

Wherein a Lad Sees Makers of History 19

"Or its methods—ahem!" interjects the colonel.

"And its private business," adds my uncle, looking daggers at Adderly, "by going to court."

Then they all rose to go to the dining-room; and as I stepped out to have a look down the street for Hamilton, I heard Colonel Adderly's last fling—"Pretty rascals, you gentlemen adventurers are, so shy and coy about law courts."

It was a dark night, with a few lonely stars in mid-heaven, a sickle moon cutting the horizon cloud-rim and a noisy March wind that boded snow from The Labrador, or sleet from the Gulf.

When Eric Hamilton left the Hudson's Bay Company's service at York Factory on Hudson Bay and came to live in Quebec, I was but a student at Laval. It was at my Uncle MacKenzie's that I met the tall, dark, sinewy, taciturn man, whose influence was to play such a strange part in my life; and when these two talked of their adventures in the far, lone land of the north, I could no more conceal my awe-struck admiration than a girl could on first discovering her own charms in a looking-glass. I think he must have noticed my boyish reverence, for once he condescended to ask about the velvet cap and green sash and long blue coat which made up the Laval costume, and in a moment I was talking to him as volubly as if he were the boy and I, the great Hudson's Bay trader.

"It makes me feel quite like a boy again," he had said on resuming conversation with Mr. Mac-