

The maiden paused in her employment, and glancing at the broad, stalwart form and shrewd yet honest face of the questioner, replied, "Nearly twenty years, sir."

Mr. Norton's quick ear immediately detected in her words a delicate, foreign accent, quite unfamiliar to him. After a moment's silence he spoke again.

"Dubois, — that is your name, is it not? A French name?"

"Yes, sir, my parents are natives of France."

"Ah! indeed!" responded Mr. Norton, and the family in which he found himself was immediately invested with new interest in his eyes.

"Where is your father at the present time, my dear child?"

"He is away at Fredericton. He has gone to obtain family supplies. I hope he is not obliged to be out this stormy night, but I fear he is."

She made the sign of the cross on her breast and glanced upward.

Mr. Norton observed the movement, and at the same time saw, what had before escaped his notice, a string of glittering, black beads upon her neck, with a black cross, half hidden by the folds in the waist of her dress. It was an instant revelation to him of the faith in which she had been trained. He fell into a fit of musing.

In the mean time, Adèle Dubois completed her preparations for the tea-table, — not one of her accustomed duties, but one which she sometimes took a fancy to perform.

She was sixteen years old, — tall already, and rapidly