

EPILOGUE

FORTY years have passed.

The sun is slowly setting on the sea-washed shores of France. Leaning on his cane, the old man looks out over the waste of waters to the west, as he has looked these two score years for the son who never comes. Bent are the stalwart shoulders, snow-white the once golden locks, yet about the lonely figure lingers something of the princely grace of a bygone day.

As the wide world darkens, and one by one break out the lights of the little fishing village, the last Laird of McNab turns away with a weary sigh.

"God forgive me," he murmurs. "I came into the world too late—a hundred years too late."

The bent shoulders tremble, the proud old head droops a little. On the soft night wind floats a smothered sob.

"My clansmen—O! My clansmen."

Heedless of all beneath its searching rays, on sweeps the sun across the watery wilderness. It shines on the hurrying lines in mid-ocean, the fishing smacks on the Newfoundland banks, the rock-bound New England coast. It gleams on the frowning ramparts of Quebec, the white homes of French Canada, the blue of the hurrying rivers, and the silent reaches of the Upper Ottawa.

It lights the long and lonely stretch of Pontiac woods (still wild and unkempt as in far-off days when ruled the McNab on the opposite shore), the great steam mill with its incessant booming, the miles of yellow lumber piles along the Madawaska. It glints on the green of the terraces, and flashes back from the metal-clad cupola of the princely mansion, which stands where once stood Kennell Lodge.

For the prophecy of Amelia Graham, in the fulness of