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## CHAPTER I.

It is early spring-time in sunny France. The dark, dreary winter is over; the warm sun shines on each bursting leaf and springing flower, as if gladly welcoming their return; while in the busy town of Tours it glances and sparkles on the spires and turrets of the old Cathedral, and lights up the dim, narrow streets.

Will you, my readers, go back with me more than two hundred years—far into the almost forgotten past? Let us defy the bounds of time and space, and entering that same City of Tours, imagine ourselves among that crowd gathered round the gates of yon Ursuline convent. Though those eager gazers are debarred from entering, we may find admission within the gloomy portals, and follow yon beautiful French lady, on whom all eyes are bent, who with mien half-submissive, half-elated, sweeps slowly in. She must surely be some one of importance, for as her delicate feet pass the threshold, the deep, sonorous convent-bell rings out its measured peal, and the long line of nuns assembled to greet the lady, and, headed by their superior, chant the "Veni Creator." Tears fill the lady's eyes at their sweet, soft music; and her face glows with a light, seraphic in the sisters' eyes. Joyously they lead her to their chapel, and fall prostrate around her as she bends before the altar.

The soft light from the richly-painted window above falls on the fair young head with

its crown of golden hair; it dyes the close-fitting velvet dress deepest crimson, while over the pure white robes of the nuns it casts a pale rose shade. Each heart under those simple garments is beating with high resolves and earnest aspirations; but on the upturned face of one of the sisters—a face young, fair and sweet—may be read still deeper longings than her companions feel.

See! the lady has arisen, and the fair young nun throws herself at her feet, and with tears implores her to let her accompany her—to let her share the trials, the privileges of her mission; she longs so earnestly to go—but whither?

Listen, and I will tell you.

Some six or seven years before our story opens, the earnest and indefatigable Le Jeune had, in response to what he believed to be a call from heaven, left the peaceful retirement of his convent at Dieppe, and embarked for the New World—bravely going forth to what he himself felt would be a living or a dying martyrdom.

Of his trials and persecutions at the hands of the Indians, of the almost insurmountable obstacles he overcame, of his cruel death, by those to benefit whom he had sacrificed all, I have not time here to speak; but the recitals of his daring mission, by his own pen, excited in his native land such enthusiasm as spread from east to west, from north to south, until a mission to Canada was the one thought of the devout in the Church, and