

had assisted me on one occasion in copying some old historical documents which I had hunted up in the Legislative Library. He had been introduced to me by the librarian, but I had forgotten his name. He was a first-rate penman, and had not only copied but translated the papers in an admirable manner. He was very young—not more than twenty probably—and some-how or other it struck me, when I noticed his retiring, subdued manner, that he was oppressed by the sense of some recent misfortune. I had intended questioning the librarian respecting him, but something occurred to prevent me carrying out my intention.

“I had given you up,” said the Abbé. “A moment later you would have missed us.” With these words the Abbé bade the stranger adieu and touched up the horse. As we passed rapidly over the rough pavement towards the gate leading to the country, my companion observed:

“That young man has friends at the place to which we are going. Indeed he was, at one time, high in the favour of the *Seigneur M. de Guercheville*; but some differences have unfortunately occurred between them.”

By this time we had passed through the gate and the Abbé's attention was directed to something else. We went through the pretty village of Beauport and caught a glimpse of Mountmorency sparkling in the morning sunlight. The country through which we drove was dotted by neat villas and churches with their tapering spires and quaint ornaments; but the farms appeared mostly of small size—one of the results, in fact, of the Seigniorial system which had been abolished a few years previously. In several places we saw by the wayside little crosses where, at that early hour, devout *habitants*, chiefly women, were kneeling. We met many of the natives—the men in red shirts or blouses, and the women in caps and stiff homespun dresses. The villages consisted of one-story, whitewashed, red-roofed houses, most of them clustered round the church and the Curé's residence. Now and then we would see a large, pretentious-looking building of stone or wood, surrounded by tall Lombardy poplars, maples, or noble elms, and giving the idea of comfort and wealth. These generally belonged to the *Seigneurs* who so long exercised feudal rights over the country, and are still the wealthiest men in the rural districts.

It was nearly dark when we arrived at our destination, which was a large village prettily sequestered by the side of a small stream just where it joined the St. Lawrence. The largest houses were mostly of stone, and some of them gave the evidence of age—indeed the Abbé pointed out several erected immediately after the fall of Quebec. The Chapel was a fine edifice of gray stone, with a lofty steeple surmounted by a cross, and ornamented by an old fashioned dial and some curiously carved images in niches on each side of the entrance. Only a few persons were moving about, but we could see the farmers busy at their barns, storing grain, or taking the cattle to water. As we drove we could see the Château des Ormeaux, the residence of *Seigneur de Guercheville*—a large, square building, over-shadowed by magnificent elms which gave the place its distinctive name.

At my request the Abbé left me at the house of a *habitant*, while he