

A DAUGHTER OF NEW FRANCE.

BY MARY CATHERINE CROWLEY.

CHAPTER XIX.

OUR PRITTY COMMISSIONERS.

The red men had attacked us, and they had been driven back. Above the bastions of Fort Pontchartrain the Bourgeois still waved, and the little colony of Le Detroit, far from being annihilated, was already planning to extend its boundaries.

It is true Mesdames Cadillac and De Tonty and the Chateaux of Chateaugay, left without shelter to spend the winter in huts scarce better than the lodges of our Huron neighbors; but this they endured without complaint. Our Sieur designed to build in the spring a manor more imposing than the first; De Tonty too was to erect a larger house, and the new church and residence for Frere Constantine were to be upon a more extensive scale than the structures that had been destroyed.

One afternoon at the beginning of the Moon of Beavers, while on a stroll through the settlement, I chanced to find myself upon a secluded path that lay behind the storehouses, which were already rebuilt in a temporary fashion.

As I passed a cabin that had remained a ruin since the fire, I noted there was water in the cellar and, peering into the stagnant pool, caught a glimpse of a furry object which I took to be the yellow gray breast of a wolf.

"It is a welp, I will take it as a present for Miladi Barbe; if an old one, still I will take it alive if possible," I soliloquized, as rapidly as well as I entered the cellar. "Twice as well to be on guard against a sudden spring from the creature, should it prove so ferocious as to be unmanageable otherwise."

Ha, ha, ha, it moves me to mirth to think of the adventure, and of the just upon myself. The furry animal stirred not, and concluding it must be dead, I poked it with the end of my blade. Chat, how I had been fooled! Miladi would not have for a plaything a cub of this breed; it was not a thing of flesh and blood at all that I fished out of the water on the point of my sword.

It was a beaver skin, and bore the mark of the company, together with the number 223. I found another also, like to the first. They were not spoiled by the water, and the discovery of them in so strange a place convinced me that the storehouse had been robbed.

Accordingly I availed myself of a pretext to go there, and quietly made an examination. The result was—I reported the matter to our Sieur.

"It is as I anticipated," he said, to my surprise, and presently proceeded to give me further instructions.

The river being still open and free of ice save at the margins, that evening, with Jollicour and two other soldiers, I crossed it in a canoe. The night was dark, and the paddles of our Indian boatman scarce made a sound as our craft of cedar bark shot swiftly across in silence, yet the savages, ever on the watch, knew of our coming ere we stepped ashore, and at the entrance to their village we were met by the chief Quarante Sols, in a quarrelsome mood.

"If you are come upon a peace errand, where is your necklace of wampum?" he demanded sullenly.

"Quarante Sols," I said with sternness, "you know the French have no need to give branches of porcelain as pledges that they mean to keep faith. It is only the false Indian who must give them, else he will not be believed. The word of our Father Monsieur de Cadillac is worth many branches of porcelain, and as binding as any necklace. When I tell you, in his name, we are come with no evil intent to you, this should suffice. If you seek to prevent us from carrying out the orders of our Father Monsieur de Cadillac, he will think you have a part in the crime he would unlearn, and you will share the punishment of the other wrongdoers."

The warning had its effect; the attitude of Quarante Sols from defiance, nay, even menace, changed to a sullen acquiescence. All the braves of the village had gathered about him, glowing upon us in a manner that argued that we might resign ourselves to a speedy despatch to the better world if the chief gave the sign to his followers.

Afterwards Jollicour avowed that my boldness had much to do with saving us; but I scarce thought of our danger, being intent on the mission on which we were sent.

Waving back his warriors with the majesty of a prince, Quarante Sols now asked in a more conciliatory tone what we would have of him.

I explained our errand.

concealed by the commissioners Arnaud and Nolan.

"They are most audacious; I did not expect so much from there," he exclaimed. "In truth, Normand, after you were gone, I regretted sending you upon so hazardous an expedition."

"Too, I had no fear of the Indians," I cried. "I have never done aught against them, and have been much among them with Frere Constantine. Moreover, do they not always hold in respect those who maintain toward them a confident bearing?"

La Mothe sighed. "Sometimes I think the good Recollect over rash," he said musingly. "It is not always safe even for a saint to thrust his head into the lion's jaws."

Who would injure Monsieur de Halle? I protested lightly. "Why, the fiercest warriors become with him as docile as children; and he is as devoted to the interests of his savage neophyte as to the French at the fort. But as to these dishonest commissioners surely they will need all their influence with the powers that be when their penitentials become known!"

My brother laughed sardonically. "This is by no means the limit of their stealings," he declared. "We have defrauded the company of furs to the value of fourteen thousand francs. They have relatives among the directors of the company, but this fact shall not save them. It is my duty to report the matter to Ville Marie and to demand their recall. To-morrow morning you shall write out the letters according to my dictation."

After much delay, Arnaud and Nolan were summoned to Montreal, and Radisson was instructed to follow them upon the arrival of the successors of the three.

The Moon of Flowers was come. My sister Madame Cadillac with her young son Jacques and the little infant Therese, born in the Moon of Snows, was to go to Quebec upon a visit to her older daughters at the Ursulines. The Chateaux of Chateaugay was, of course, to accompany her. But ere they left for the St. Lawrence, Miladi Barbe, perchance for old time's sake, went amaying with me upon the prairie of Le Detroit.

Never were the waters of the strait so fair a blue as upon that morning. From the woods came the fragrance of the wild honeysuckle, the arbutus, and fleurs-de-lis; the green banks of the river were dotted with violets and boutons d'or (buttercups); the skies were azure, and here and there across their azure meadows strayed fleecy white clouds, like flocks of sheep driven by the gentle shepherdess the South Wind, with a sunbeam for her crook.

The prairie was gay with the songs of the meadow-lark and the robin, the brown thrush and the bobolink. The wild pigeons of the woods were so numerous that any evening after sunset I could have knocked hundreds of them off the low branches of the trees with the back of my blade; the wild geese returning from the south flew so low over the settlement that their notes could be distinctly heard. The deer too ventured from their haunts in the depths of the forest, to gaze at us in gentle wonder.

Ah, that day of days, when I sought to beguile the time for Miladi by tales of Indian romance, I had learned at Michilimackinac!

Barbe was in a gay and captivating mood. Nevertheless, perchance because of Ishkodah, she lent but an inattentive ear to my description of the beauty of dusky maidens, and was bent upon bantering me anew my old fancy for her friend Madeleine de Vercheres, who was still unwed.

This I rebuked not, and abandoning the jesting themes, I fell into an earnest tone. But scarce at this moment, who should cross our path but Duquesne? In his hand he swung a spray of budding eglantine which he must needs present to the young Chateaux of Chateaugay with many compliments, the which she, capricious beauty, made no attempt to cut short.

The sundial records only sunlit hours. Miladi Barbe and Madame Cadillac went to Quebec. From the hand late the forest of the Chat can St. Louis had read darker days for our Sieur, and they were fast approaching.

By the first summer convoy from Montreal came the company's three new commissioners. To my surprise, Monsieur de Radisson was not at the landing-place of the canoes to greet these officials, but at the request of De la Mothe, I went thither to extend to them the civilities of the Commandant.

As their chief stepped ashore, so ludicrous was his appearance, I with difficulty preserved my gravity, being near to laughing in his face. He was a slight, effeminate-looking man, attired in the height of the fashion as they know it in New France; his eyebrows were of a reddish color, and I surmised that beneath his fine peruke was a plentiful shock of lousy hair. He had not spoken many words, however, ere I judged that under his drawing tone there lurked a shrewdness like to let no chance escape which might be turned to his own advantage, and his sharp ferret eyes lost nothing of what took place around him. These last observations I made a little later.

As he came up the beach, I met him with a courteous salutation.

"Monsieur le Noyer?" I said; and for my life I could not help that into my voice crept a note of interrogation, so amusing was his self-satisfaction and conceit, as though the whole world must at a glance know him to be some great personage.

"Eh bien, I am Monsieur le Noyer, the chief commissioner for Le Detroit; and since I bring letters to your Commandant, Monsieur de la Mothe, I trust I may have the pleasure of meeting him as soon as may be."

"The Sieur Cadillac has requested me to invite you to breakfast," I replied with more amenity. "Permit me to conduct you to the manor, some rooms of which are ready for occupancy."

The little man concluded to unbecome a degree of his dignity. Doubtless in his self-complacency, he had expected my brother to be on the strand to welcome him; but the hospitable invitation of our Sieur restored his good humor for the time.

Monsieur de Cadillac received him with much courtesy in the salon of the manor, where upon a table laid with snowy damask and sun silver plate as had been saved from the fire were set forth the best of meats, and bread and wine that the post afforded.

Monsieur le Noyer presented his letters, and then De la Mothe, after an interchange of compliments with the stranger, said, glancing at the bulky proportions of the packet he still held in his hand—

"I ask your pardon, Monsieur le Noyer; I am a prompt man by nature and by habit. In this packet no doubt are instructions that require immediate consideration. You will hold me excused if I withdraw to read these documents. Monsieur Gayon will ably fill the role of dispenser of the best hospitality my poor house affords. An revoir. Were it not that I must give my attention to the letters, I should ask no greater pleasure than to spend the remainder of the day in listening to your news of the doings in Montreal, and making inquiry for my friends in that good town of the King."

Therewith he retired to examine the budget.

Whether Le Noyer had assumed the breakfast to be a formal feast prepared in his honor, to which all the gentlemen of the post would be invited, I do not know. At all events, though I strove to my utmost to play well the part of entertainer which was assigned me, the guest grew sullen and silent. Yet his ill-humor in no way interfered with his relish of the viands, or so it seemed.

I ate more sparingly, but was ready to let gohen out the repast, esteeming it easier to cater to the palate of the guest than to divert him with conversation.

Within the hour our Sieur returned. We were just risen from the table, and Monsieur le Noyer had gone to a window and was looking out upon the river, that lay, a fair expanse of blue and silver, shining in the sunlight of this perfect day in June.

"Monsieur le Commissaire," began Cadillac, in his courtliest tone, "I dare say you are eager to be about the affairs of the company. I will not detain you from them, therefore. Be assured you shall have all the protection you may need from me as Commandant of this post, in the discharge of your duties. I would advise you to execute as quietly as possible any order wherewith you may be charged. Monsieur Gayon will give you whatever information you require regarding our treatment of the savages."

"Thanks, Monsieur le Commandant," returned his guest with ill-concealed impatience. "I have need to ask no information, save to be shown the way to the house of the retiring commissioner. I marvel he has not come to greet me."

"Of Monsieur Radisson's acts I can make no explanation, not being on terms of amity with him. I am sure, however, that Monsieur Gayon will be happy to conduct you to his house."

My brother glanced at me, a flash of amusement in his eye, for he knew I would be gladly rid of the duty of host.

"Monsieur," I said, turning to his guest with a grave bow, "I shall be pleased to do you a service."

Accordingly we went out together, and down the street of Ste. Anne, toward the dwelling of Monsieur de Radisson.

"I presume my predecessor in office is ready to deliver over to me at once the keys of the company's storehouse," remarked the little commissioner pompously, as we proceeded; despite his announcement that he wanted to be told nothing, here he was immediately questioning me.

From his manner one would have thought he had been appointed Commandant of Le Detroit, at least, and I laughed in my sleeve as I answered—

broke out Le Noyer, clapping me on the shoulder, and shouting hilariously, as though he found in my words much wit. "I have heard, Monsieur Gayon, never found. The boys begin to joke me about it, and they kept it up until last I was so sick of hearing 'Newfoundland dog' that I wouldn't have found one as a gift."

"One night—I was just a clerk in the post office then—when I was distributing the mail I found five letters in it for myself. I had never had so many before. Charlie Stone, who was postmaster then, saw them and smiled. 'You've got a heavy mail, to-night, George,' said he, and I heard Jim Sneaker and the other fellows sniggering daker and the other fellows sniggering outside. I opened one of the letters. It was dated New York and it ran something like this—

"Dear Sir:—I saw your advertisement in the Herald. I have got seven as fine Newfoundland pups as you ever saw. Say the word and I will ship them. Price for the litter \$100."

"Saw my advertisement in the Herald," said I to myself. "What can he mean. It must be the letter was intended for someone else." I opened the other four. No, they were all evidently meant for me. They were all about like the first, and they offered me from two to a dozen pups each. Meantime the boys had been watching me through the window, and when I heard that they all broke into a laugh. I knew they must be at the bottom of the joke, but I pretended not to notice their hilarity. As soon as they were out of the way, however, I took a Herald out of someone's box, and waded through the want columns. At last my eyes rested upon this announcement: (And here the postmaster got down his scrap-book and showed me a yellow clipping in it that read:—

"Wanted—Seven Newfoundland pups, price no object. Address George Andrews, Sellersville, N. Y."

"Then I saw it all. I know some of those boys had gone to the expense of that advertisement simply to worry me. I made up my mind not to be worried. But the next day brought a larger number of letters, and the next more yet. For a week the current kept up, and at one time I found I was receiving nearly half the mail of the office. Let us see the far West, offering me Newfoundland dogs at prices ranging from \$15 to \$125 each. Several correspondents said they had no Newfoundland dogs, but could sell me terriers, bulldogs, poodles and what not. Then came a grist of circulars and letters about dog food, dog collars, chains, flea powder and a hundred things of that kind.

"At the end of the month, when I made out the money order report to send to Washington, I saw where Jim Sneaker had bought a money order for \$1.50 in favor of the New York Herald. This confirmed my suspicion, but I said nothing to Jim, as the thing had by that time blown over."

"In a day or two, however, I received a telegram from some dog fancier in New Jersey, saying that having seen my advertisement he had sent me by express seven young Newfoundland dogs, price \$150 e. o. d. It never occurred to me that young Rogers had gone from our neighborhood down to New Jersey to teach school, and that Sneaker had probably prompted him to send the telegram. The telegram worried me nearly to death. 'What am I going to do with seven Newfoundland pups?' I kept asking myself. I canvassed the town and neighboring country to see if I couldn't find some one who would take the other six, for I had concluded to keep one. After much work I induced Jim Sneaker, Abe Short and some of the other boys to agree to take five of them. I had them sign a paper to that effect, just as a memorandum. They didn't hesitate, for they knew the telegram was fictitious. Several days passed and my dogs didn't come. I began to worry about their being fed on the way, and I pictured to myself the arrival of a crate full of dead dogs."

"While I was in this state of suspense—with the boys all making life miserable for me—I received another contribution to the subject of dogs, from Rochester. It was from a young lady there by the name of Baker, whose father had been very fond of Newfoundland dogs. He had recently died and she found herself in possession of six fine pups which were a nuisance to her. She had tried to give them away, but none of her acquaintances wanted the bother of a dog in the city. Finally some one remembered having read my advertisement, and gave her my address. If I wanted the dogs she would be glad to present to me, she said. I telegraphed her to have them shipped to me at once, and in turn I began now to chuckle under my breath at the other fellows."

"The next day the pups arrived, and I sent word to Jim and the other fellows that I was ready to fill my part of our contract. Pretty soon Jim came into the post office and asked me what I meant. He thought it was a joke of mine. But no, there were the dogs still in the crate, as frisky and handsome little fellows as you ever saw."

"There was no way out of it. Jim had to take his dog and pay for it, and the other fellows followed suit. I let 'em off for \$10 apiece, which made \$50 out of the deal, with my dog into the bargain. This turned the laugh on them, and for a while I had the advantage."

"But one day they got that confounded joker, Andy Smith, the printer, to print five hundred postal cards and address them to newspapers all over the country, inquiring how much they would charge me to run an advertisement of my alleged patent dog-churn. As a result mail came pouring in upon me again, and the stream kept up for two weeks. Nearly twenty editors said they would insert the 'ad' in return for one of the churns. A number of the papers gave me editorial notices to show their good will, and they spoke of my dog churn with such convincing praise that I began to get letters from farmers and dairymen in various parts of the country who

wanted the machines, and from merchants who wanted to sell them. Dog-churns were a novelty at that time, and with these orders to start on I made up my mind to start a dog-churn factory. I furnished the money and Bill Sims did the work. We started to make the churns in the back part of Bill's tin shop, but the business soon forced us into a big factory, and it grew till the time of Bill's death there was hardly a farmer in the country who hadn't heard of Andrew & Sims's dog churns. When Bill died I sold out my share in the business for a nice round sum and the factory was moved away."

"But the best part of it, as I look at it, is yet to come. Soon after the dog episode I went to Rochester on business. Meantime I had sent Miss Baker the \$50 I had got of Jim and the other jokers for her dogs. She was an orphan, and it came handy to her. It turned out that she knew relations of mine in Rochester, and so I was taken to call on her. We had such a good laugh over the dog story that we felt acquainted with each other right from the start. It wasn't many months before Miss Baker came to Sellersville as Mrs. Andrews, and the boys saw I'd got ahead of 'em again, for there wasn't a girl in town who could hold a candle to her. That was thirty years ago, but to this day Mrs. Andrews and I have our laughs at the dog story. 'Little thought I had that she played that April fool on me that he was setting me up in business and introducing me to my future wife.'"

"Come up some time, Mr. Hobson, and see us. Good night!"—The Pathfinder.

THE CATHOLIC SON OF AN ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP.

FATHER ROBERT HUGH BENSON AND HIS BOOKS.

Catholics have not forgotten the sensation caused in England a few years ago by the conversion of Robert Hugh Benson, son of the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Catholic faith. Young Benson studied for the priesthood, was duly ordained, and, in addition to effective work in his high vocation, has recently taken a notable place in the ranks of contemporary novelists by his two remarkable books, "The King's Achievement," and "By Whose Authority?"

The first of these is a story of the time of Henry VIII. of England. It is several generations since we have heard much of "blat King Hal." Dickens describes him as a spot of blood and grease on the history of England. The advanced Anglicans condemn him as severely as did ever the Catholics—more severely, perhaps, for the wreck and ruin he wrought among the architectural glories of their land and their religious feeling is up in arms at hearing such a monster of villainy and cruelty acclaimed as the founder of what is now known as the church of England. Ralph Adams Cram, in his "Ruined Abbeys of Great Britain," calls him "the Scourge of England."

In Father Benson's story, the tyrant is described without passion or prejudice. The author has simply recreated Henry's epoch and has made us feel as none other has attempted, the dreadful but undeniable personal fascination which the man exercised over his contemporaries. Next to Henry in life-like portraiture is Henry's minister, Cromwell, who, heading not the advice of his deposed predecessor, eventually came to the pang without the palm of martyrdom.

The romantic interest of the story overshadowed by these two evil men is supplied by the careers of the two sons of Sir James Torrison of Overfield Court—Ralph, a man in his early thirties, when the story opens, high in Cromwell's service and confidence; and Christopher, ten years younger, and with his mind turning to the monastic life. There is a married daughter, Mary, whose manly, out-spoken husband, Sir Nicholas Maxwell, is one of the most lovable characters in the book; and a young maiden daughter, Margaret, finishing her schooling with the Benedictines near to Rusper, her heart set on becoming one of them.

Ann Boleyn has just been crowned Queen. As yet, there is no general presentiment of the inevitable consequences of this wicked union. Henry hears Mass and discusses theology as of old. The great masterpieces of the stately spires all over the land, and the "Opus Dei" is chanted and the poor are fed, and the people ministered to from time immemorial. Sir James Torrison lets Christopher and Margaret go in obedience to the call of God, feeling that their respective monastic homes are abiding cities.

It is true that the grand old Catholic gentleman had his sorrows; for the ill-begotten of Henry's divorce from his lawful wife had entered Overfield Court in the destruction of Lady Torrison's faith, and the ascendancy of Cromwell over Ralph. The gradual corruption of Ralph by his unscrupulous master is marvellously told. We have hope for the man for awhile through his love for Beatrice Atherton, the ward of Sir Thomas More—and the author gives us, by the way, another of those charming glimpses into the home life of the most lovable man, best of husbands and fathers, merriest of hosts, broad-minded scholar, incorruptible statesman, and finally martyr of God. But ambition is the strongest force in Ralph Torrison's character, unless, indeed, his extraordinary devotion to Cromwell, and we find him gradually losing all faith, manly honor, and regard for the ties of nature.

When Henry suddenly becomes scrupulous for the spiritual perfection of the monks and nuns of his kingdom, and orders an investigation of the religious houses with a view to their suppression, unless, Ralph, what over might would insert the 'ad' in return for one of the churns. A number of the papers gave me editorial notices to show their good will, and they spoke of my dog churn with such convincing praise that I began to get letters from farmers and dairymen in various parts of the country who

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THE POSTMASTER'S TRUE STORY.

WHICH CENTERS ABOUT AN APRIL FOOL JOKE.

"No letters for you to-night," said the little old postmaster, in his cheery voice. "Come in, won't you? It's most closing up time." So I went inside the little office, though it wasn't just in accordance with the postal regulations, and took a seat on the table.

"First of April jokes? Well, I ought to know something about 'em. Didn't you ever hear the one about the dogs? Queer if you didn't. Every body in Sellersville knew about it. I was the laughing stock of the town for two months. But that was before your time. Ha, ha! Jim Sneaker never sees me to this day without saying, 'Hey, George, don't you want a dog?'"

"Well, it was like this. It was when I was a young man. I've held this office, you know, from one administration to another going on thirty years now. I got the idea into my head that I wanted a dog, a Newfoundland dog. I asked every farmer that came to town if he knew where I could get a likely pup. But no one knew."

"Finally, I told Doak Bird what I wanted. He was a horse doctor who

those days and traveled round a good deal. I said to him, 'Doak, I'll give you \$5 if you'll find me a nice Newfoundland pup.' But the pup was never found. The boys begin to joke me about it, and they kept it up until last I was so sick of hearing 'Newfoundland dog' that I wouldn't have found one as a gift."

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"There was no way out of it. Jim had to take his dog and pay for it, and the other fellows followed suit. I let 'em off for \$10 apiece, which made \$50 out of the deal, with my dog into the bargain. This turned the laugh on them, and for a while I had the advantage."

"But one day they got that confounded joker, Andy Smith, the printer, to print five hundred postal cards and address them to newspapers all over the country, inquiring how much they would charge me to run an advertisement of my alleged patent dog-churn. As a result mail came pouring in upon me again, and the stream kept up for two weeks. Nearly twenty editors said they would insert the 'ad' in return for one of the churns. A number of the papers gave me editorial notices to show their good will, and they spoke of my dog churn with such convincing praise that I began to get letters from farmers and dairymen in various parts of the country who

wanted the machines, and from merchants who wanted to sell them. Dog-churns were a novelty at that time, and with these orders to start on I made up my mind to start a dog-churn factory. I furnished the money and Bill Sims did the work. We started to make the churns in the back part of Bill's tin shop, but the business soon forced us into a big factory, and it grew till the time of Bill's death there was hardly a farmer in the country who hadn't heard of Andrew & Sims's dog churns. When Bill died I sold out my share in the business for a nice round sum and the factory was moved away."

"But the best part of it, as I look at it, is yet to come. Soon after the dog episode I went to Rochester on business. Meantime I had sent Miss Baker the \$50 I had got of Jim and the other jokers for her dogs. She was an orphan, and it came handy to her. It turned out that she knew relations of mine in Rochester, and so I was taken to call on her. We had such a good laugh over the dog story that we felt acquainted with each other right from the start. It wasn't many months before Miss Baker came to Sellersville as Mrs. Andrews, and the boys saw I'd got ahead of 'em again, for there wasn't a girl in town who could hold a candle to her. That was thirty years ago, but to this day Mrs. Andrews and I have our laughs at the dog story. 'Little thought I had that she played that April fool on me that he was setting me up in business and introducing me to my future wife.'"

"Come up some time, Mr. Hobson, and see us. Good night!"—The Pathfinder.

THE CATHOLIC SON OF AN ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP.

FATHER ROBERT HUGH BENSON AND HIS BOOKS.

Catholics have not forgotten the sensation caused in England a few years ago by the conversion of Robert Hugh Benson, son of the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Catholic faith. Young Benson studied for the priesthood, was duly ordained, and, in addition to effective work in his high vocation, has recently taken a notable place in the ranks of contemporary novelists by his two remarkable books, "The King's Achievement," and "By Whose Authority?"