

because he saw farther than his companion the shadows of coming events.

Sometimes he stopped impatiently at the window, beating a tattoo with his nails on the polished casement as he gazed out upon the beautiful parterres of autumnal flowers, beginning to shed their petals around the gardens of the Palace. He looked at them without seeing them. All that caught his eye was a bare rose-bush, from which he remembered he had plucked some white roses which he had sent to Caroline to adorn her oratory; and he thought of her face, more pale and delicate than any rose of Provence that ever bloomed. His thoughts ran violently in two parallel streams side by side, neither of them disappearing for a moment amid the crowd of other affairs that pressed upon his attention,—the murder of Caroline and the perquisition that was to be made for her in all quarters of the Colony. His own safety was too deeply involved in any discovery that might be made respecting her to allow him to drop the subject out of his thought for a moment.

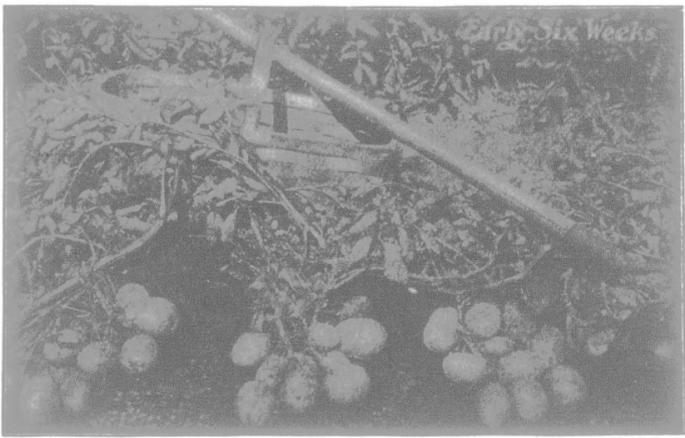
By imposing absolute silence upon himself in the presence of Angelique, touching the death of Caroline, he might impose a like silence upon her whom he could not acquit of the suspicion of having prompted the murder. But the certainty that there was a confederate in the deed—a woman, too, judging by the fragment of writing picked up by Cadet—tormented him with endless conjectures.

Still, he felt, for the present, secure from any discovery on that side; but how to escape from the sharp inquisition of two men like La Corne St. Luc and Pierre Philibert? And who knew how far the secret of Beaumanoir was a secret any longer? It was known to two women, at any rate; and no woman, in Bigot's estimation of the sex, would long keep a secret which concerned another and not herself.

"Our greatest danger, Cadet, lies there!" continued the Intendant, stopping in his walk and turning suddenly to his friend. "La Corne St. Luc and Pierre Philibert are commissioned by the Governor to search for that girl. They will not leave a stone unturned, a corner unransacked in New France. They will find out through the Hurons and my own servants that a woman has been concealed in Beaumanoir. They will suspect, if they do not discover who she was. They will not find her on earth,—they will look for under the earth. And, by St. Muir! it makes me quake to think of it, Cadet, for the discovery will be utter ruin! They may at last dig up her murdered remains in my own Chateau! As you said, the Bastille and the Place de Greve would be my portion, and ruin yours and that of all our associates."

Cadet held up his pipe as if appealing to Heaven. "It is a cursed reward for our charitable night's work, Bigot," said he. "Better you had never lied about the girl. We could have brazened it out or fought it out with the Baron de St. Castin or any man in France! That lie will convict us if found out!"

"Pshaw! the lie was a necessity," answered Bigot, impatiently. "But who could have dreamed of it leading us such a dance as it has done! Par Dieu! I have not often lied except to women,



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and such lies do not count! But I had better have stuck to truth in this matter, Cadet. I acknowledge that now." "Especially with La Pompadour! She is a woman. It is dangerous to lie to her,—at least about other women." "Well, Cadet, it is useless blessing the Pope or banning the devil! We are in

for it, and we must meet La Corne St. Luc and Pierre Philibert as warily as we can. I have been thinking of making safe ground for us to stand upon, as the trappers do on the great prairies, by kindling a fire in front to escape from the fire in the rear!" "What is that, Bigot? I could fire the

Chateau rather than be tracked out by La Corne and Philibert," said Cadet, sitting upright in his chair.

"What, burn the Chateau!" answered Bigot. "You are mad, Cadet! No; but it were well to kindle such a smoke about the eyes of La Corne and Philibert that they will need to rub them to ease their own pain instead of looking for poor Caroline."

"How, Bigot? Will you challenge and fight them? That will not avert suspicion, but increase it," remarked Cadet.

"Well, you will see! A man will need as many eyes as Argus to discover our hands in this business."

Cadet started, without conjecturing what the Intendant contemplated. "You will kill the bird that tells tales on us Bigot,—is that it?" added he.

"I mean to kill two birds with one stone, Cadet! Hark you; I will tell you a scheme that will put a stop to these perquisitions by La Corne and Philibert—the only two men I fear in the Colony—and at the same time deliver me from the everlasting bark and bite of the Golden Dog!"

Bigot led Cadet to the window, and poured in his ear the burning passions which were fermenting in his own breast. He propounded a scheme of deliverance for himself and of crafty vengeance upon the Philiberts which would turn the thoughts of every one away from the Chateau of Beaumanoir and the missing Caroline into a new stream of public and private troubles, amid the confusion of which he would escape, and his present dangers be overlooked and forgotten in a great catastrophe that might upset the Colony, but at any rate it would free Bigot from his embarrassments and perhaps inaugurate a new reign of public plunder and the suppression of the whole party of the Honnetes Gens.

CHAPTER XLV.

"I WILL FEED FAT THE ANCIENT GRUDGE I BEAR HIM."

The Treaty of Aix La Chapelle, so long tossed about on the waves of war, was finally signed in the beginning of October. A swift-sailing goelette of Dieppe brought the tidings of New France, and in the early nights of November, from Quebec to Montreal. Bonfires on every headland blazed over the broad river; churches were decorated with evergreens, and Te Deums sung in gratitude for the return of peace and security to the Colony.

New France came out of the struggle scathed and scorched as by fire, but unshorn of territory or territorial rights; and the glad colonists forgot and forgave the terrible sacrifices they had made in the universal joy that their country. Their religion, language, and laws were still safe under the Crown of France, with the white banner still floating over the Castle of St. Louis.

On the day after the arrival of the Dieppe goelette bringing the news of peace, Bigot sat before his desk reading his despatches and letters from France, when the Chevalier de Pean entered the room with a bundle of papers in his hand, brought to the Palace by the

(Continued on page 27.)

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