

character come out to the colonies. Who knows what this one may be? It is not impossible that all this hiding is only a trick by which she hopes to pique your curiosity, and interest your feelings. But here comes your friend. Poor old man! He certainly does not look like an impostor."

The partners took their leave. As they walked away, it was impossible not to be struck by the contrast presented by d'Auban's tall figure and firm step, and his companion's ungraceful form and shuffling gait, or to see the latter's admiring confiding manner towards his companion and doubt its sincerity. The priest could not, however, divest himself of a vague apprehension as to the character and designs of the strangers. Experience had taught him sad lessons with regard to colonial speculators, and his fatherly affection for d'Auban made him suspicious of their designs. It was in Russia that the intimacy of these two men had begun, and in America it had deepened into friendship. There was a difference of at least twenty years between their ages. Father Maret was bent with toil, and his countenance bore the traces of a life of labour and privations. When at rest, melancholy was its characteristic expression, as if continual contact with sin and sorrow had left its impress upon it; but when he conversed with others, it was with a bright and graceful smile. His step, though heavy, was rapid, as that of a man who, weary and exhausted, yet hastens on in the service of God. His head fell slightly forward on his breast, and his hair was thin and grey, but in his eye there was a fire, and in his manner and language an energy which did not betoken decay of body or mind.

The first years he had spent in America had been very trying. Till d'Auban's arrival he had seldom been cheered by intercourse with those who could share in his interests or his anxieties, or afford him the mental relief which every educated person finds in the society of educated men. Some of the Indian Christians were models of piety and full of childlike faith and amiability; but there must always exist an intellectual gulf between minds untrained and uncultivated, and those which have been used from childhood upwards to live almost as much in the past as in the present; and this is even the case to a certain degree as re-

gards religion. The advantages in this respect may not always be on the side of civilization and of a high amount of mental culture. There is often in persons wise unto salvation and ignorant of all else, a simplicity of faith, a clear realization of its good truths and unhesitating acceptance of its teachings, which may very well excite admiration and something like envy in those whom an imperfect, and therefore deceptive, knowledge misleads, and who are sometimes almost weary of the multiplicity of their own thoughts. But it is nevertheless impossible that they should not miss, in their intercourse with others, the power of association which links their religious belief with the whole claim of reminiscences, and connects it with a number of outlying regions bordering on its domain. Viewed in the light of faith, art, science, literature, history, politics, every achievement of genius, every past and present event, every invention, every discovery, has a particular significance. Names become beacons in the stream of time—signal lights, bright or lurid as may be, which the lapse of ages never extinguishes. This continued train of thought, this kingdom of association, this region of sympathy, is the growth of centuries, and to forego familiarity with it one of the greatest sacrifices which a person of intellectual habits can make. D'Auban's society and friendship had filled up this void in Father Maret's existence, and there was another far greater trial which his residence in this settlement had tended to mitigate.

In New France, as in all recently-discovered countries, a missionary's chief difficulty consisted not in converting the natives, or (a greater one) in keeping them from relapsing into witchcraft and idolatry—not in the wearisome pursuit of his sheep over morasses, sluggish streams, and dreary savannahs—but in the bad example set by the European settlers. It was the hardened irreligion, the scoffing spirit, the profligate lives of the emigrants swarming on the banks of the Mississippi, tainting and polluting the forests and prairies of this new Eden with their vile passions and remorseless thirst for gold, which wrung the heart of the Christian priest, and brought a blush to his cheek when the Indians asked—"Are the white men Christians? Do they worship Jesus?"

He felt sometimes inclined to answer,