

the head of the stairs. Here he swung round upon John and beckoned him to stand out from the listening group of red-coats.

"It can be proved, sir," he went on, addressing M. Etienne, "that the lady—your niece, is she not?—owes her life, and more than her life perhaps, to this savage. I claim only that, answering his call, I led my men with all possible speed to the rescue. Up there on the leads I found your brother lying dead, with a sergeant dead beside him; and their wounds again will prove to you that they had perished by the bursting of a shell. But this man alone stood on the hatchway and held it against a dozen Iroquois, as your niece will testify. What you suppose yourself to owe him, I won't pretend to say; but I tell you—and I tell you, General—that cleaner pluck I never saw in my life."

And John, the soldiers pushing him forward, stood out with bent head. He prayed that there might be no Ojibway interpreter at hand; he knew of none in the fort but Father Launoy, now busy in the chapel laying out the Commandant's body. Of all the spectators there was but one—the General himself—who had not known him either as Ensign John à Cleeve or as the wounded sergeant from Ticonderoga. He had met Muspratt at Albany, and remembered him well on the march up the Hudson to Lake George. With Etherington he had marched, messed, played at cards, and lived in close comradeship for months together—only two years ago! It was not before their eyes that he hung his head, but before the thought of two eyes that in the chapel yonder were covered by the hands of a kneeling girl.

M. Etienne stepped forward and took his hand.

"I thank you, my friend—if you can understand my thanks."

Dominique Guyon, returning from the chapel, saw only an Indian stepping back upon the ranks of the red-coats, who clapped him on the shoulder for a good fellow; and Dominique paid him no more attention, being occupied with M. Etienne's next words.