

One of the first and most eager friends of *The Battle of the Strong* was Mrs. Langtry, now Lady de Bathe, who, born in Jersey, and come of an old Jersey family, was well able to judge of the fidelity of the life and scene which it depicted. She greatly desired the novel to be turned into a play, and so it was. The adaptation, however, was lacking in much, and though Miss Marie Burroughs and Maurice Barrymore played in it, success did not attend its dramatic life.

*The Battle of the Strong* was called an historical novel by many critics, but the disclaimer which I made in the first edition I make again. *The Seats of the Mighty* came nearer to what might properly be called an historical novel than any other book which I have written save, perhaps, *A Ladder of Swords*. *The Battle of the Strong* is not without faithful historical elements, but the book is essentially a romance, in which character was not meant to be submerged by incident; and I do not think that in this particular the book falls short of the design of its author. There was this enormous difference between life in the Island of Jersey and life in French Canada, that in Jersey, tradition is heaped upon tradition, custom upon custom, precept upon precept, until every citizen of the place is bound by innumerable cords of a code from which he cannot free himself. It is a little island, and that it is an island is evidence of a contracted life, though, in this case, a life which has real power and force. The life in French Canada was also traditional, and custom was also somewhat tyrannous, but it was part of a great continent in which the expansion of the man and of a people was inevitable. Tradition gets somewhat battered in a new land, and even where, as in French Canada, the priest and the Church have such supervision, and can bring such pressure to bear that every man must feel its influence; yet there is a happiness, a blitheness, and an exhilaration even in the most obscure quarter of French Canada which cannot be observed in the Island of Jersey. In Jersey the custom of five hundred years ago still