

heart. Rosalba felt it such, as extending her hand to raise him up, she murmured :

"Mr. Phipps, I too thank God that you were saved! Everything is in that. The instrument is nothing."

When they had both recovered from their surprise and emotion, they conversed together a long time, Walter, at his own request, receiving from Rosalba all the particulars of his rescue, which he constantly interrupted with passionate exclamations of thanks. What the young merchant, on his part, communicated to the girl, was not made known till many years after, and even then only imperfectly, but it is certain that he declared his entire devotion to her and protested that his life and fortune were at her disposal. Whether he had heard it from others, or whether Rosalba herself hinted the fact, Walter knew that she was bound to a prior love, and consequently did not importunately press his suit, beyond the fervent and emphatic assurance that he would be always and everywhere at her service, and that if ever she needed aid or comfort of any kind, she should apply to him unreservedly. That there was more than mere formality in these words, as meant by Walter and as understood by Rosalba, the sequel will show. Meanwhile, we shall close this interview.

That same day Walter Phipps returned to the city with his friends. Not many days after, he sent Rosalba (with her permission) a small gift, which, it was understood between them, should be regarded as both a memorial and a pledge.

It was a silver oar of exquisite workmanship, with this inscription :

R. V.

APRIL 5th, 1837.

W. P.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SEPARATION.

In times of revolution, events march with startling rapidity. One day breaks up the hopes and calculations of the preceding, to be itself effaced by the unforeseen complications of the morrow. The rebellion of 1837, though trifling in comparison with other similar movements, was no exception to this rule, chiefly because it happened among a very excitable people, and also, because the leaders really did not know the extent or probable results of the agitation which they were fomenting. History has not recorded the personal suffering, the domestic sacrifices, and the social disruptions which this little insurrection occasioned, yet if the truth were known it would be found that in the Richelieu parishes, and in most of the northern counties, from Berthier to there, there is hardly a family which does not bear to this day some or other trace of the trouble by which they were affected at that time.

The summer of 1837 was spent by the malcontents in plans of organization. From St. Eus-

tache to St. Hyacinthe and from Chateaugay to Sorel, emissaries were quietly at work, and haranguing groups of them at night in barns or isolated houses. It is certain that the idea of the majority was a pacific agitation, in the shape of monster petitions addressed to the Provincial and Imperial legislatures, and mass-meetings at important points to back these resolutions by a show of determination and unanimity. But what with the articles of the *Vindicator*, the violence of several young leaders, and the impudence of certain itinerant speakers, it was difficult to maintain this programme, and still more difficult to determine what sudden and compromising action might be taken by influential persons; which would draw the whole party in its wake.

It was a time, too, when every man was required to take sides, one way or other. In country places, more especially, where communication is difficult, and among an unlettered population, where verbal messages are necessary instead of written despatches, it was imperative that a man should know whether his neighbour could be trusted or not. The patriots had their pass-words and other cabalistic signs. The bureaucrats were hemmed in among their enemies, their least movements were watched, and communication among themselves well nigh impossible. To a person of Samuel Varny's fiery and fearless temperament this state of things was intolerable. As he had before refused to be catechized on the subject of his political preferences, so now he resolved to be unfettered in his movements. His patient, quiescent attitude gradually disappeared, and he assumed a position of defiance. He was aware of all that was said against him, in public and in private, in the village taverns, at the church-door on Sunday, and in the secret conclaves of his enemies. He knew, too, that a band of small farmers in his neighbourhood, prominent among whom was Bavaud—men who owed him many a personal grudge—had now openly vowed to ruin him. But all this did not prevent him from going about as usual, working in his fields, and driving into Montreal whenever he had business, though his enemies said that he went there to consult with the military authorities, and act the odious character of an informer.

June and July passed thus. In August the excitement ran very high, and Mr. Varny experienced the first of the misfortunes which the rebellion was destined to bring upon him. As we have seen, he had all along been on the best of terms with Edgar Martin. He had favoured the latter's suit with his daughter, and looked forward fondly to their probable marriage. He was acquainted with Edgar's political opinions, and had respected them, as he required that his own should be respected. Out of deference to Mr. Varny, the young man had moderated many of his views, and persisted in the resolution he had formed during the winter of avoiding political assemblies, and taking active part in political organization. But in August Edgar lost his head completely. He could not resist the tide of