our army but believed that we should win the day. I could plainly see Montcalm, mounted on a dark horse, riding along the lines as they formed against us, waving his sword, a truly gallant figure. He was answered by a roar of applause and greeting. On the left their Indians and burghers overlapped our second line, where Townsend with Amherst's and the Light Infantry, and Colonel Burton with the Royal Americans and Light Infantry, guarded our flank, prepared to meet Bougainville. In vain our foes tried to get between our right flank and the river; Otway's Regiment, thrown out, defeated that.

It was my hope that Doltaire was with Montcalm, and that we might meet and end our quarrel. I came to know afterwards that it was he who had induced Montcalm to send the battalion of Guienne to the heights above the Anse du Foulon. The battalion had not been moved till twenty-four hours after the order was given, or we should never have gained those heights; stones rolled from the cliff would have destroyed an army.

We waited, Clark and I, with the Louisburg Grenadiers while they formed. We made no noise, but stood steady and still, the bagpipes of the Highlanders shrilly challenging. At eight o'clock sharpshooters began firing on us from the left, and skirmishers were thrown out to hold them in check, or dislodge them and drive them from the houses where they sheltered and galled Townsend's men. Their field-pieces opened on us, too, and yet we did nothing, but at nine o'clock, being ordered, lay down and waited still. There was no restlessness, no anxiety, no show of doubt, for these men of ours were old fighters, and they trusted their leaders. From bushes, trees, coverts, and fields of grain there came that constant hail of fire, and there fell upon our ranks a doggedness, a quiet anger, which grew into a grisly patience. The

only pleasure we had in two long hours was in watching our two brass six-pounders play upon the irregular ranks of our foes, making confusion, and Townsend drive back a detachment of cavalry from Cap Rouge, which sought to break our left flank and reach Montcalm.

We had seen the stars go down, the cold, mottled light of dawn break over the battered city and the heights of Charlesbourg; we had watched the sun come up, and then steal away behind slow-travelling clouds and hanging mist; we had looked across over unreaped cornfields and the dull, slovenly St. Charles, knowing that endless leagues of country, north and south, east and west, lay in the balance for the last time. I believed that this day would see the last of the strife between England and France for dominion here; of La Pompadour's spite which I had roused to action against my country; of the struggle between Doltaire and myself.

The public stake was worthy of our army--worthy of the dauntless soldier, who had begged his physicians to patch him up long enough to fight this fight, whereon he staked reputation, life, all that a man loves in the world; the private stake was more than worthy of my long sufferings. I thought that Montcalm would have waited for Vaudreuil, but no. At ten o'clock his three columns moved down upon us briskly, making a wild rattle; two columns moving upon our right and one upon our left, firing obliquely and constantly as they marched. Then came the command to rise, and we stood up and waited, our muskets loaded with an extra ball. I could feel the stern malice in our ranks, as we stood there and took, without returning a shot, that damnable fire. Minute after minute passed; then came the sharp command to advance. We did so, and again halted, and yet no shot came from us. We stood there, a long palisade of red.

At last I saw our general raise his sword, a command rang down the long line of battle, and, like one terrible cannon-shot, our muskets sang together with as perfect a precision as on a private field of exercise. Then, waiting for the smoke to clear a little, another volley came with almost the same precision; after which the firing came in choppy waves of sound, and again in a persistent clattering. Then a light breeze lifted the smoke and mist well away, and a wayward sunlight showed us our foe, like a long white wave retreating from a rocky shore, bending, crumpling, breaking, and, in a hundred little billows, fleeing seaward.

Thus checked, confounded, the French army trembled and fell back. Then I heard the order to charge, and from near four thousand throats there came for the first time our exultant British cheer, and high over all rang the slogan of Fraser's Highlanders. To my left I saw the flashing broadswords of the clansmen, ahead of all the rest. Those sickles of death clove through and broke the battalions of La Sarre, and Lascelles scattered the good soldiers of Languedoc into flying columns. We on the right, led by Wolfe, charged the desperate and valiant men of Roussillon and Guienne and the impetuous sharpshooters of the militia. As we came on, I observed the general sway and push forward again, and then I lost sight of him, for I saw what gave the battle a new interest to me: Doltaire, cool and deliberate, animating and encouraging the French troops.

I moved in a shaking hedge of bayonets, keeping my eye on him;

and presently there was a hand-to-hand melee, out of which I fought to reach him. I was making for him, where he now sought to rally the retreating columns, when I noticed, not far away, Gabord, mounted, and attacked by three grenadiers. Looking back now, I see him, with his sabre cutting right and left, as he drove his horse at one grenadier, who slipped and fell on the slippery ground, while the horse rode on him, battering him. Obliquely down swept the sabre, and drove through the cheek and chin of one foe; another sweep, and the bayonet of the other was struck aside; and another, which was turned aside as Gabord's horse came down, bayoneted by the fallen grenadier. But Gabord was on his feet again, roaring like a bull, with a wild grin on his face, as he partly struck aside the bayonet of the last grenadier. It caught him in the flesh of the left side. He grasped the musket-barrel, and swung his sabre with fierce precision. The man's head dropped back like the lid of a pot, and he tumbled into a heap of the faded golden-rod flower which spattered the field.

It was at this moment I saw Juste Duvarney making towards me, hatred and deadly purpose in his eyes. I had will enough to meet him, and to kill him too, yet I could not help but think of Alixe. Gabord saw him, also, and, being nearer, made for me as well. For that act I cherish his memory. The thought was worthy of a gentleman of breeding; he had the true thing in his heart. He would save us--two brothers--from fighting, by fighting me himself.

He reached me first, and with an "Au diable!" made a stroke at me. It was a matter of sword and sabre now. Clark met Juste Duvarney's rush; and there we were, at as fine a game of cross-purposes as you can think: Clark hungering for Gabord's life (Gabord had once been his jailer, too), and Juste Duvarney for mine; the battle faring on ahead of us. Soon the two were clean cut off from the French army, and must fight to the death or surrender.

Juste Duvarney spoke only once, and then it was but the rancorous word "Renegade!" nor did I speak at all; but Clark was blasphemous, and Gabord, bleeding, fought with a sputtering relish.

"Fair fight and fowl for spitting," he cried. "Go home to heaven, dickey-bird."

Between phrases of this kind we cut and thrust for life, an odd sort of fighting. I fought with a desperate alertness, and presently my sword passed through his body, drew out, and he shivered--fell--where he stood, collapsing suddenly like a bag. I knelt beside him, and lifted up his head. His eyes were glazing fast.

"Gabord! Gabord!" I called, grief-stricken, for that work was the worst I ever did in this world.

He started, stared, and fumbled at his waistcoat. I quickly put my hand in, and drew out--one of Mathilde's wooden crosses.

"To cheat--the devil--yet--aho!" he whispered, kissed the cross, and so was done with life.

When I turned from him, Clark stood beside me. Dazed as I was, I did not at first grasp the significance of that fact. I looked towards the town, and saw the French army hustling into the St. Louis Gate; saw the Highlanders charging the bushes at the Cote Ste. Genevieve, where the brave Canadians made their last

stand; saw, not fifty feet away, the noblest soldier of our time, even General Wolfe, dead in the arms of Mr. Henderson, a volunteer in the Twenty-Second; and then, almost at my feet, stretched out as I had seen him lie in the Palace courtyard two years before, Juste Duvarney.

But now he was beyond all friendship or reconciliation--forever.

XXIX

"MASTER DEVIL" DOLTAIRE

The bells of some shattered church were calling to vespers, the sun was sinking behind the flaming autumn woods, as once more I entered the St. Louis Gate, with the grenadiers and a detachment of artillery, the British colours hoisted on a gun-carriage. Till this hour I had ever entered and left this town a captive, a price set on my head, and in the very street where now I walked I had gone with a rope round my neck, abused and maltreated. I saw our flag replace the golden lilies of France on the citadel where Doltaire had baited me, and at the top of Mountain Street, near to the bishop's palace, our colours also flew.

Every step I took was familiar, yet unfamiliar too. It was a disfigured town, where a hungry, distracted people huddled among ruins, and begged for mercy and for food, nor found time in the general overwhelming to think of the gallant Montcalm, lying in his shell-made grave at the chapel of the Ursulines, not fifty steps from where I had looked through the tapestry on Alixe and Doltaire. The convent was almost deserted now, and as I passed it, on my way to the cathedral, I took off my hat; for how knew I but that she I loved best lay there, too, as truly a heroine as the admirable Montcalm was hero! A solitary bell was clanging on the chapel as I went by, and I saw three nuns steal past me with bowed heads. I longed to stop them and ask them of Alixe, for I felt sure that the Church knew where she was, living or dead, though none of all I asked knew aught of her, not even the Chevalier de la Darante, who had come to our camp the night before, accompanied by Monsieur Joannes, the town major, with terms of surrender.

I came to the church of the Recollets as I wandered; for now, for a little time, I seemed bewildered and incapable, lost in a maze of dreadful imaginings. I entered the door of the church, and stumbled upon a body. Hearing footsteps ahead in the dusk, I passed up the aisle, and came upon a pile of debris. Looking up, I could see the stars shining through a hole in the roof, Hearing a noise beyond, I went on, and there, seated on the high altar, was the dwarf who had snatched the cup of rum out of the fire the night that Mathilde had given the crosses to the

revellers. He gave a low, wild laugh, and hugged a bottle to his breast. Almost at his feet, half naked, with her face on the lowest step of the altar, her feet touching the altar itself, was the girl--his sister--who had kept her drunken lover from assaulting him. The girl was dead--there was a knife-wound in her breast. Sick at the sight I left the place, and went on, almost mechanically, to Voban's house. It was level with the ground, a crumpled heap of ruins. I passed Lancy's house, in front of which I had fought with Gabord; it too was broken to pieces.

As I turned away I heard a loud noise, as of an explosion, and I supposed it to be some magazine. I thought of it no more at the time. Voban must be found; that was more important. I must know of Alixe first, and I felt sure that if any one guessed her whereabouts it would be he: she would have told him where she was going, if she had fled; if she were dead, who so likely to know, this secret, elusive, vengeful watcher? Of Doltaire I had heard nothing; I would seek him out when I knew of Alixe. He could not escape me in this walled town. I passed on for a time without direction, for I seemed not to know where I might find the barber. Our sentries already patrolled the streets, and our bugles were calling on the heights, with answering calls from the fleet in the basin. Night came down quickly, the stars shone out in the perfect blue, and, as I walked along, broken walls, shattered houses, solitary pillars, looked mystically strange. It was painfully quiet, as if a beaten people had crawled away into the holes our shot and shell had made, to hide their misery. Now and again a gaunt face looked out from a hiding-place, and drew back again in fear at sight of me. Once a drunken woman spat at me and cursed me; once I was fired at; and many times from dark corners I heard voices crying, "Sauvez-moi--ah, sauvez-moi, bon Dieu!" Once I stood for many minutes and watched our soldiers giving biscuits and their own share of rum to homeless French peasants hovering round the smouldering ruins of a house which carcasses had destroyed.

And now my wits came back to me, my purposes, the power to act, which for a couple of hours had seemed to be in abeyance. I hurried through narrow streets to the cathedral. There it stood, a shattered mass, its sides all broken, its roof gone, its tall octagonal tower alone substantial and unchanged. Coming to its rear, I found Babette's little house, with open door, and I went in. The old grandfather sat in his corner, with a lighted candle on the table near him, across his knees Jean's coat that I had worn. He only babbled nonsense to my questioning, and, after calling aloud to Babette and getting no reply, I started for the Intendance.

I had scarcely left the house when I saw some French peasants coming towards me with a litter. A woman, walking behind the litter, carried a lantern, and one of our soldiers of artillery attended and directed. I ran forward, and discovered Voban, mortally hurt. The woman gave a cry, and spoke my name in a kind of surprise and relief; and the soldier, recognizing me, saluted.

I sent him for a surgeon, and came on with the hurt man to the little house. Soon I was alone with him save for Babette, and her I sent for a priest. As soon as I had seen Voban I guessed what had happened: he had tried for his revenge at last. After a little

time he knew me, but at first he could not speak.

"What has happened--the Palace?" said I.

He nodded.

"You blew it up--with Bigot?" I asked.

His reply was a whisper, and his face twitched with pain:
"Not--with Bigot."

I gave him some cordial, which he was inclined to refuse. It revived him, but I saw he could live only a few hours. Presently he made an effort. "I will tell you," he whispered.

"Tell me first of my wife," said I. "Is she alive?--is she alive?"

If a smile could have been upon his lips then, I saw one there--good Voban! I put my ear down, and my heart almost stopped beating, until I heard him say, "Find Mathilde."

"Where?" asked I.

"In the Valdoche Hills," he answered, "where the Gray Monk lives--by the Tall Calvary."

He gasped with pain. I let him rest awhile, and eased the bandages on him, and at last he told his story:

"I am to be gone soon. For two years I have wait for the good time to kill him--Bigot--to send him and his palace to hell. I can not tell you how I work to do it. It is no matter--no. From an old cellar I mine, and at last I get the powder lay beneath him--his palace. So. But he does not come to the Palace much this many months, and Madame Cournal is always with him, and it is hard to do the thing in other ways. But I laugh when the English come in the town, and when I see Bigot fly to his palace alone to get his treasure-chest I think it is my time. So I ask the valet, and he say he is in the private room that lead to the treasure-place. Then I come back quick to the secret spot and fire my mine. In ten minutes all will be done. I go at once to his room again, alone. I pass through the one room, and come to the other. It is a room with one small barred window. If he is there, I will say a word to him that I have wait long to say, then shut the door on us both--for I am sick of life--and watch him and laugh at him till the end comes. If he is in the other room, then I have another way as sure--"

He paused, exhausted, and I waited till he could again go on. At last he made a great effort, and continued: "I go back to the first room, and he is not there. I pass soft, to the treasure-room, and I see him kneel beside a chest, looking in. His back is to me. I hear him laugh to himself. I shut the door, turn the key, go to the window and throw it out, and look at him again. But now he stand and turn to me, and then I see--I see it is not Bigot, but M'sieu' Doltaire!

"I am sick when I see that, and at first I can not speak, my tongue stick in my mouth so dry. 'Has Voban turn robber?' m'sieu'

say. I put out my hand and try to speak again--but no. 'What did you throw from the window?' he ask. 'And what's the matter, my Voban?' 'My God,' I say at him now, 'I thought you are Bigot!' I point to the floor. 'Powder!' I whisper.

"His eyes go like fire so terrible; he look to the window, take a quick angry step to me, but stand still. Then he point to the window. 'The key, Voban?' he say; and I answer, 'Yes.' He get pale; then he go and try the door, look close at the walls, try them--quick, quick, stop, feel for a panel, then try again, stand still, and lean against the table. It is no use to call; no one can hear, for it is all roar outside, and these walls are solid and very thick.

"How long?' he say, and take out his watch. 'Five minutes--maybe,' I answer. He put his watch on the table, and sit down on a bench by it, and for a little minute he do not speak, but look at me close, and not angry, as you would think. 'Voban,' he say in a low voice, 'Bigot was a thief.' He point to the chest. 'He stole from the King--my father. He stole your Mathilde from you! He should have died. We have both been blunderers, Voban, blunderers,' he say; 'things have gone wrong with us. We have lost all.' There is little time. 'Tell me one thing,' he go on: 'Is Mademoiselle Duvarney safe--do you know?' I tell him yes, and he smile, and take from his pocket something, and lay it against his lips, and then put it back in his breast.

"You are not afraid to die, Voban?' he ask. I answer no. 'Shake hands with me, my friend,' he speak, and I do so that. 'Ah, pardon, pardon, m'sieu,' I say. 'No, no, Voban; it was to be,' he answer. 'We shall meet again, comrade--eh, if we can?' he speak on, and he turn away from me and look to the sky through the window. Then he look at his watch, and get to his feet, and stand there still. I kiss my crucifix. He reach out and touch it, and bring his fingers to his lips. 'Who can tell--perhaps--perhaps!' he say. For a little minute--ah, it seem like a year, and it is so still, so still he stand there, and then he put his hand over the watch, lift it up, and shut his eyes, as if time is all done. While you can count ten it is so, and then the great crash come."

For a long time Voban lay silent again. I gave him more cordial, and he revived and ended his tale. "I am a blunderer, as m'sieu' say," he went on, "for he is killed, not Bigot and me, and only a little part of the palace go to pieces. And so they fetch me here, and I wish--my God in Heaven, I wish I go with M'sieu' Doltaire." But he followed him a little later.

Two hours afterwards I went to the Intendance, and there I found that the body of my enemy had been placed in the room where I had last seen him with Alixe. He lay on the same couch where she had lain. The flag of France covered his broken body, but his face was untouched--as it had been in life, haunting, fascinating, though the shifting lights were gone, the fine eyes closed. A noble peace hid all that was sardonic; not even Gabord would now have called him "Master Devil." I covered up his face and left him there--peasant and prince--candles burning at his head and feet, and the star of Louis on his shattered breast; and I saw him no more.

All that night I walked the ramparts, thinking, remembering,

hoping, waiting for the morning; and when I saw the light break over those far eastern parishes, wasted by fire and sword, I set out on a journey to the Valdoche Hills.

XXX

"WHERE ALL THE LOVERS CAN HIDE"

It was in the saffron light of early morning that I saw it, the Tall Calvary of the Valdoche Hills.

The night before I had come up through a long valley, overhung with pines on one side and crimsoning maples on the other, and, travelling till nearly midnight, had lain down in the hollow of a bank, and listened to a little river leap over cascades, and, far below, go prattling on to the greater river in the south. My eyes closed, but for long I did not sleep. I heard a night-hawk go by on a lonely mission, a beaver slide from a log into the water, and the delicate humming of the pine needles was a drowsy music, through which broke by-and-bye the strange crying of a loon from the water below. I was neither asleep nor awake, but steeped in this wide awe of night, the sweet smell of earth and running water in my nostrils. Once, too, in a slight breeze, the scent of some wild animal's nest near by came past, and I found it good. I lifted up a handful of loose earth and powdered leaves, and held it to my nose--a good, brave smell--all in a sort of drowsing.

While I mused, Doltaire's face passed before me as it was in life, and I heard him say again of the peasants, "These shall save the earth some day, for they are of it, and live close to it, and are kin to it."

Suddenly there rushed before me that scene in the convent, when all the devil in him broke loose upon the woman I loved. But, turning on my homely bed, I looked up and saw the deep quiet of the skies, the stable peace of the stars, and I was a son of the good Earth again, a sojourner in the tents of Home. I did not doubt that Alixe was alive or that I should find her. There was assurance in this benignant night. In that thought, dreaming that her cheek lay close to mine, her arm around my neck, I fell asleep. I waked to bear the squirrels stirring in the trees, the whir of the partridge, and the first unvarying note of the oriole. Turning on my dry, leafy bed, I looked down, and saw in the dark haze of dawn the beavers at their house-building.

I was at the beginning of a deep gorge or valley, on one side of which was a steep sloping hill of grass and trees, and on the other a huge escarpment of mossed and jagged rocks. Then, farther up, the valley seemed to end in a huge promontory. On this great wedge grim shapes loomed in the mist, uncouth and shadowy and unnatural--a lonely, mysterious Brocken, impossible to human tenantry. Yet as I watched the mist slowly rise, there grew in me the feeling that there lay the end of my quest. I came down to the brook, bathed my face and hands, ate my frugal breakfast of bread, with berries picked from the hillside, and, as the yellow light of the rising sun broke over the promontory, I saw the Tall Calvary upon a knoll,

strange comrade to the huge rocks and monoliths--as it were vast playthings of the Mighty Men, the fabled ancestors of the Indian races of the land.

I started up the valley, and presently all the earth grew blithe, and the birds filled the woods and valleys with jocund noise.

It was near noon before I knew that my pilgrimage was over.

Coming round a point of rock, I saw the Gray Monk, of whom strange legends had lately travelled to the city. I took off my hat to him reverently; but all at once he threw back his cowl, and I saw--no monk, but, much altered, the good chaplain who had married me to Alixe in the Chateau St. Louis. He had been hurt when he was fired upon in the water; had escaped, however, got to shore, and made his way into the woods. There he had met Mathilde, who led him to her lonely home in this hill. Seeing the Tall Calvary, he had conceived the idea of this disguise, and Mathilde had brought him the robe for the purpose.

In a secluded cave I found Alixe with her father, caring for him, for he was not yet wholly recovered from his injuries. There was no waiting now. The ban of Church did not hold my dear girl back, nor did her father do aught but smile when she came laughing and weeping into my arms.

"Robert, O Robert, Robert!" she cried, and at first that was all she could say.

The good Seigneur put out his hand to me beseechingly. I took it, clasped it.

"The city?" he asked.

"Is ours," I answered.

"And my son--my son?"

I told him how, the night that the city was taken, the Chevalier de la Darante and I had gone a sad journey in a boat to the Isle of Orleans, and there, in the chapel yard, near to his father's chateau, we had laid a brave and honest gentleman who died fighting for his country.

By-and-bye, when their grief had a little abated, I took them out into the sunshine. A pleasant green valley lay to the north, and to the south, far off, was the wall of rosy hills that hid the captured town. Peace was upon it all, and upon us.

As we stood there, a scarlet figure came winding in and out among the giant stones, crosses hanging at her girdle. She approached us, and, seeing me, she said: "Hush! I know a place where all the lovers can hide."

And she put a little wooden cross into my hands.

APPENDIX

The following is an excerpt from 'The Scot in New France' (1880) by J.M. Lemoine. It is an account of Robert Stobo, the man whose life this text is loosely based upon.

Five years previous to the battle of the Plains of Abraham, one comes across three genuine Scots in the streets of Quebec--all however prisoners of war, taken in the border raids--as such under close surveillance. One, a youthful and handsome officer of Virginia riflemen, aged 27 years, a friend of Governor Dinwiddie, had been allowed the range of the fortress, on parole. His good looks, education, smartness (we use the word advisedly) and misfortunes seem to have created much sympathy for the captive, but canny Scot. He has a warm welcome in many houses--the French ladies even plead his cause; le beau capitaine is asked out; no entertainment at last is considered complete, without Captain--later on Major Robert Stobo. The other two are: Lieutenant Stevenson of Rogers' Rangers, another Virginia corps, and a Leith carpenter of the name of Clarke. Stobo, after more attempts than one, eluded the French sentries, and still more dangerous foes to the peace of mind of a handsome bachelor--the ladies of Quebec. He will re-appear on the scene, the advisor of General Wolfe, as to the best landing place round Quebec. Doubtless you wish to hear more about the adventurous Scot.

A plan of escape between him, Stevenson and Clarke, was carried out on 1st May, 1759. Major Stobo met the fugitives under a wind-mill, probably the old wind-mill on the grounds of the General Hospital Convent. Having stolen a birch canoe, the party paddled it all night, and, after incredible fatigue and danger, they passed Isle-aux-Coudres, Kamouraska, and landed below this spot, shooting two Indians in self-defence, whom Clarke buried after having scalped them, saying to the Major: "Good sir, by your permission, these same two scalps, when I come to New York, will sell for twenty-four good pounds: with this I'll be right merry, and my wife right beau." They then murdered the Indians' faithful dog, because he howled, and buried him with his masters. It was shortly after this that they met the laird of the Kamouraska Isles, le Chevalier de la Durantaye, who said that the best Canadian blood ran in his veins, and that he was of kin with the mighty Duc de Mirapoix. Had the mighty Duke, however, at that moment seen his Canadian cousin steering the four-oared boat, loaded with wheat, he might have felt but a very qualified admiration for the majesty of his stately demeanor and his nautical savoir faire. Stobo took possession of the Chevalier's pinnace, and made the haughty laird, nolens volens, row him with the rest of the crew, telling him to row away, and that, had the Great Louis himself been in the boat at that moment, it would be his fate to row a British subject thus. "At these last mighty words," says the Memoirs, "a stern resolution sat upon his countenance, which the Canadian beheld and with reluctance temporized." After a series of adventures, and dangers of every kind, the fugitives succeeded in capturing a French boat. Next, they surprised a French sloop, and, after a most hazardous voyage, they finally, in their prize, landed at Louisbourg, to the general amazement. Stobo missed the English fleet; but took passage two days after in a vessel leaving for

Quebec, where he safely arrived to tender his services to the immortal Wolfe, who gladly availed himself of them. According to the Memoirs, Stobo used daily to set out to reconnoitre with Wolfe on the deck of a frigate, opposite the Falls of Montmorency, some French shots were nigh carrying away his "decorated" and gartered legs.

We next find the Major, on the 21st July, 1759, piloting the expedition sent to Deschambault to seize, as prisoners, the Quebec ladies who had taken refuge there during the bombardment--"Mesdames Duchesnay and Decharnay; Mlle. Couillard; the Joly, Malhiot and Magnan families." "Next day, in the afternoon, les belles captives, who had been treated with every species of respect, were put on shore and released at Diamond Harbour. The English admiral, full of gallantry, ordered the bombardment of the city to be suspended, in order to afford the Quebec ladies time to seek places of safety." The incident is thus referred to in a letter communicated to the Literary and Historical Society by Capt. Colin McKenzie.

Stobo next points out the spot, at Sillery, where Wolfe landed, and soon after was sent with despatches, via the St. Lawrence, to General Amherst; but, during the trip, the vessel was overhauled and taken by a French privateer, the despatches having been previously consigned to the deep. Stobo might have swung at the yard-arm in this new predicament, had his French valet divulged his identity with the spy of Fort du Quesne; but fortune again stepped in to preserve the adventurous Scot. There were already too many prisoners on board of the French privateer. A day's provision is allowed the English vessel, which soon landed Stobo at Halifax, from whence he joined General Amherst, "many a league across the country." He served under Amherst on his Lake Champlain expedition, and there he finished the campaign; which ended, he begs to go to Williamsburg, the then capital of Virginia.

It seems singular that no command of any importance appears to have been given to the brave Scot; but, possibly, the part played by the Major when under parole at Fort du Quesne, was weighed by the Imperial authorities. There certainly seems to be a dash of the Benedict Arnold in this transaction. However, Stobo was publicly thanked by a committee of the Assembly of Virginia, and was allowed his arrears of pay for the time of his captivity. On the 30th April, 1756, he had also been presented by the Assembly of Virginia with 300 pounds, in consideration of his services to the country and his sufferings in his confinement as a hostage in Quebec. On the 19th November, 1759, he was presented with 1,000 pounds as "a reward for his zeal to his country and the recompense for the great hardships he has suffered during his confinement in the enemy's country." On the 18th February, 1760, Major Stobo embarked from New York for England, on board the packet with Colonel West and several other gentlemen. One would imagine that he had exhausted the vicissitudes of fortune. But no. A French privateer boards them in the midst of the English channel. The Major again consigns to the deep all his letters, all except one which he forgot, in the pocket of his coat, under the arm pit. This escaped the general catastrophe; and will again restore him to notoriety; it is from General A. Monckton to Mr. Pitt. The passengers of the packet were assessed 2,500 pounds to be allowed their liberty, and Stobo had to pay 125 pounds towards the relief fund. The despatch forgotten in his coat on delivery to the great Pitt brought back a letter from Pitt to Amherst. With this testimonial, Stobo sailed for New York, 24th April, 1760, to rejoin

the army engaged in the invasion of Canada; here end the Memoirs.

Though Stobo's conduct at Fort du Quesne and at Quebec can never be defended or palliated, all will agree that he exhibited, during his eventful career, most indomitable fortitude, a boundless ingenuity, and great devotion to his country--the whole crowned with final success.

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