

MARGUERITE:—A TALE OF FOREST LIFE IN THE NEW DOMINION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS IN ACADIA," &C.

(Concluded.)

CHAPTER I.—PART IV.

Soon after the foregoing conversation the party broke up, but not before Captain Hay promised Madame and Monsieur de Tourville to pay his respects to them at their château. Captain Hay and several of his brother officers then went off to their respective quarters, which were situated some distance from the Governor's residence. The moon was now rising above the western hills, and diffusing a silvery radiance over the bosom of the St. Lawrence, which swept tranquilly below the town. The churches and convents looked more quaint than ever in the dim light, which only made visible the darkness and gloom of the narrow streets. At that midnight hour one might, with hardly a stretch of the imagination, believe himself passing through some ancient town of Normandy or Bretagne.

All the cabarets appeared to be closed for the night as Osborne and his friends went by, but in two or three some chinks of light escaped through the shutters, and the sound of laughter showed that there were some revellers yet awake.

"It is not difficult to tell that there are a lot of *coureurs des bois* just now in town," said one of the party as they passed a small inn in a street near the water, from which there came snatches of an old French *chanson*. As the party came opposite the door, they paused for a moment, as some of the officers lived in a different direction and had to say "good night." At that moment the door of the inn suddenly opened and a man stepped upon the little platform in front of the building, apparently to see what the night was like. The light from the room, where several men could be seen seated at a table, brought his

figure out in full relief. He was dressed in the ordinary costume of a *coureur des bois*, red shirt, leggings of deer-skin, and a gaudy handkerchief tied around his head; but what made Hay start back in astonishment was the recognition of one he had not seen for many years. He could not mistake the deep-set eyes and gloomy features of the Acadian spy—Gaspard Leoville.

Before Hay had recovered from his surprise at so unexpected a meeting, the spy turned into the house, the door of which was locked immediately, for the former could hear the key turned in the lock. This *rencontre* naturally gave Hay matter for much reflection as he went home slowly by himself, for he parted from his friends at the door of the tavern. Seven years had passed since they had seen or heard of the spy. He was convinced that he could not be mistaken as to the identity of Gaspard, for the events which had impressed his face on his memory were of too startling a character to be easily forgotten. Nor was it strange that he should have been seen at that time and place—the rangers of the woods were made up of just such individuals as the spy. In all probability, ever since the fall of Louisbourg, Leoville had been wandering through the forests of the West, and trading among the Indian tribes. It was also most probable that he had been brought to Montreal in company with other *coureurs des bois* by the troubles in the Western country. Then the thought flashed across Hay's mind as he remembered Black Cloud's past career. Might he not have some connection with the great conspiracy of which Pontiac was at the head? He was certainly too formidable an enemy of the British not to be looked after.