

"How do you deserve this? Do you know what you ask?"

"My Father, I know it is immense, and I deserve nothing: and in return I can offer nothing, not even that I will repent. And I have done no good in the world; but still perhaps I am worth the saving, as may be seen in the end. As for you — but — you will do a little wrong so that the end will be right. So?"

The priest's eyes looked out long and sadly at the man from under his venerable brows, as though he would see through him and beyond him to that end; and at last he spoke in a low, firm voice:

"Pierre, you have been a bad man; but sometimes you have been generous, and of some good acts I know —"

"No, not good," the other interrupted. "I ask *this* of your charity."

"There is the law, and my conscience."

"The law! the law!" and there was sharp satire in the half-breed's voice. What has it done in the West? Think, *mon Père!* Do you not know a hundred cases where the law has done wrong? There was more justice before we had law. Law —" And he named over swiftly, scornfully, a score of names and incidents, to which Father Corrainé listened intently. "But," said Pierre, gently, at last, "but for your conscience, ah, that is greater than law. For you are a good man and a wise man; and you know that I shall pay my debts of every kind some sure day. That should satisfy *your* justice, but you are merciful for the moment, and you will spare until the time be come, until the corn is ripe in the ear. Why should I plead? It is foolish. Still, it is my