

The man who picked him up had been successfully defended by him in a charge of murder, and out of gratitude took him to himself in his secluded hut, on the "Vadrome Mountain", where he nursed him into recovery. But when Charley Steele awakened from his stupor in his rescuer's hovel, his mind was a complete blank, all his past was forgotten and he was a new or "phantom" Charley. Later on his mind was restored by a medical operation performed by a skilful Parisian surgeon who had been brought to him by the Curé of the near by village of Chaudiere. The Curé was the physician's brother.

After Charley Steele's restoration, he would not, however, return to his former life because by his so doing he would bring not only unhappiness upon the wife, Kathleen, whom he had left behind and who, supposing him to be dead, had married again, but also disgrace upon her brother who was guilty of stealing trust moneys, a crime which his return to the old life would expose, because he would have to vindicate himself from being the culprit as he was falsely believed to be, since the stolen money had been deposited with him in trust.

After some months he left his friend's abode in the mountain and secured employment in an old tailor's shop in the village of Chaudiere. Here he became acquainted with one Rosalie Evanturel, the heroine of the story, an employe in the local post office there. His life at Chaudiere, moulded by his past shrouded in mystery, and Rosalie's part in it, form the burden of the story.

Mr. Parker in assuming the role of an exponent to some extent of the religious beliefs and moral natures of the French people of Quebec, went beyond his depth. The author of "The Right of Way" falls far short of competency to do justice to the religious side of his characters, notwithstanding his reputation for broad mindedness. He seems in dealing with them to be laboring under the disadvantage of preconceived misconceptions.

The river men at the Cote Dorion came in for the first manifestation of his incapacity to acquit himself generously of his self-imposed task. These were the men who nearly murdered Charley Steele, Catholics who "held religion in superstitious respect, however far from practising its precepts." There was no need, whatever, for this animadversion. A bar-room where men were drinking could and did easily furnish the occasion for an assault without the aid of religion or superstition. Charley Steele, the foppish young lawyer with his monocle in his eye standing near the bar,