

TOO STRANGE NOT TO BE TRUE.

BY LADY GEORGINA FULLERTON.

Neither the magnificence of the scenery nor the vivacity of the denizens of the surrounding grove, attracted much of M. de Chamblé's attention.

"Do I really see, not a cabin or a hut, not one of those abominable wigwags, but a real house fit for civilized people, my dear sir, there, just as it stands, furniture, birds, flowers, and all? What may be the price of this charming habitation?"

"D'Auban named the sum he thought it fair to ask for the plantation, and said the house was included in the purchase. M. de Chamblé took out his pocket-book and made a brief calculation.

"It will do perfectly well," he exclaimed. "The interest of this sum will not exceed the rent we should have had to pay for a house at New Orleans. It is exactly what we wanted."

"You have been fortunate to hit upon it, then," said d'Auban with a smile, "for I suppose that from the mouth of the Mississippi to the sources of the Missouri you would not have found such a habitation as my poor friend's folly. However, as Providence has conducted you to this spot, and you think the establishment suit you, we better go over the house and afterwards visit the plantations, in order that you may judge of the present condition and the prospects of the concession."

"I do not much care about that, my dear sir. My knowledge on agricultural subjects is very limited, and I am no judge of crops. Indeed, I greatly doubt if I should know a field of maize from one of the barley, or distinguish between a coffee and a cotton plantation."

"D'Auban looked at astonishment at his companion. "Is this a cunning adventurer, or the most simple of men?" was the thought in his mind as he led M. de Chamblé into the house, who was at once as much delighted with the inside as he had been with the outside of the building. The entrance-chamber was decorated with the skins of various wild animals, and the horns of antelopes ingeniously arranged in the form of trophies. Bows and arrows, hatchets, tomahawks, and clubs, all instruments of Indian warfare, were hanging against the walls. There was a small room on one side of this hall fitted up with exquisite specimens of Canadian workmanship, and possessing several articles of European furniture, which had been conveyed at an immense expense from New Orleans. There was an appearance of civilization, if not of what we should call comfort, in this parlor, as well as in two sleeping chambers, in which real beds were to be found; a verandah, which formed a charming sitting-room in hot weather, and at the back of the house a well-fitted up kitchen, but the finishing touch to M. de Chamblé's ecstasies.

"One could really fancy oneself in Europe," he exclaimed, rubbing his hands with delight.

"Do not think Madame de Mouldau will betray her eyes when she sees this charming pavilion. It is really more than we could have expected."

"I should think so, indeed," said d'Auban, laughing. "You might have been led on such a home in the New World."

"Ah, the New World—the New World, my dear sir. Don't you find it dreadfully uncivilized? I cannot accustom myself to the manners of the savages. Their countenances are so wild, their habits so unpleasant, there is something so—so, in short, so savage in all their ways that I cannot feel at all at home with them. By-the-by, there is only one thing I do not like in this delightful habitation."

"What is it?"

"I am afraid it is a very solitary residence. You see the Indian servant, our negro boy, Madame de Mouldau, and myself, we do not compose a very formidable garrison."

"But my house is at a stone's throw from this one. In the winter you can see through those trees, and then the wigwags of our laborers are scattered about at no great distance."

"Ah, your laborers live in wigwags! Horrible things, I think; but I suppose they are used to them. Have you many savages then, in your employment?"

"I have some Indian laborers, but they are Christians, and no longer deserve the name of savages. I like them better than the negroes. My French servants and I live in the house I spoke of."

"Oh, then it is all charming, all perfect. With a loud cry of 'A moi mes amis, Messieurs les Sauvages are upon us!' we could call you to our assistance. Well, my dear sir, I wish to conclude the purchase of this place as soon as possible. Will it suit your convenience if I give you a cheque on Messrs. Dumont et Compagnie, New Orleans?"

"Certainly. I have no doubt they will undertake to transmit the amount to M. de Harlay's bankers in Paris."

"I hope we may be allowed to take possession of the house without much delay. Madame de Mouldau is so weary of the vile hut where we have spent so many weeks."

"I can take upon myself to place the pavilion at once at your disposal for a few days, and you can then make up your mind at leisure about concluding the purchase."

"Thank you, my dear sir; but my mind is, I assure you, quite made up. I am sure we could go further and fare worse; the saying was never more applicable."

"But you are not at all acquainted yet with the state or the value of the concession. You have not gone over the accounts of the last year."

"Is that necessary?"

"Indispensable. I should say," d'Auban answered, rather coldly.

"It would be quite impossible, I suppose, to let us have the house without a residence, but I do not see how I am to manage the business of the concession. Is not that what you call it?"

"D'Auban, more puzzled than ever by the simplicity of this avowal, exclaimed, 'But in the name of patience, sir, what

can you want a house for in this country, unless you intend to work the land? You do not mean, I suppose, to throw it out of cultivation and sell the slaves?"

"O no! I suppose that would not be right. There are slaves, too. I had not thought of that. Who has managed it all since M. de Harlay went away?"

"I have."

"Then you will help me with your advice?" This idea made M. de Chamblé brighten up like a person who suddenly sees a ray of light in a dark wood.

"Oh yes, of course, everything must go on as usual, and you will put me in the way of it all."

"I now propose," said d'Auban, "that we take some refreshment at my house, where you can see the accounts, and then that we should go over the plantations."

"By all means, by all means," cried M. de Chamblé, trying to put a good face on the matter. "And as we walk along, you can point out the principal things that have to be attended to in the management of a concession."

"During the remainder of the day d'Auban took great pains to explain to his guest the nature and capabilities of his proposed purchase, and the amount of its value as an investment. M. de Chamblé listened with great attention, and assented to everything. Two or three times he interrupted him with such remarks as these: 'She will like the low couch in the parlor?' or 'Madame de Mouldau can sit in the verandah on the summer evenings?' or again, 'I hope the noise of the birds and insects will not annoy Madame de Mouldau. Do you think, my dear sir, the slaves could drive them away?'"

"I am afraid that would be a task beyond their power," d'Auban said as gravely as he could. "But depend upon it, after the first few days your daughter will get so accustomed to the sound as scarcely to hear it. 'I am afraid,' he added, 'she must have suffered very much during the voyage up the river?'"

"Oh yes, she has suffered very much," the old man answered; and then he hastened to change the subject by asking some question about crops, which certainly evinced an incredible absence of the most ordinary knowledge and experience in such matters."

Before they parted, M. de Chamblé and d'Auban agreed that in the afternoon of the following day he should remove with his daughter to St. Agathe. D'Auban offered to fetch them himself in his boat and to send a large party of their luggage, and he arranged that he should, very much hesitated a little, and then said that, if he would not take it amiss, he should beg of him not to come himself, but only to send his boatman. Madame de Mouldau was so unaccustomed to the sight of strangers, and in such delicate health, that her efforts she would make to express her gratitude to Colonel d'Auban would tax her strength too severely. He felt a little disappointed, but of course assented. The following morning he went through the rooms of the pavilion, arranged the furniture, and conveying from his own house some of the most over-abundant articles it contained to the chamber Madame de Mouldau was to occupy.

"Antoine," he said to his servant, who was in the kitchen at St. Agathe, storing it with provisions, "just go home and fetch me the two pictures in my study; the walls here look so bare."

"But Monsieur's own room will look very dull without them," answered Antoine, who by no means approved of the arrangement, and in addition he had been going on all the morning in his master's house.

"Never mind, I want them here; and bring some nails and some string with you."

A little water-color view of a castle on a cliff and a totem pole copy of the Madonna della Seggiola soon ornamented the lady's bed-room, whilst a selection from his scanty library gave a home-like appearance to the parlor. A basket full of grapes was placed on the table, and then Therese came in with an immense nosegay in her hand.

"Ah! that is just what I wanted," d'Auban exclaimed.

"For the nest of the white dove," she answered, with the sudden lighting up of the eye which supplies the place of a smile in an Indian face.

"Oh, you see we have found a cage for your wounded bird, Therese, and now we shall have to tame her."

"Ah," cried Therese, putting her hand to her mouth—a token of admiration amongst the Indians—you have brought her pictures, which will not fade like my poor flowers."

"But she may get tired of the pictures, and you may bring her, if you like, fresh flowers every day."

"Look," said Therese, pointing to the river. "There is your boat; they are coming."

"So they are. I did not expect them so soon."

He sent Antoine to meet the strangers and conduct them to the house, and walked across the wooded lawn to his own home. All the evening he felt unsettled. In his monotonous life an event of any sort was an unusual excitement. He went in and out of the house, paced restlessly up and down the margin of the stream. His eyes were continually turning towards the pavilion, from the chimney of which, for the first time for three years, smoke was issuing. He watched that blue curling smoke, and felt as if it warmed his heart. Perhaps he had suffered from a sense of loneliness more than he was quite aware of, and that thought of those helpless beings close at hand, of whom he knew a little, but who inspired him with a vague interest, was an unconscious relief. He pictured them to himself in their new home. He wondered what impression the first sight of it had made on Madame de Mouldau, and then he tried to fancy what she would like. Therese thought her beautiful, and the German overseer said she was handsome. She was not, in that case, like her father. Would he feel disappointed when he saw her? Would she turn out to be a good-looking woman with white cheeks and yellow hair, such as an Indian and a German boor would admire, one because it was the first of the sort she had seen, and the other because he had not known any others. He missed his picture a little. The room, as Antoine had said, would look dull without them. Perhaps they had not attracted her notice at all, or if they had, she did not perceive care at

all about them. He grew tired of thinking, but could not banish the subject from his mind. As the shades of evening deepened, and the crescent moon arose amidst myriads of stars, "the common people of the sky," as Sir Henry Wootton calls them, showed one by one in the blue vault of heaven, and were pictured in the mirror of the smooth broad river, he still wandered about the grove, whence he could see St. Agathe and the window of the chamber which he supposed was Madame de Mouldau's. There was a light in it—perhaps she was reading one of his books—perhaps she was gazing on the dark woods and shining river, and thinking of a far-distant home. She was weeping, perhaps, or praying, or sleeping. "Again," he impatiently exclaimed, "again at this guessing work! What a fool I am! What are these people to me, and why on earth have they come here?"

That last question he was destined very often to put to himself, with more or less of curiosity, of anxiety, and it might be, of pain, as time went on.

The purchaser of St. Agathe was enchanted with his new possession, and began in earnest, as he considered, to apply himself to his new pursuits as an agriculturist and planter; but the absurd mistakes which attended his first attempts at the management of his property, increased d'Auban's astonishment that a man so unfitted for business should ever have thought of becoming a settler. Instruction and advice were simply thrown away on M. de Chamblé. He might as well have talked to a child about the management of a plantation, and he plainly foresaw that unless some more experienced person were entrusted with the business, the concession might be as well at once given up. At the end of a few days he frankly told him as much, and advised him to engage some other emigrant to act as his agent, or to join him as a partner in the speculation.

M. de Chamblé eagerly caught at the idea, and proposed to d'Auban himself to enter into partnership with him.

"Indeed, my dear Colonel," he urged, "you will be doing a truly charitable action. Whom else could I trust? I know of no one who would do this kind of business for me, and I have not more confidence than of the natives."

"Not half as much, I fear," said d'Auban; "but you could write to M. Dumont and ask him to look out for you at New Orleans."

"And in the meantime ruin the plantation and go out of my mind. M. d'Auban, do consider my position."

There was an eager, wistful expression on the old man's face, which at once touched and provoked d'Auban, and he said to himself in that position "I was his inward exclamation. He was not in a very good humor that day. He could not help feeling a little hurt at the manner in which, whilst he was assisting her father in every possible way, and showering kindness upon them, Madame de Mouldau avoided him. M. de Chamblé had asked him one day to call at St. Agathe, and assured him that, much as she dreaded the sight of strangers, she really did wish to see his acquaintance.

"D'Auban said he would go with him, and he said he would wait for him a few minutes till he had finished directing some letters which a traveller was going to take with him that evening. M. de Chamblé sat down, and as each letter was thrown on the table, he read the direction. One of them was to a Prince Mitroskoff at St. Petersburg. As they were walking to St. Agathe, he asked d'Auban if he had ever been in Russia.

"Yes," was the answer. "I was there for some years."

"How long ago, my dear sir?"

"I left about five years ago."

"Were you in the Russian service?"

"Yes, I commanded a regiment of artillery. And you, M. de Chamblé, have you ever been at St. Petersburg?"

"Oh, I have been all over the world," M. de Chamblé answered, with a shrug, and then began to chatter in his random sort of way, passing from one subject to another without allowing time for any comments. When they arrived at the pavilion, he begged d'Auban to wait in the parlor, and he went to fetch Madame de Mouldau. In a few minutes he returned, and said she had a bad headache, and begged M. d'Auban to excuse her. Several days elapsed since then, and no message was sent to invite his return. He felt a little angry with the lady, and still more with himself, for caring whether she saw him or not.

Foolish as all this was, it did not incline him to a favorable consideration of M. de Chamblé's proposal.

"You are so clever," the latter pleaded. "You know all about this concession, and you manage your own so beautifully, and you understand so well how to behave to the natives. I speak civilly to them, and they laugh, and if I find fault they turn their backs upon me, and make remarks in their own language, which I have every reason to suppose are not over and above polite. We are not in any particular hurry about profits; I do not mind letting you into the secret. We have got a large sum of money at the banker's at New Orleans, and I can draw upon them if necessary. You would then make all the bargains for us with Messieurs les Sauvages, and I need not have anything to say to them. I cannot tell you how happy it would be to me, and Madame de Mouldau also."

"Indeed!" d'Auban said, with a rather scornful smile.

"Of course you would make your own conditions. I assure you that I look upon it as a providential event to have met with such a friend as you have been to me in this land of savages and alligators. By the way, I forgot to tell you how narrowly I escaped yesterday one of those horrible animals."

"Your reliance on Providence seems to me to have been carried to excess," d'Auban said. "Suppose we had not met, what would you have done? Your daughter could not have endured the ordinary hardships of a settler's life. Had it not been for St. Agathe?"

"Aye, and for Colonel d'Auban, what would have become of us? But you see she would come to Louisiana, and when we got to New Orleans nothing would serve her but to come on to this place. What could I do?"

D'Auban laughed. "Is it, then, the

new fashion in France for parents to obey their children?"

"Ah! ce que femme veut Dieu le veut! One cannot refuse her anything."

"Perhaps she has had some great sorrow. Has she lost her husband lately?"

"I suppose she has suffered everything a woman can suffer," the old man answered, in a tone of feeling which touched d'Auban.

"She has one great blessing left," he kindly said—"an affectionate father. O no, no! what can such a one as I do for her? But what I meant was that if she is bent upon this, she must be prepared to believe it."

"But with regard to the partnership, M. d'Auban,"

"Well, I am sure you will excuse my speaking plainly, M. de Chamblé. I perfectly admit that you cannot manage your property yourself, but at the same time I would greatly prefer your applying to some other colonist to join you in the undertaking."

"What is the use of talking to me of other colonists? Is there a single person in this neighborhood whom you would really recommend to me as a partner? Only consider how I am situated."

"Et que diable est-il venu faire dans cette galère?" muttered d'Auban, and then said out loud: "But it is impossible to conclude an arrangement of this kind in an off-hand manner. There must be an agreement drawn up and signed before witnesses."

"By all means, my dear sir, as many as you please."

"But such formalities are not easily accomplished in a place like this."

"Then, for heaven's sake, let us dispense with them! The case lies in a nutshell. I have purchased this land for the sake of the little bijou of a house upon it; and as regards the plantation, I am much in the same position as a Milord Anglais. I once heard of who bought St. Agathe, and was surprised to find, when he brought it home, that it did not set of its own accord. I have used my best endeavors to master the subject. I have tried to assume the manners of a planter; but, *chassez le naturel, et revient au galop*, and I find myself back as fast as possible to my starting-point. There are things a man can do, and others he can't. I was not made for a colonist."

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE CANADIAN CONFEDERATION.

WITH CERTAIN CONSIDERATIONS AS TO THE INFLUENCE OF CATHOLICITY ON ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

FROM THE DISCOVERIES OF CAPTAIN TO THE DEATH OF CHAMPLAIN, A.D. 1535-1635.

III.

Champlain began the foundation of Quebec in July, 1608. His choice of a site for the new town was indeed happy. The position of the old Indian village of Stadacona had previously suggested itself to Cartier as a spot so close to the Gulf as not only to permit, but secure easy communication enough with the ocean, and inward to control, by means of the facilities offered by the St. Lawrence, the interior of the gigantic empire of New France. Champlain fixed upon a site a short distance from the spot whereon Cartier had erected his fort as that offering the greatest advantages for the erection of the rude buildings destined to form the first permanent settlement in Canada. The place so selected, immediately to the right of the river St. Lawrence, and called Kebec by the natives in the vicinity. Stadacona had evidently disappeared in some of the internal convulsions which must have, during the period following the departure of Cartier, distributed the aborigines, and the new settlement with a firm and gracious sway. His powers, or "instructions," as they were termed, gave him supreme and absolute authority. He was vested with the chief command on land and sea, in peace and in war, empowered to do everything, and anything he deemed necessary to maintain and preserve the countries under his control in obedience to the King, his master—authorized to establish all offices he might consider necessary in the departments of justice, police, and direct trade, prescriptive, subject, however, to the royal pleasure, "with the advice of prudent and capable persons," all laws, decrees, and statutes called for by the exigencies incidental to the rise and progress of the colony. Quebec had not safely passed the dangers of its first year's existence when a domestic difficulty threatened its utter destruction. A discontented colonist succeeded in forming a conspiracy to cut off the governor—whose rule appeared to some very severe—and carry off the stores in the fort. An accomplice discovered the conspiracy. All concerned in the plot were condemned to death, but the leader alone was executed, the remainder being sent to France, where the King admitted them to pardon.

The firmness and discernment of Champlain, fighting with the conspirators served to secure respect for his authority amongst the colonists, inspired confidence in the Mother Country, and promoted effectually the internal peace of the new settlement.

In 1623, Champlain, owing to the troubles at Quebec, and the rapid diminution of the settlement, undertook another voyage to France. The Duke de Montmorency had meanwhile transferred his viceroyalty to the Duke de Vaudouren, who had retired from the world to the seclusion of a monastery. His object in accepting the position of viceroy of Canada was to promote the conversion of the natives to Christianity. The aborigines were now at peace with each other, and a more favorable time for the prosecution of such a view could not be desired. The very first year of his viceroyalty saw the departure from France, under his orders, of three Jesuit missionaries for Quebec and New France, arrived hospitably were upon their way to the execution of their duty, and were warmly received by the Recollet fathers. The Huguenots vainly sought to excite hostility against the Jesuits to procure their banish-

ment. Champlain did not return till 1626—then to find the colony distracted by ill-feeling, and retarded by despondency which seemed to have seized on the minds of the greater portion of the settlers. He had several years before laid the foundation of the castle of St. Louis, and commenced the erection of a stone fort. The latter was in 1626 in the same unfinished condition in which he had left it on his departure for the mother country. The whole colony of Quebec at this time included but fifty-five persons, while the settlements at Tadoussac, Three Rivers, and Montreal, had almost disappeared. One of the principal causes of this unfortunate state of things was the middle-class spirit of the Huguenots, emboldened by the large powers enjoyed by the de Caens, as superintendents of the colony. Champlain now determined to make a decisive effort to rid the dominions of New France of the demon of religious discord.

Cardinal Richelieu had, in 1624, become the leading statesman of France. His policy in home affairs was to abrogate the privileges enjoyed by the Huguenots, who constantly, placing sect before country, proved a source of weakness to State which no statesman of his capacity could fail to eliminate.

Champlain succeeded in having the attention of this able minister directed to the condition of New France. Cardinal Richelieu at once determined to remove religious dissensions in the colony by annulling the powers granted to the de Caens, and to secure the formation of a vigorous colonial Government interested in the advancement of the country, by forming a company of one hundred partners—gentlemen of station, influence, and means. To this company was added, with the most ample powers, the entire territory of New France, including Florida. The company, in return, bound itself to send to Canada at once two or three hundred artisans, and afterwards several thousand colonists of both sexes. The company, besides, engaged to provide for three years, lodging, provisions, clothing and the necessary implements for their colonists—then to grant them sufficient quantities of land to enable them to support themselves—to see that neither French subjects and Catholics should settle in the country, to the entire exclusion of strangers and heretics—to provide three priests for each settlement, guaranteeing the expenses of religious worship for fifteen years, besides granting a portion of cleared land for the maintenance of the church, and of its educational and religious establishments in New France.

Some writers, referring to the establishment of the company of the hundred partners, dilate on the liberality, as they choose to term it, of Cardinal Richelieu, in excluding all Huguenots from the colony. But the conduct of the secretaries in France forces us to the conclusion that that eminent statesman acted from a sense of duty justifiable under every consideration.

The Huguenots in France had proved an element of weakness. They maintained in the midst of their kindred a great independent State, but their influence was ever felt to be in opposition to the best interests of France. Their sympathy for her Protestant neighbors and rivals was openly expressed, while numbers of their adherents were found in various times bearing arms against their own country. It is not within our province to discuss the policy of Richelieu with regard to the Huguenots of France—but, as regards his policy in relation to Canada, it must be confessed that he was far from generous of French authority in the New World, the exclusion of the Huguenots was a matter of necessity. In France they were hostile to French interests, and in America, removed, as they would be, from the direct control of the central government, would upon less provocation than even the writers most friendly to them claimed they received in the mother country, resist its authority and seek the protection of England and the alliance of its North American colonies.

The policy of Richelieu in regard to the French possessions in America, was profoundly wise, prudent, and comprehensive. The very terms of the charter granted to the hundred associates made it a matter of interest and profit for that company to spare no effort and to lose no occasion to fill the territory of New France with a mass of colonists best adapted to advance the cause of religion, and ensure the permanence of French supremacy within the extensive dominions ceded to the partners.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A CATHOLIC LEGEND.

Among the peculiarities of the Roman ritual may be noticed the striking symbolism of the washing of the celebrant's hands (or rather the tips of the thumb and forefinger) before he touches the sacred elements, reciting the while a portion of the twenty-fifth psalm: "I will wash my nine hands in innocency, and I will go to Thine altar." And he will observe that the "Canon of the Mass"—that portion of the service which we should call the consecration—is said by the priest intently. The reason given by ritual authorities for this direction is based on the fear lest the sacred words so often repeated in the hearing of the people might become too common and familiar, and even be used profanely.

A legend on this subject, as told by a reclus of the seventh century, is worth notice, as having received the stamp of no less an authority than the Council of Nicea: "A party of boys watching flocks in Apana, in Syria, took it into their heads one day to while away their time by going through the ceremonies of Mass. One acted as celebrant, another as Deacon and a third as Subdeacon. All went on pleasantly until he who personated the celebrant pronounced the sacred words of consecration, when suddenly a ball of fire, bright and heavy as a meteor, fell down upon them, and they fell prostrate on the ground. When this singular occurrence was afterwards related to the Bishop of the place, he went to expiate the spot, and having learned to the particular of the case, caused a church to be built thereon to commemorate so remarkable an event. From this circumstance, it is said, the Church derives her custom of reciting the Canon in secret."

Blackwood's Magazine.