

until Maxime was free to return to France, and he would grow strong and well, and everybody concerned would be happy. It would be madness, she urged, for Maxime to put himself in the power of French law until such time as his innocence was officially acknowledged.

But Maxime thought otherwise. His innocence had been declared, and would sooner or later be acknowledged. The manly and honourable thing to do was to trust to the generosity of his adopted land. To France he would go, and boldly throw himself upon her mercy.

"He is right, Virginia," said Roger, fearing the while that secret jealousy influenced his decision.

"He is right," echoed George Trent, with no hidden thoughts at all.

Virginia held her peace, though her heart was full; and the ultimate destination of the *Bella Cuba* was France.

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France did not disappoint Maxime's trust, but months passed before he was a free man. Meantime hope had given him new life. His sister