

The Money Master

on which low, white houses with dormer-windows and big stoops flashed to the passer-by the message of the pioneer, "It is mine. I triumph."

At the Manor Cartier, not far from the town of Vilray, where Jean Jacques was master, and above it and below it, there had been battles and the ravages of war. At the time of the Conquest the stubborn *habitants*, refusing to accept the yielding of Quebec as the end of French power in their proud province, had remained in arms and active, and had only yielded when the musket and the torch had done their work, and smoking ruins marked the places where homes had been. They took their fortune with something of the heroic calm of men to whom an idea was more than aught else. Jean Jacques' father, grandfather, and great-great-grandfather had lived here, no one of them rising far, but none worthless or unnoticeable. They all had had "a way of their own" as their neighbours said, and had been provident on the whole. Thus it was that when Jean Jacques' father died, and he came into his own, he found himself at thirty a man of substance, unmarried, who "could have had the pick of the province." This was what the Old Curé said in despair, when Jean Jacques did the incomprehensible thing, and married *l'Espagnole*, or "the Spanische," as the lady was always called in the English of the *habitant*.

When she came it was spring-time, and all the world was budding, exuding joy and hope, with the sun dancing over all. It was the time between the sowing and the hay-time, and there was a feeling