

INTRODUCTION

THE strange French Canadian marriage law on which this novel is founded has been, peculiar as it may appear, endorsed by British Courts in the province of Quebec. It is but natural that the French-speaking portion of the population, which, it may be added, greatly outnumbers that of the English, should uphold the claim, put forth by the Catholic Church, as to its supremacy (supremacy even greater than that of the Civil Law) in all matters pertaining to the sanctioning of marriage; but, upon the other hand, it is not to be wondered at that adherents of other denominations bitterly resent such claim, and are contending that the Courts, by their mandates, have practically made the faith of the Catholic Church a State religion in the vast province of Quebec. Although this marriage law has been in existence ever since the conquest of Canada by the British, it is, for reasons shown in the novel, in reality only now becoming in some