



Grandpere Nadeau Recruits

By Queenie Fairchild

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THE morning after his success as a raconteur, Grandpere Nadeau seated himself in the sun at the cottage door. His daughter looked out inquiringly once or twice, as it is a rare thing for an old habitant not to do a few little daily chores to keep up the pretence of his usefulness.

"I don't think I will work to-day, ma fille," he announced, "I want to think of some tales for to-night when the Messieurs les Officiers come to see me."

The children gathered about plaguing him for stories. Grandpere refused point blank to tell of the murderess LaCorriveau swinging in her iron cage at Point Levis, and of the terrible midnight feasts of the Sorciers of the Island of Orleans, but he made the children his living note books, giving each one something to remind him about during the evening.

Rene St. Maurice was out early, smoking and talking with the men who, like himself, were only visiting St. Norman. Captain Cameron could do little but lend his moral support and act as a safety valve for St. Maurice to blow himself off to in English, after haranguing the men about the war and acting out the scenes he was describing as realistically as if performing for a moving picture camera. That part appealed immensely to his little audience, for French-Canadians dearly love a theatrical element in everything and are quite connoisseurs of every style of platform speaking, for a political meeting can always arouse the duller habitant.

"What's that you are saying, Telephore Benoit?" demanded Captain St. Maurice, and one of the group half mumbled something. "You will fight when the Germans come to Quebec? I dare say you might, but I sometimes wonder where all the old spirit has evaporated to, that Grandpere Nadeau told us about last night. If your church were battered down by German guns, your priest shot, and your home pillaged, it would be a bit late for fine talk; you would be shouting for help like the Belgians, yes, and be thankful to see an Orangeiste from Ontario rushing to save your women and children, you wouldn't stop to ask how he had voted on the school question!"

"Keep cool, St. Maurice!" said Jack Cameron. "Let them think it over for a while." Just then the parish priest turned in at the gate and all the men greeted him respectfully.

"How do you do, Monsieur le Cure?" said Captain St. Maurice. "This is my friend Captain Cameron. I was just picturing to these men how dread-

ful it would have been to have had St. Norman attacked by Germans who would shoot you on the slightest excuse."

The good father paled somewhat at the unexpected greeting; he looked at his fine new church, his cosy little house in its garden, and felt vaguely troubled.

"But all these dreadful happenings are so far away—it is so hard to realize them," commenced the priest, then his natural cheerfulness reasserted itself and he exclaimed: "Bien! bien! I came to welcome you to St. Norman. I was desole this morning when I heard you had gone to Madame Marois instead of driving straight to the presbytere. I insist you come now, my old sister Marie is making a feast in your honour. It is so seldom I see anyone from the world."

After Father Joliette had hurried away to see to the preparations for his guests, and the two officers were packing their kit bags, Jack Cameron expressed some trepidation about his ignorance of rules and regulations to be conformed to in a priest's house.

"Well, that is rich," laughed Rene St. Maurice. "Do you think you are going to a monastery of La Trappe? You won't find the home any different from any other bachelor's, in fact you will find Father Joliette a good sight more free and easy than a stiff minister of your own dour Scotch faith." But the affectionate way Rene put his arm around his friend's shoulders proved that he would trust his life to a man of that same Scotch "dourness."

The small cracked mirror in which they were reflected could not show them another scene in France, when the fair and dark heads would again be close together as Jack Cameron carried wounded little Rene St. Maurice off the shell swept field to a place of safety.

The feast at the Presbytere proved almost too much for even St. Maurice's energetic nature until the young boy who worked for the priest announced that "le boss" of the Valconna Pulp Company had just driven up to Grandpere Nadeau's to engage men for the winter's "cut" on the Company's timber limits.

"Pray excuse me, father, I must get back to the men," said St. Maurice. "I will report in good time, Mademoiselle Joliette, to do justice to your supper."

Captain Cameron remained to smoke with their host. In quaint broken English and bad French they got along famously, laughing heartily at their own mistakes.

The latest arrival in St. Norman who was being noisily greeted on all sides was a type of French-Canadian with whom a man of St. Maurice's class considered it impossible to associate as with the good old habitants. Dark, fat, and slick, "Boss" Fortier was dressed in a loud suit, velvet waisted, bright yellow boots, and red tie, while several glass diamonds and a huge gold watch chain gave the fin-

ishing touches, not to be foolishly hidden under a furlined coat, that he wore carelessly thrown open. The younger men looked upon him with envy as quite the "Monsieur." His coming had always been the event of the Autumn for the men, and had caused no little flutter among the girls of St. Norman, and now he had not been five minutes in the place, and here were half a dozen men who could talk only of two grand officers, "en visite" at the presbytere.

CAPTAIN ST. MAURICE joining the men, Fortier took it as a mark of special interest in himself, and pushing up to the officer, thrust out a fat hand, saying with insufferable familiarity:

"Comment ca va, mon brave?"

For an instant Rene thought of resenting the address, then said to himself: "Bah! the pig knows no better. There is no use antagonizing him."

"What's this I hear? You want my men?" said the Boss, with would-be pleasantry, "I don't think they are such fools as to want to be shot."

"I am not seeking fools who want to be shot, but men who can fight to the last gasp," flung back Captain St. Maurice.

"Last week in Quebec," continued Fortier, "I saw some soldiers with one arm off, or a leg gone, leaving them as useless as a burnt out log."

"Perhaps I might remind you of the many men who lose their arms in saw-mills, and what do they get for that?"

There was no answer to Captain St. Maurice's question. "I ask again, what do such maimed men get but the verdict of having been careless of the rules of the Company? Do you mean to tell me you can guarantee these men if they hire with you, that they will not be killed by a falling tree, or cut with an axe, so that they lose a foot? And what about the toll every river takes of men on log 'drives'? What does a 'lumber king' care, when their poor bodies are found battered to pulp below the rapids, or worse yet, never found? When you are taken sick in the bush or crippled with rheumatism from the icy water, who takes care of you? The camp cook! because he is the only person around during the day."

"But I am not here to take the place of le bon Dieu who alone knows the fate in store for any of us. I grant you those soldiers you saw made terrible sacrifices, but they are the most cheerful men in the world, for they have done their duty to their country, and are upheld by that knowledge, and there isn't a man, woman, or child who doesn't admire them as heroes."

"Mademoiselle Juneau, wouldn't you care just as much for Jean Brodeur, if he came home wounded?" asked Captain St. Maurice, turning to a pretty dark eyed girl, standing near her fiancé.

"Of course I would," she answered, "and work for him too."

"He had better go, as he is assured of an easy time the rest of his days," sneered the shanty boss.

The hot blood rushed into Alphonse Juneau's olive cheeks, and the black eyes snapped as she said:

"Well, I know one thing, M'sieur Fortier, I won't let him go with you! But he could do no wrong if he were to follow wherever a gentleman such as Captain St. Maurice lead him."

FORTIER who cared nothing for a man's say was disconcerted by the girl's spirited attack and look of dislike.

Not since the last General Elections had St. Norman enjoyed such excite-



Boss Fortier was dressed in a loud suit.