

indignant protest, but stooped and kissed the cheek that had crimsoned at the mention of her lover's name, and mounting his horse, was soon out of sight on the long, dangerous road that led to Port Royal. Few men at this time could have made this journey in safety. But this man was both trusted and feared, and thus sheltered, he rode fearlessly into the dark forest and the coming night.

Madrine Bourge left her companions and walked rapidly and alone to her home. She was mistress of her father's house. Her mother had been dead some years. Her father had not married again and she was the only child.

It was near sunset; the weather was raw and chilly, and she built a fire of dry logs on the broad fireplace; and as its mellow blaze curled around the logs and roared up the wide chimney, she stopped her work and gazed intently into it. The ruddy light fell upon her form and face, and the last hot words spoken at the inn repeated themselves in every lineament.

As she stood with her bare, brown arms on the top of a straight-backed kitchen chair, and the mellow light of the fire flushing her sharp-lined expressive face, she was beautiful,—this Acadian maiden of eighteen years—but it is not the beauty of culture. It was the beauty of the shapely, clean-limbed forest tree, and the curving, foaming mountain stream. Here was a wild beauty, and there was reason for it.

When but five years old she had been captured by the Micmac Indians, and had lived with them till she was fifteen. And now her thoughts were of that free life and wild people, and the crackling camp-fire that she had unconsciously built was a medium of communication with the past existence.

But her reverie was short, for her father soon came into the house with Baptiste Doucet, her betrothed husband. Receiving them with her accustomed greeting, she set about her household duties and the supper was soon ready. At the table neither of the men spoke of the proclamation on the tree. Madrine was surprised at this, and during the evening tried to get some opportunity to speak with Baptiste alone, for she wanted to tell him of the talk with her grandfather. But the men seemed more than usually occupied with business affairs, and Baptiste went away much earlier than was his usual custom on such visits, and Madrine and her father separated for the night without a word upon the subject.

Alone in her neat little sleeping-room, she thought long and earnestly of the cruelty to be practised upon the people who had been to her like her own for so many years, and she decided to tell her feelings freely to Baptiste on the morrow.

Early in the morning her father was up and preparing for a journey, telling Madrine he was going to Pisiquid on business that would keep him from home three days. Madrine asked no questions, for her father often had business away from home. Nor was she surprised when he took from its place on the deer-horns over the door the long-barrelled French musket, and drawing out the partridge charge, loaded it with a bullet, and filled the great powder horn with powder and a leathern pouch with bullets; for this was the season for shooting moose and deer, and she knew there were twenty miles of unbroken forest on his proposed journey.

These preparations completed, Jean Bourge bade his daughter be mindful of the house and herself, and kissing her, mounted his strong horse and rode rapidly away, Madrine watching him till he passed out of sight beyond the willow trees that lined the roadway.

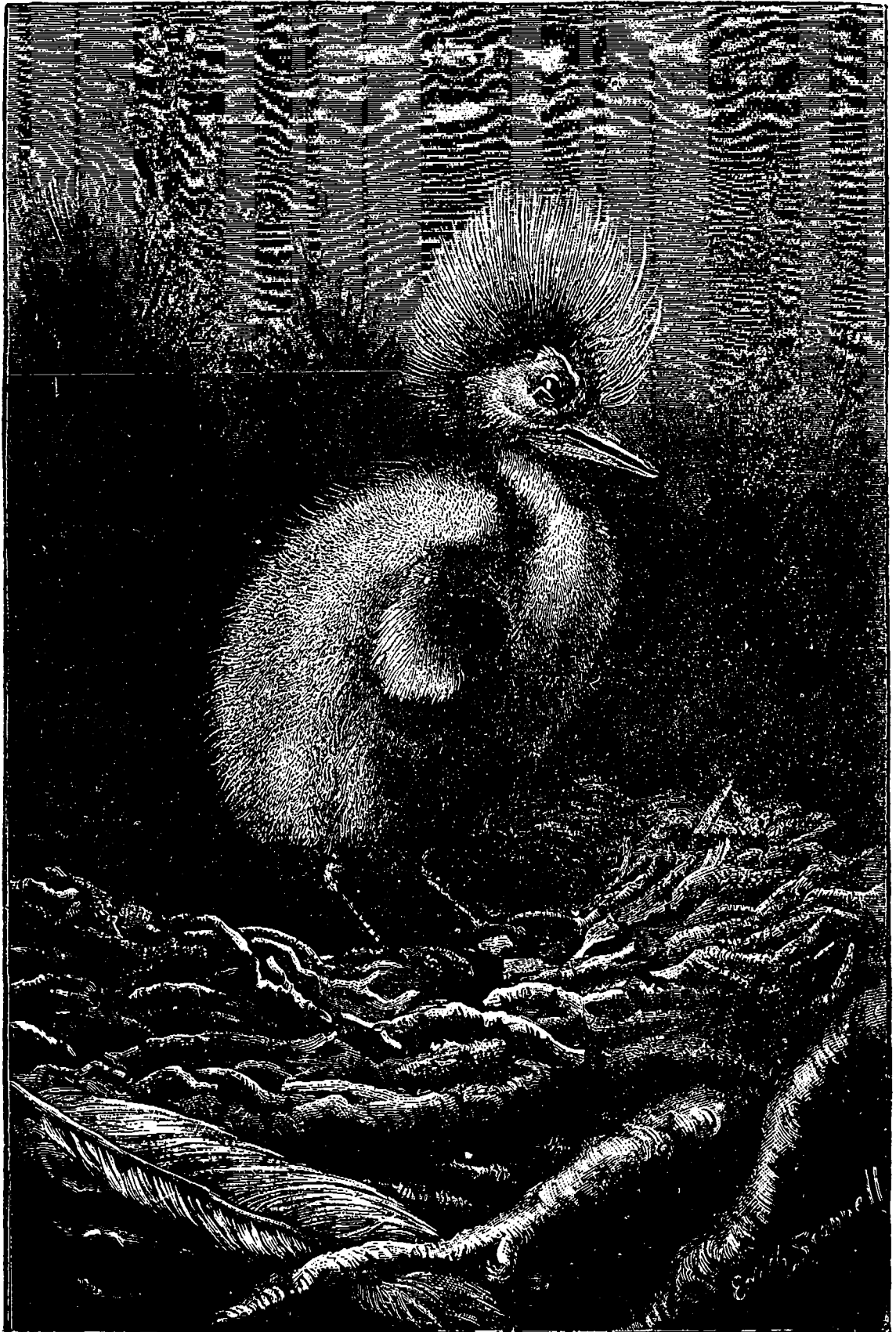
Expecting Baptiste would be in during the forenoon, and thus cheered from her

father's absence, she went about her work. But noon came, and no sign of Baptiste. Alarmed at this she enquired of a neighbor passing, and learned that a party of horsemen from Port Royal had gone through the village early in the morning, on their way to surprise and kill the Indians encamped at Chinictou, and that her father and Baptiste had joined them. It was at this place and with this people that she had lived the last three years of her Indian life, and the thought that they were to be killed like wolves for a reward, and by her own father and betrothed husband, was hard to endure.

With a sad, indignant heart she shut herself in the house, and sat down by the flax-wheel in front of the window that faced the Bason of Minas—a broad bay into which the high tides of the Bay of Fundy flow with great rapidity. The house was near the shore, and directly across to the northward the Indian village of Chinictou stood, twenty miles distant by water, but by land a two days' journey.

She sat long at the window looking out on the blue waters of the Bason, and across it to the Indian village. The tide was flowing majestically in over the broad flats, and creeping noiselessly up the perpendicular banks of its more rugged shores. It was now three o'clock. All day the sun had shone with the brightness of summer, and over the surface of the water there rose an invisible mist, through which, in the clear, dry, autumnal atmosphere, the opposite shore of the Bason and the high Bluff of Blomidon appeared nearer than they really were.

Madrine's practised eye saw the high lands of the Indian village, and the blue smoke curling up from the wigwam fires. How far away it was, she did not know, but she looked long upon it, and thought of what another day would bring upon the unsuspecting inhabitants, she knew that it never had seemed half so near as now. A shadow came over her face, as she rose from the window, and a look of determination in her eyes.



YOUNG BUT NOT BEAUTIFUL.