

THE CAPTAIN OF THE *ALBEMARLE* 3

manned, whose victories at sea remained our only hope of counterbalancing the reverses we had suffered on land? I relaxed none of my military manner as I replied to the beauty—for such she was, give her her due.

"It is nothing to call for paroxysms, Miss Simpson. Merely some sailors doing their duty."

"Duty, indeed! Is it the duty of any men to imprison others simply because they have no English?"

The two impressed rascals were, indeed, chattering French at the top of their lungs, and I had had to raise my hand to silence them before I could hear what Miss Simpson was saying. Her more genteel companion was waiting for her at the foot of the hill, and I courteously suggested that I should be pleased to escort her in safety past this brawling group to join the older female; but the girl stood her ground with a heightened colour, which I might have deemed vastly becoming had I had any eyes whatever for women's looks in those days.

"Can you not see, Captain Mathews, that these are no seamen, but honest habitants—Jacques Michaud, from the Chaudière, and his brother-in-law, Gustave Tremblays."

"Honest?" I spake testily. "I have occasion to know somewhat of the record of this particular pair of scoundrels. 'Twill be no loss to the community when they are safely aboard ship, being treated to the cat-o'-nine-tails with liberality!"