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TOO STRANGE NOT TO BE TRUE.

BY LADY GEORGIANA FULLERTON.

PART II.—CHAPTER I.—CONTINUED.

"AND why not?" cried Madame d'Auban gaily. "We might both be suns, or Henri might be the sun, and I the moon and revolve around him. What do you say to this idea, Monsieur d'Auban? Shall we be king and queen of the Illinois?"

Her husband looked up into her face as she bent lovingly over him, and said with a smile, "The hereditary instinct is still at work, I see, Madame. How little we thought," he added, turning again to Father Maret, "how much ambition there is still in this deceitful woman's heart! She has set up a perfect sovereignty over the hearts of this people, and is dreaming of fresh conquests."

"Ah! I took you both in. Well, Lown I am ambitious, but it is a little your doing, reverend Father. When one has once realized that principle of yours, of working towards an end, and doing everything with a purpose, there is no knowing where it may lead one. It is a little like the traveller's story of the Flying Dutchman—when his leg was wound up he could never stop again. I want to convert thousands of souls; to draw all the neighbouring tribes into the fold of the Church; to have as many missions here as in Paraguay."

"Then, Madame, I see no hope of rest for you on this side of the grave," answered the Father with a smile. "I never expected to see you so fond of work."

"There is no saying what indolent natures, when once roused, will arrive at. Do not you notice, reverend Father, great varieties of character and habits amongst these Indian nations?"

"Very striking ones, I should say. The Arkansas and the Algonquins, as well as the Illinois, have received Christianity with much willingness and are attached to the French. With the Dacotahs and the Natches, though in some respects more civilized, very little progress has been made. The Dacotahs and Choktaws are fierce, warlike, races, and, though they call themselves our friends, are not quite to be trusted."

"I often think," d'Auban observed, "that this colony is living on a volcano. Only think how insignificant is the number of our countrymen in comparison with the multitude of natives and of negro slaves we have imported; a mere handful, after all! Things are in a state in which an accidental spark might kindle a flame from New Orleans to the sources of the Mississippi."

"Here at least," said his wife, "we can feel quite in safety; our dear Indians would never turn against us."

"No; because they are almost all Christians," said Father Maret. "Every nation which belongs to the Prayer, as they call our religion, is attached to France. The tie between them and their pastors is a se-