

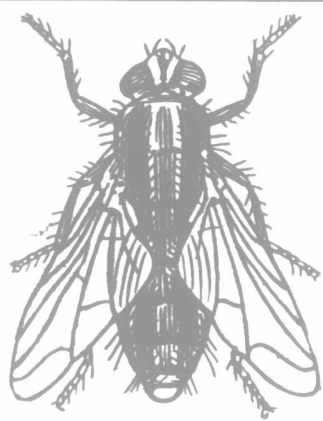
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gone to do honor to Colonel Philibert! And, as for the girls in the Convent, who you will allow are the most important and most select portion of the community, there is not one of us but would willingly jump out of the window, and do penance on dry bread and salt fish for a month, just for one hour's pleasure at the ball this evening, would we not, Louises?"

Not a Louise present but assented with an emphasis that brought sympathetic smiles upon the faces of the two young chevaliers who had watched all this pretty play.

The Chevalier des Meloises bowed very low. "I regret so much, ladies, to have to leave you! but affairs of State, you know—affairs of State! The Intendant will not proceed without a full board; I must attend the meeting to-day at the Palace."

"Oh, assuredly, Chevalier," replied Louise Roy. "What would become of the Nation, what would become of the world, nay, what would become of the internes of the Ursulines, if statesmen and warriors and philosophers like you and the Sieurs Drouillon and La Force here (this in a parenthesis, not to scratch the Chevalier too deep), did not take wise counsel for our safety and happiness, and also for the welfare of the nation?"

The Chevalier des Meloises took his departure under this shower of arrows.

The young La Force was as yet only an idle dangle about the city; but in the course of time became a man of wit and energy, worthy of his name. He replied, gaily:

"Thanks, Mademoiselle Roy! It is just for the sake of the fair internes of the Convent that Drouillon and I have taken up the vocation of statesmen, warriors, philosophers, and friends. We are quite ready to guide your innocent footsteps through the streets of this perilous city, if you are ready to go."

formed of the pleasant meeting of the class Louises and the gentlemen who escorted them round the city on the present occasion.

CHAPTER XIX.

Put Money in Thy Purse.

The Chevalier des Meloises, quite out of humor with the merry Louises, picked his way with quick, dainty steps down the Rue du Palais. The gay Louises, before returning to the Convent, resolved to make a hasty promenade to the walls to see the people at work upon them. They received with great contentment the military salutes of the officers of their acquaintance, which they acknowledged with the courtesy of well-trained internes, slightly exaggerated by provoking smiles and mischievous glances which had formed no part of the lessons in politeness taught them by the nuns.

In justice, be it said, however, the girls were actuated by a nobler feeling than the mere spirit of amusement—a sentiment of loyalty to France, a warm enthusiasm for their country, drew them to the walls; they wanted to see the defenders of Quebec, to show their sympathy, and smile approval upon them.

"Would to heaven I were a man," exclaimed Louise de Brouague, "that I might wield a sword, a spade, anything of use, to serve my country! I shame to do nothing but talk, pray, and suffer for it, while everyone else is working or fighting."

Poor girl! she did not foresee the day when the women of New France would undergo trials compared with which the sword-stroke that kills the strong man is as the touch of mercy—when the batteries of Wolfe would for sixty-five days shower shot and shell upon Quebec, and the south shore for a hundred miles together be blazing with the fires of devastation. Such things were mercifully withheld from their foresight, and



View from Parliament Buildings, Quebec, 1908, showing the walls and Kent Gate.

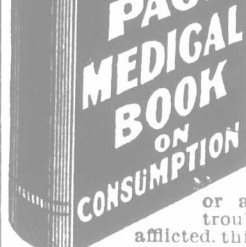
"We had better hasten, too!" ejaculated Louise Roy, looking archly through her eye-glass. "I can see Bonhomme Michel peeping round the corner of the Cote de Lery! He is looking after us stray lambs of the flock, Sieur Drouillon!"

Bonhomme Michel was the old watchman and factotum of the monastery. He had a general commission to keep a sharp eye upon the young ladies who were allowed to go out into the city. A pair of horn spectacles usually helped his vision—sometimes marred it, however, when the knowing gallants slipped a crown into his hand to put in the place of his magnifiers! Bonhomme Michel placed all his propitiation money—he liked a pious word—in his old leathern sack, which contained the redemption of many a gadding promise made through the streets of Quebec. Whether he reported what he saw this time is not recorded in the Vieux Recit, the old annals of the Convent. But, as Louise Roy called him her dear old Cupid, and knew so well how to bandage his eyes, it is probable the good nuns were not in-

the light-hearted girls went the round of the works as gaily as they would have tripped in a ballroom.

The Chevalier des Meloises, passing through the Porte du Palais, was hailed by two or three young officers of the Regiment of Bearn, who invited him into the Guard House to take a glass of wine before descending the steep hill. The Chevalier stopped willingly, and entered the well-furnished quarters of the officers of the guard, where a cool flask of Burgundy presently restored him to good-humor with himself, and consequently with the world.

"What is up to-day at the Palace?" asked Captain Monroin, a vivacious Navarrais. "All the Gros Bonnets of the Grand Company have gone down this afternoon. I suppose you are going, too, Des Meloises?" "Yes!" They have sent for me, you see, on affairs of State—what Penisault calls "business." Not a drop of wine on the board! Nothing but books and papers, bills and shipments, money paid, money received. Doit et avoir and all the good things of the Friponne!"

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We passed, in the course of an hour, two dead cows and more than fifty dead chickens. A strong smell of petrol pervaded the atmosphere, and there were wheel tracks in the dust.

Sherlock Holmes became greatly interested.

"Watson," exclaimed he, after deep thought, "there has been a motor along here."