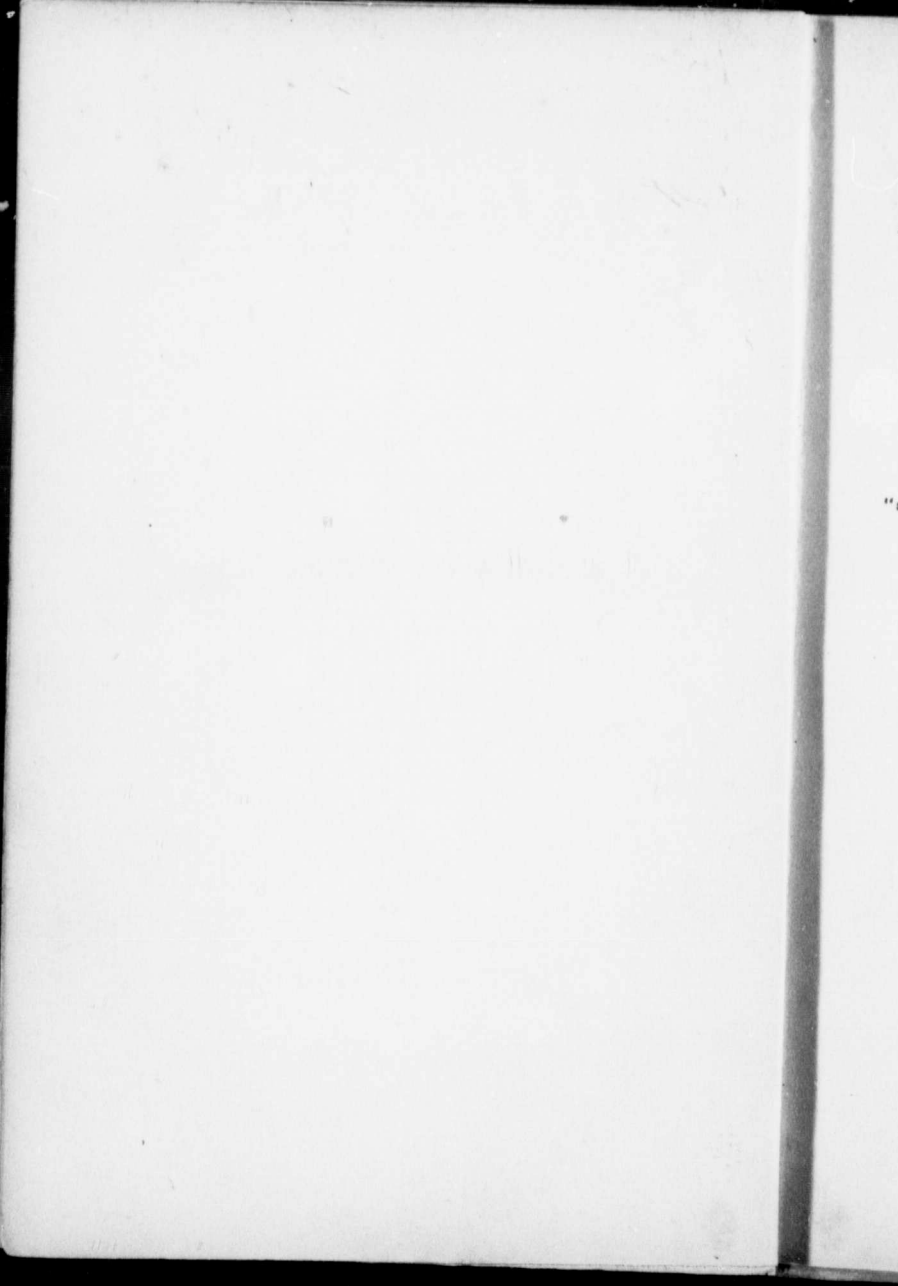


A DIANA OF QUEBEC



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BY
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"SIR FREDERICK HALDIMAND," "THE CURIOUS CAREER OF RODERICK CAMPBELL,"
"CANADA," ETC

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TO
MY SISTER MARY

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CHAPTER I.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE *ALBEMARLE*.

CERTAIN moments in a man's life stand out like blazed trees in the forest of his memory. Such a one is that in which I first saw Nelson. Yes, I mean Horatio, afterwards Admiral Lord Nelson, though I was a bigger man than he in those days—or thought myself such—which comes to the same thing. I was larger, physically at any rate, tall, broad-shouldered, and perhaps over-conscious, as I strode down Mountain Hill, Quebec, that first day of July, 1782, of the contrast I presented in my spick-and-span uniform, to the forlorn-looking little naval officer toiling towards me up the slope, steep enough to test stouter calves than his. There never has been much love lost between the two arms of the service, but surely no man could have aught but pity for that scrap of humanity, whose clothes hung upon him like the ill-fitting garb of a larger person. Such was my first impression.

I suspected that he was off the *Albemarle*, a frigate of twenty-four guns, which had served as convoy to provision vessels coming up the Gulph; but before we came together for the confirmation of my surmise, a *fracas* occurred on the hill between us. It was an incident common enough in that day, when the ships of His Majesty's navy were generally shorthanded. A press-gang from one of these had hauled out of a tavern, just at the turn in Mountain Hill, two lusty rogues whom they were bent on marching to their ship to be trained into decent seamen. This laudable purpose might have been effected without remark had it not been for two females walking directly in front of me, one of whom felt called upon to interfere—with that tendency to thrust a finger into the affairs of others so noticeable in the sex. The older lady passed hurriedly on her way, in apparent and natural anxiety to get out of the road; it was the younger who stood up and protested. Unfortunately, I had been presented to her at a recent assembly in the town, and though I had made no effort towards the continuance of the acquaintance, she remembered me.

“Oh, Captain Mathews! It is truly lucky you are here. You will put a stop to this.”

I stayed my steps, as in duty bound, though none too pleased at the appeal. The press-gang was a necessity. We of the army hated it as heartily as did, no doubt, the officers of the navy; but what else could be done, in war time, with ships to be

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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!”

The four men of the press-gang, who had each an arm of the unwilling novitiates, tried to move on in obedience to a signal from the fifth, their leader, who was prepared to clap irons on the captives should they show further resistance ; but Miss Mary Simpson planted herself fiercely in the way, like a she-bear defending her cubs, and thereby put me in a deuced uncomfortable position. I was loath to lay hands on her to draw her aside. It was no affair of mine to what methods the navy resorted. Happily, none such were necessary in our branch of the service. We treated our men better—had to, or they would desert, which they could not so easily do from aboard ship.

“ You are mistaken about these men,” railed on their self-elected defender. “ I know them both—have written letters for them and their wives. Each has a large family dependent on him.”

“ I have no doubt of that,” I retorted dryly. “ Show me the Canadian that has not. Neither have I a doubt that each has had considerable experience sailing on the great river. They may serve as pilots.”

“ You surely cannot understand what the poor fellows say, Captain Mathews, or you would tell their kidnappers that they have taken no runaway sailors. Neither of these men has ever been on an ocean-going vessel in his life.”

“ My knowledge of French may not be so complete as your own, Miss Simpson, but my knowledge

of the world is assuredly more extensive. It is most unseemly for any female to be mixed up in a street riot."

By this time a crowd of idle loungers had collected—all French sympathizers with their captive countrymen ; but they were unarmed, and I doubted not that the five British tars would be more than a match for the lot so soon as I could persuade this irate Miss to go about her business. It was her attractive appearance that tempted them into delay in the doing of their duty—the part that woman has been playing in the world ever since Eve tempted Adam. Miss Simpson showed not the slightest sign of yielding, even when the curious throng pressed close about her, but continued to face me like a fury.

"You are *afraid* to interfere, Captain ! That is the trouble, though you see a great wrong being done."

I smiled in her face ; had she been a man I had slapped it. My military record was at least respectable, though I had never sought the empty bauble, Fame, so many set their hearts upon.

I know not what might have been the upshot of the whole affair, had not Captain Nelson now pushed his way through the crowd on the outskirts of which he had been standing, an interested observer at least of Miss Simpson's head, which towered above the undersized Canadians'—indeed, above all in the group except my own.

"Pardon me," he said. "Can I be of any service ?"

"You can indeed, sir," cried the girl, giving me her back and him her face at once. "I perceive you to be of the navy. You have the authority, which Captain Mathews lacks, to prevent these good friends of mine from being taken to sea against their will."

"Friends of yours? They are surely above reproach." Horatio bowed low to her.

"The mariner on land," I said to myself. "He had better beware of bogs—as dangerous as fogs, when light-footed damsels flit over them before his eyes. Serve him right if he sinks to his knees!"

But here was one who could at least command his own ship, I had to acknowledge, as I remarked the change from the ingratiating tone in which he addressed the first female he had had speech with probably for months. He turned to the sailors.

"You are from the *Viper*?"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"I thought as much. Tell Captain Stiles that Captain Nelson, of the *Albemarle*, will let him have two of the shipwrecked seamen picked up down the Gulph, instead of these you have secured. I can ill spare them, as my best are knocked up with scurvy. Doubtless yours are in a like case, or you would not have been put to this extremity."

"Ay, ay, sir," chimed the men again, and in a twinkling the two released habitants had taken to their heels, while the crowd dispersed as quickly as it had formed.

Miss Simpson's excitement did not cool off so

rapidly. There were even tears in her monstrously fine eyes, and a trembling about her lips that accorded well with the lingering flush of rage upon her cheek as she courtesied her thanks to Captain Nelson. I found it difficult to recognize the virago who had attacked me so savagely in this sweet-spoken lass, who turned the head of Horatio then and there, I verily believe. 'Tis marvellous that a man so wise in some respects should be such a fool in others.

"Who is she?" he asked me eagerly, when she had at length made an end of flattering him to the top of his bent about his "gallant rescue," and had seen fit to rejoin her no doubt impatient companion at the foot of the hill. There was no occasion for women of respectability to descend to the rough shipping quarter, especially without escort, and probably my opinion of recent proceedings betrayed itself in my speech as I replied to the question.

"Her name is Simpson—Mary Simpson, a belle of Quebec, so please you. Her father was Saunders Simpson, a Provost-Marshal in General Wolfe's army, and she lives with her mother somewhere near the top of this street we are now climbing."

We had fallen into step, and were making our way up Mountain Hill, avoiding, as far as might be, the pit-falls of ash heaps, soot, and filth of every kind which the citizens had deposited without their dwellings, despite the most stringent orders to the contrary. Refuse from the Lower Town was to be placed on the beach in certain places at low tide;

that from the Upper Town was to be taken through Palace Gate and deposited on the shore near the Intendant's Palace. Had His Excellency not been so much averse to clapping a few of the law-breakers into gaol, matters might have been mended. I made an apology somewhat of this nature to my companion, but he was taking deep draughts of the air with such delight that naught could daunt him.

" 'Tis good to feel the solid earth beneath one's feet, no matter how it be littered up. Phew! I am already recovered. You are Captain Mathews," he continued. "I caught the name but now from the belle of Quebec."

I had said *a belle* of Quebec, but he instantly placed her where she was ever to remain—in his estimation.

"Yes," I replied. "That is my name. I am of the 53rd Infantry, but at present acting as military secretary to General Haldimand, Governor of this Province. He sent me to meet Captain Nelson, of the *Albemarle*, and conduct him to dinner at the Château St. Lewis, where he lives. The forward female we have left has been the means also of making me aware that you are the one I seek."

Nelson's laugh rang out like a school-boy's. He had an absurdly sensitive mouth, a full under-lip, and a dimple in his chin. Thick, dark brows added strength to a pair of grey eyes, deep-set, and rather soft for my taste—in a man—though I doubted not they could emit sparks on occasion. But it is not

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fair to make an inventory of a man's features as a clue to his characteristics just after he has been cajoled into mildness by a pleasing female. This post-captain seemed to find much amusement in the fact that I did not participate in his admiration of *the belle* of Quebec. He was but three-and-twenty, a dozen years or so younger than myself, and therefore prone to derive merriment from the smallest occurrences, even to the loose pig which ran between his legs and nearly upset him, as he was none too steady on his feet.

"'Twere passing strange," he laughed, "if I should escape the French cannon balls at sea, and be run to death by one of their swine ashore. I hate the whole nation most damnably. Permit me to offer my condolences, Captain, that an Englishman, like yourself, should have the misfortune to be stationed among them, even for a time."

"Accept my thanks for the same, but, as a matter of fact, I am a Scot."

"Which accounts for the matter-of-factness."

"May be; but it also means that I have no personal feeling against the French whatsoever, such as you have. They were the ancient allies of my forbears, and stood by us in our wars with England."

"But that time is long past. King George has now no more loyal subjects than your countrymen."

"That is true; but it is not true of the Canadians. They have taken the oath of allegiance, yet they are

constantly intriguing with the revolted English colonies."

"But the French are to blame for that revolt," cried Nelson. "Without their countenance, think you a parcel of raw colonials had dared to set up a standard of their own in defiance of their lawful sovereign? We take from France her American colony; she in turn relieves us of ours."

"It is Independence the New Englanders think they have achieved, since the defeat of Cornwallis last autumn."

"By heaven! they will discover their mistake after peace is declared, and France applies for her share in the winnings."

"Some such representations have been made to the Canadians. They must not fight against their Mother Country, whilst she is aiding our colonies to escape from our rule. They should rather lend a hand to their former foes, the Bastonnais, and join them in their secession."

"Hath England ill-treated these new subjects of hers?"

"On the contrary, they have been over well-treated. That is why they behave like spoiled children. Their language, laws, and religion are all to be maintained, so that the country is like to remain French for many generations."

"Ungrateful blockheads! How much will the Yankees do for them?—What is this barrier we are coming to?"

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The rude structure of pickets, crossing Mountain Hill in front of us, had been erected as a barricade against invasion the last night of the year '75.

"The Congress troops were kept out then, only to be let in now," said I.

"They will need to make haste about it, for peace is already in the air."

"So we are told; but there is no sign of peace yet in Canada."

By the time we had climbed the last flight of stairs leading to the Upper Town, Captain Nelson had only breath left to gasp—

"Lord! What a prospect!"

Looking at the familiar panorama with his eyes, I, too, admired afresh the spacious harbour spreading beyond the masts of the ships five miles downwards, to embrace the green Isle of Orleans, off whose shores the ships of Wolfe had lain at anchor. Now we were at war again—a fratricidal conflict for which many of us had no stomach.

"A man needs to have been long at sea," said Nelson, "to appreciate the beauty of those eternal, immovable hills yonder. They rest the eye that hath been sickened by heaving mountains of salt water."

"They are finely wooded."

"They are more—they are finely placed by the Almighty Himself to serve as a frame for this fair harbour, that smiling plain. I can now understand how difficult of approach this promontory guarding

the further reaches of the St. Lawrence hath ever been."

"Quebec hath thrown defiance at several would-be conquerors."

I should have been nothing loath to have told my companion of the five sieges, to have given him in brief a history of the town, as we passed through a part of it on our way up to the Castle of St. Lewis; but, in the way which I found later to be his habit, he sprang impulsively to another topic.

"Which is the home of Miss Simpson? You said it was about here."

"That small house next the *Chien d'Or*."

"What is that? I have no French."

I called his attention to the gilded dog carved in the stone above the doorway of a certain pretentious building, and translated for him the verse below it—

"I am a dog which gnaws a bone,
And while I am gnawing I take my ease.
But a time will come, that is not yet here,
When I shall bite those who have bitten me."

The story of the honest merchant of the French *régime*, who had caused this tablet to be placed above the door of his shop as a warning to the iniquitous Intendant Bigot and his minions, had not in my experience failed to interest the casual traveller in Quebec, but it brought no remark from Captain Nelson. He was more taken up with the house next door.

"They must be quite poor people to live there," he said.

"Nobody in Quebec is rich since the Conquest. Bigot and his band took their ill-gotten gains back to France with them. Miss Simpson mingles with the best society this port can provide. You will probably meet her again."

Again the school-boy laugh, and the school-boy playing truant, in thought, at least.

"I fear I shall not have that privilege at this time. Three days are the greatest length to which I can stretch my shore leave."

"I regret to say that I have no acquaintance with the Simpson household, else I should take you to inquire if Mademoiselle had quite recovered from the shocking scene we have just witnessed."

"I could not think of presuming so far upon your good nature, Captain Mathews. And yet—when can you go?"

"I said I could *not* go, Captain Nelson. Duty and dignity alike forbid it."

"Damn the dignity! We are ashore."

"Yes, where mine must be upheld. Were I at sea I could cast it to the four winds."

"You would probably be under the weather. Seasickness is fatal to dignity; but it is another kind of sickness that hath got hold of me. Think you if we walked back down the hill we should meet Miss Simpson coming up? Is there any other way for her to reach home?"

"Several ways. She may have gone round by the Sault au Matelot, and be coming up by the Canoterie Hill. She may be going on further towards Palace Gate ; or she may have turned to the right at the foot of Mountain Hill with the intention of climbing the footpath that leads from Champlain Street to the Cove Fields."

I did not feel called upon to tell my companion how entirely unlikely I thought it that the females were doing any one of these things. The Lower Town of Quebec was no choice place for extensive rambles, infested as it was with brawling sailors, thieves, and cut-throats. Had I given Captain Nelson a hint of the possibilities of danger to his charmer, he would have fled at once to offer protection—and she had already made us late for dinner. I was amazed at the susceptibility of the sailor ashore, such having never before come so prominently beneath my notice.

As we picked our way across the stepping-stones over the brook in Fabrique Street—that were little needed, since the heat and the drouth had driven away nearly all the water—I remarked—

"I am more concerned as to the whereabouts of the two habitants released from the press-gang. It ill befits the daughter of Saunders Simpson to be in league with such."

"You mean those poor devils freed just now? What had Miss Simpson to do with them, apart from exciting my sympathy in their behalf? "

"You must have heard her call them friends. Jacques Michaud and Gustave Tremblay, forsooth! Two of the suspects I have long been looking for, but knew them not by sight."

"Suspects?"

"Suspected of carrying information to the rebels regarding our resources."

"It had been better, perhaps, to have let them be shipped quietly off to sea."

"So I thought; but Providence, in the person of Miss Mary Simpson, thought otherwise."

"She hath a good heart."

"That may be; but I doubt the discretion of writing letters in English for such rascals—to their dear friends in Massachusetts, no doubt."

"She doth it innocently, I can swear, if she doth it at all. That face conceals no double dealing, no hypocrisy."

"Her face is well enough," I said, shortly, "though it hath a stronger touch of the sun than would be becoming in a female with more pretensions to gentility."

"Why, God bless you, Captain! you must be as great a woman-hater as I have heard your Governor, General Haldimand, is!"

"Hush! We are now at the gate of his *château*, and walls have ears!"

CHAPTER II.

DINNER AT THE CHÂTEAU.

WE were a curious company that sat down together at five o'clock that evening—I have often thought of it since. The dinner was an informal affair, but the Baroness de Riedesel was there, because she always dined with His Excellency, while in Quebec, though she and her children slept in the house of his friend, Judge Adam Mabane, at Woodfield, near the Samos Battery, three miles out of town. General Riedesel, commander of the Brunswick troops, was stationed at Sorel, at the mouth of the Richelieu, that main water route to Albany by way of Lake Champlain, and could seldom leave his post; but he and General Haldimand were in constant correspondence, being great friends, as well as allies, for both were foreigners in the service of Great Britain. On her occasional visits to Quebec, the Baroness charmed away the habitual moroseness of our bachelor Governor, and I can affirm with confidence that she was the most welcome guest that ever sat at His Excellency's table. He and she conversed

in French, his native tongue, as it was also that of his Swiss housekeeper, Mrs. Fairchild. She sat at the other end of the table, with Captain Nelson on her right, and on her left the Mohawk chieftain, Joseph Brant, dressed in a costume half Indian, half military, which had evidently cost him so much thought that it made him self-conscious.

Nelson was fully entertained with watching him and trying to understand his halting English, so I had opportunity to indulge in pleasant converse with the estimable Mrs. Fairchild. I was no woman-hater, be it understood, though I had learned, by experience, to distrust the more flighty of the sex. The General's housekeeper was every inch a lady, the widow of an officer who had died in the West Indies. Since Captain Nelson had recently been in that part of the world, I tried to draw him into talk with her concerning it; but "Infernal hole! My health was ruined there!" was all he had to say. Like the veritable youngster he then was, he would rather hearken to highly-coloured accounts of Joseph's raids upon the rebel frontier. Here was the actual perpetrator of some of those notorious Indian atrocities! Nelson may have seen in Joseph Brant a hero; the General and I regarded him as a bore. He knew too much, and yet too little; but, from his standing with our fickle Mohawk allies, he could not be ignored. He was called the most civilized savage of his time, but a savage he was, nevertheless, and I was unwilling to have this naval officer go away with

the idea that this was the kind of company we kept in Quebec. To be sure, he seemed more than satisfied with the novelty of it, but I was easier in my mind when at last the General and the Baroness stumbled into talk with the stranger. I shall not attempt to reproduce their broken English, since to do so would detract from the dignity which both possessed in large measure. Madame was about my own age—that is to say, midway in the thirties at this time—rather full in the figure, and less fastidious in attire than she had doubtless been in Europe; but her face was fine and high-bred, her blue eyes kindly and intelligent, and her manner so amiable that she gave the impression of a charming and beautiful female.

“I wish so much I had better command of French,” she said, “particularly on account of my daughters. They ought to be learning to speak fluently while they have so good an opportunity in this colony; but they chatter away in English and in German—never a word of French do I hear. I would I could find some one who is competent to teach them.”

“That should not be difficult,” said His Excellency. “There are the Ursulines.”

“I fear to place my little ones in any but Protestant hands. The nuns are so lovable, I am told they win many older girls away from the Faith.”

“At any rate, they do not speak English. Your

children would require a governess conversant with both languages."

"I have met a young lady that could teach them, if she would," said Captain Nelson.

The General smiled, and the Baroness laughed her merriest as she said—

"You, who have just landed? You already know all the young women in town?"

"I know one—that is to say, I have seen her—a Miss Mary Simpson. She would be a most delightful person to teach your daughters, Madame, anything whatsoever. She is the only child of a soldier's widow, and, judging by the exterior of her humble home, she and her mother might be thankful for any addition to their income, genteelly earned."

"What do you know of her French?" I asked, in fair amaze at his effrontery.

"Captain Mathews has informed me," he continued, disregarding my interruption, "that Miss Simpson is in the habit of transcribing letters from English into French, and *vice versa*—no easy task, you will allow—to oblige some of her Canadian friends."

Had I told the Governor then and there the nature of the letters I suspected Miss Simpson of translating, much future trouble might have been avoided; but I am ever slow of speech, and the talk flowed past me in the direction steered by the gentleman of the navy.

"Mary Simpson—I seem to recall the name,"

said the General. "What do you know of her scholastic acquirements, Mathews?"

"Nothing whatever. I had speech with her for the first time to-day."

"But such speech!" cried Nelson, in rapture, real or assumed. "Her English is of the purest, and I doubt not her French is the same. She seems to have equal facility in either language."

I could not refrain from smiling at my recollection of the said "facility."

"Tanswell's Academy, most likely," said the General.

"However that may be, Captain Mathews assures me that she is the belle of Quebec, and therefore she must be accomplished in the use of both tongues."

"Not of necessity, Captain Nelson," replied the Baroness, with a quizzical glance in my direction. She was probably wondering when I had begun to remark who was and who was not the "belle of Quebec." "The army men here are all English—or Scots. To be a belle does not imply popularity with the Canadian women—often quite the reverse."

Nelson laughed with her, and then we adjourned out of doors, since there was still daylight enough for His Excellency to take the Baroness round his adored flower-beds, and even into the vegetable garden. He and she exchanged seeds, cuttings, fruit trees, and were never done comparing notes of progress in horticulture between Quebec and Sorel.

The General lifted the heavy head of a rose, creamy white, tinged with pink, in his long, slim fingers, for us all to admire.

"I brought this from my Florida garden," said he. "They told me it would never bloom in Canada; but I gave it a southern exposure, and you see—it is here. These annuals I have raised from my own seed. That which is brought from England is often too old and dry to sprout."

So he rambled on with talk of his plans for planting, as if we abode in some peaceful valley, instead of being a target on our rock, and constantly in the midst of alarms. The reminder thereof, Joseph Brant, had not remained with us, for he was too much the Indian to be interested in civilized gardening. So soon as he no longer found a listener to his tales of frontier raids and the clemency *he* had ever shown—to women and children—he took his leave. Mrs. Fairchild was detained within doors by some household duty, so that Nelson was left to me, and I seized the opportunity to remonstrate with him upon his levity at table.

"It had served you right, had I made known to His Excellency the exact circumstances under which you became acquainted with Miss Simpson's knowledge of French."

"It was yourself told me, Captain."

"Yes; but it was a piece of information that was little to her credit. Think what would happen should a female of such doubtful loyalty gain the *entrée* to

the family of our Governor, or into that of General Riedesel, at Sorel. She would be in a position to collect items of interest innumerable for her correspondents in New England."

"What a suspicious Scot you are, Captain!"

"You do not understand the situation here, or you would be suspicious too. We have to keep up a constant system of espionage, much as it goes against the grain. We are surrounded by a set of two-faced rascals in this colony who make their bows at the state receptions and swear allegiance at every opportunity; yet news of all our affairs is promptly forwarded to the rebels. Washington, Lafayette, Franklin, and the rest know more of what is happening here, and of the general state of feeling in this Province, than we know of the plans and movements of the English commander at New York."

"But why suspect so lovely a female?"

"Because, as you have seen to-day, she is hand-in-glove with the Canadians, with two of them in particular, who are specially under suspicion at the present time."

"It would be a fine thing for her to come under the influence of an accomplished woman of the world, such as Madame de Riedesel."

"The idea is not to benefit Miss Simpson, but the Riedesel children."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"They will do very well without French."

"And without Miss Simpson too, I am thinking."

"If she could inspire them with somewhat of her force of character, her air, her manner, her voice, they might make a happy escape from being dowdy little *frauleins*."

"You have not seen them. Their mother is no ordinary *hausfrau*."

"No, indeed."

He launched forth into a high-flown panegyric of the Baroness, which was more acceptable to me than his praise of Miss Simpson, for I held Madame de Riedesel in as high esteem as did my General.

When he and she had fully admired the garden and the view from it, delightful even in the waning light, Madame must be taken within doors to be shown the improvements His Excellency had made in the Château, for at his coming to Québec, four years previously, he had thought little enough of the manner in which England housed her officials, even at posts the most important. Since that time he had practically rebuilt the Castle, as he had a taste for household architecture as for gardening, both surprising in an elderly bachelor. He had more scope for his energies in both directions down at Montmorenci, where he had built himself a summer residence near the Falls.

Just to convince Captain Nelson that our alarms and suspicions were not without foundation, I drew forth from my desk in the library of His Excellency,

where we went to smoke, a sheet of paper on which some verses were written.

"What is this?" he asked. "A French song, apparently."

"Apparently, yes; but it has entirely different meanings according as you read, or omit, certain parts. This is the information intended for the rebels: 'Quebec is fortified, but there are in the whole Province no more than 5000 soldiers, and owing to the feeling of the people, should 3000 be brought here under the French flag, they would be equal to 10,000.' A suggestion is made that commissions be printed and distributed from Chambly to the Gulph, urging an attack on the Royalists. But that is a year or two old. Here is something more recent."

I handed him a harmless-looking letter in English, evidently a literal translation from the French. It was directed to one Robinson, in Boston, whose deceased wife had seemingly been a Canadian.

"Perchance he met her whilst here with Montgomery," said Nelson. "I scent a romance."

"I would there were naught else to be scented in it."

He read it aloud—

"HONOURED SIR,

"We have the pleasure to acquaint you with the fact that we are all in good health, but wishing the war was over that you might come to

see the fourteen nephews and nieces you now have here. The times are hard, but with the help of a little fishing in the Great River and some shooting of the wild pigeons that pass in great flocks overhead at this season of the year, we manage to keep the wolf from the door, though wheat is scarce, as well as beef. I send this by a trusty messenger, who will bring me your reply in return.' "

" Apparently the messenger was not trusty."

" Faithful enough, but stupid. This came into our possession through the cleverness of a young man we sent to court the servant girl of Madame Michaud, wife of the rascal you released to-day."

" All's fair in war ! "

" So we judged, when we applied heat to the letter and found these lines written in white ink on the reverse side of the page : ' There are only fifty men in garrison here. The Chaudière is the best route for summer, the Richelieu is too well guarded. St. John's cannot be defended. There is not at present a gun there, and only volunteers who favour the Americans. The five hundred men you mention are plenty. The inhabitants wait only for your coming—in sufficient force. Then for the *fleur-de-lis* once more upon our ramparts ! "

" It is just possible," said I, " that Miss Simpson, in her desire to befriend the down-trodden, may have written that."

" Impossible ! " cried Nelson, in heat. " You

will notice that the black ink and the white are the work of different pens. The former may have been written by a woman ; the latter is in a man's hand."

"What I fear is that the chief plotters are using some one who can read and write the two languages as a tool—an innocent tool, if you will."

"Innocent is the only word applicable to Miss Simpson, as any one could judge who looked into her face."

"But once?"

"Once suffices for a man of discernment. It may be that you are slow in your perceptions, Captain Mathews. Females are always disposed to hold a brief for the under dog."

"Yes ; but in many instances their judgment is at fault as to which is the under dog. In this case it is not the too well-treated habitants, but my General, whose health has been sadly impaired with the worry over their intrigues."

"I think you are wrong in your present suspicions."

"Straws show which way the wind blows. Had we not been observant of straws the past six years, the wind had blown this Province fairly over to the rebels."

"Did they receive such a favourable reception when they came to conquer at the opening of the war?"

"The weather fought against them—the climate and the situation of Quebec—else we could not

have held out. Think you Arnold and his men had ever gotten so far as this, through a terrible wilderness in winter, had not the Canadians helped them with supplies and shelter wherever possible? Fine neutrals, they! Handbills have been distributed among them, saying that the rule of England on this continent is at an end; the time has come to make peace with France and her victorious allies, the United States, as they call themselves—though, up to the present, there has been precious little union among them. Very few of the Canadians can read or write, but some mischief-maker is generally found to act as interpreter."

"Why do you not imprison a lot of them?"

"We have already more than our gaols will accommodate—prisoners of war brought in by our raiders, loyalist refugees who have nowhere else to go, besides the usual riff-raff of a sea-port town. No, by giving plenty of rope to the underlings we have hopes of discovering who are the ring-leaders."

"In which class do you place Miss Simpson; an underling or a leader?"

"Not yet in either. My suspicions of that young person date from this afternoon only."

"Good heavens! What an atmosphere to live in! I could not endure being ever on the watch for a hidden traitor, even among attractive females."

"It is not pleasant, I will allow, but somebody has to play the watchdog. You have an open, a

manly *rôle*. You meet an enemy in fair fight and beat, or are beaten, as the case may be."

"Never beaten, Captain, not so that we are aware of it."

"The navy has heretofore been more fortunate than the army, that I acknowledge; but boast not, your time may come."

"When it does, I trust I may learn to bear reverses with fortitude. In the meantime, I have learned but one part, that of the British bull-dog, that knows not when it is beaten but hangs on to the enemy despite a battered face and blinded eyes."

"The bull-dog must needs be informed at what point to take hold."

"He knows by instinct, even as I flatter myself I know instinctively what the enemy is about to do next and where I can give him a broadside, grapple his ship, and never let go till he or I is sunk."

"Simple tactics, suited to a seaman, and the reverse of what we are called upon to exercise here and now."

"Assuredly this does not look simple."

He had lifted from my desk a large sheet covered with diagrams and figures.

"Do you use much cipher in your correspondence?"

"Yes; but those are astronomical problems and calculations I work at for my own amusement."

"An extraordinary form of relaxation! They

look as difficult as some of the navigation lessons we had to put through as midshipmen."

"They are not easy, but they are an infallible relief from present anxieties. As one plays with the mean motions of the planets and with the logarithms of their distances from the sun, it does not seem to matter much what flag flies over a small portion of a small globe in one of the lesser solar systems."

"This is why your health has not suffered, like your General's. It must be hard for him to steel himself to the holding down of his own countrymen with so firm a hand."

"He is not French—Swiss, from one of the French cantons, and a Protestant, therefore detested by all good Catholic Canadians—the terms are synonymous. Their language being the same as his, merely enables him the better to detect their duplicity. They cannot deceive him as they might hope to do an Englishman or other foreigner."

"He has not had much chance for honour?"

"None whatever in this country. The consciousness of duty done is his sole reward. He came to Canada first, after Wolfe had won the glory of taking it, and again after Carleton had repulsed the rebels in '75. He has only the thankless task before him, as behind him, of holding a colony for Great Britain which, in his opinion, is not worth keeping."

"Why not?"

"A terribly cold climate, a sparsely settled

country, a disloyal peasantry—what chance is there for the withstanding of any invasion from the richer, more populous country to the southward? Ah, here he comes for a smoke with us. Madame always returns early to the Samos Manor.”

I recall distinctly my General's appearance that night—a stately, soldierly gentleman of sixty-odd, with a thin-lipped, distinguished face, as may still be seen in the portrait Sir Joshua painted of him, a few years later, after his retirement to London. As if anxious to waive aside our usual harassing topics of conversation, he talked with Nelson and me about painting and painters in England and on the Continent—for he was somewhat of a connoisseur in art, and had seen more than either of us younger men could have appreciated, even had we been so privileged. He gave us some information, obtained in his last London letters, of the new star on the horizon, one George Romney, who was rapidly winning distinction through the beauty and artistic posing of his model, Emma Lyon, a female of low repute, who called herself Mrs. Hart. None suspected at that day she would ever rise to be the wife of the English ambassador at Naples—Sir William Hamilton.

Nelson was not interested in the subject, and in that dexterous way of his, he led His Excellency on to talk of his life in the South, for he had been Governor of Florida during six out of the twenty years of British occupation. He told us many anecdotes of

his friend and fellow-countryman, General Henry Bouquet, his predecessor in that government, who had died at Pensacola.

"The climate killed him?" asked Nelson.

"Not entirely. He had an unhappy love affair. Miss Willing of Philadelphia jilted him whilst he was off at the wars. Ah, my friends, shun the women; we who have our lives and honour to preserve!"

Our naval guest laughed gaily. I doubted not he had the self-confidence to believe he would always come off conqueror in an encounter with a designing female, as with an enemy's ship, though the same method of hanging on and battering an opponent into insensibility might not succeed in a warfare in which the opponent was by nature gifted with more *finesse* than any of the privateers he had been chasing in the West Indies.

Nelson had seen much active service for so young a man, and I own I envied him the experience, though it had, to all appearance, undermined a constitution none too strong by nature. The General had had an abundance of fighting too, in his younger days, when he had served under the Great Frederick, and it was on account of his military record, while at The Hague, in 1756, that he and Bouquet had been asked to come out to Pennsylvania to raise the regiment, chiefly of Germans, known as the Royal Americans, for defence against the French and Indians we were fighting at that period.

Now the tables were turned, and these same

well-protected colonists had raised their guns against their late protectors; but what availed that to Frederick Haldimand? A soldier of fortune—no discreditable profession for natives of poor countries like Switzerland—or Scotland—King George had bought his services, and King George should have them till the last drop of his blood. The glow of patriotism may stir men to spasmodic enthusiasm, to isolated deeds of valour; it is devotion to duty that alone sustains one throughout a protracted siege of insignificant occurrences. His Excellency was my ideal of a soldier and a gentleman; though I am willing to acknowledge that the more picturesque, and therefore the more popular hero is he who from his youth onwards disregards the lesser obligations of life in his eagerness to reach that high plateau where glory waits.

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CHAPTER III.

ON THE BATTERY.

QUEBEC, I vow, is one of the hottest towns out of the tropics. As if to make the most of the short summer, the sun beats down pitilessly upon that unshaded promontory, built up with grey stone houses, climbing the hills, shoulder to shoulder, flush with the streets. The dwellings of the religious orders had courtyards, or gardens at the back, but less favoured citizens thanked heaven for the ramparts to walk upon, and more especially for the Battery, upon which the whole town would turn out of a summer evening.

July the 2nd, 1782, was one of the warmest days of a warm season, and never had my daily duties seemed more arduous. Since early morning I had sat in the Château library, interpreting and replying to documents in cypher, writing duplicates or triplicates of letters to commanders at different posts, or to Indian agents throughout the country. Every despatch, whether to England or to His Majesty's representative in New York, had to be copied more

than once so that different routes might be tried for its delivery, and the danger of capture lessened, by land or sea. Our difficulties in getting letters were even greater than those we encountered in the sending of them, and we were thankful at times for news of the outside world obtained by some such windfall as a package of rebel newspapers hidden in a tree, intended for other hands than ours, you may be sure.

Quill-driving in a hot uniform on a day so sultry would have fatigued even a more sturdy penman than I was supposed to be, and I eagerly hastened out of doors at the close of an arduous afternoon. It was like a benediction to feel the cool evening air blowing up into my face from the valley of the St. Charles, as I leaned over the stone wall of the Battery, and admired the colouring the departed sun had left above the distant mountains. They had been hidden all day behind a haze of heat, but now they stood out in purple shadows against a green and gold sky, flecked with pink, vapoury clouds-like rosebuds on a lady's ball gown. I was not the only one who had come out to enjoy the mystic radiance around those blue hills. A number of Quebec maidens were promenading the Battery, arm in arm, in their light, summer attire, buzzing in talk like a swarm of bees. I paid no attention to what they were saying, as they passed and repassed me, till a distinctly English voice, though speaking French like the rest, caught my ear.

"For shame, my friends! He is an Englishman from England, all the way."

If that was not Miss Simpson, I had lost my ear, but my disapproval of her proceedings the previous afternoon was so strong I scorned to turn about or notice her. I withdrew not my gaze from the admirable mountains, even when the group of girls took up their stand directly behind me, and I could not avoid hearing all that they said. Their purpose was probably the attraction of masculine company, but I was not to be drawn into the net, though I resented mightily the criticisms that were being passed on one of my sex.

"Ah, but, Mademoiselle Marie! Saw you ever such a head of hair? Without powder, too!"

"Regard the length of his queue!"

"He is a Hessian, without doubt."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Miss Mary. "I tell you he is an English naval officer. His name I forget at the moment; but ask Captain Mathews, yonder. He knows him."

I continued to find the village of Charlesbourg and the Valcartier hills beyond it of absorbing interest. The feminine talk flowed on.

"English, *certainement!* Observe the size of his hat."

"Also his feet—and he has no epaulets."

"*Ma chère Mademoiselle Marie*, ask him if he weeps for his mamma."

"He surely looks doleful enough—I agree with

you. Had he been properly introduced to me—but he was not. Come away, girls. See how he stares! He must suspect we are talking about him.”

“*Pouf!* He is but a boy—a midshipman, most likely, though he wears the waistcoat of an Admiral.”

“He has borrowed the full-laced coat of his Captain to come ashore in.”

“Wrong again! I remember now. He commands the *Albemarle*, that frigate, odd-looking as himself, anchored down there, and his name, if I recall it aright, is Nelson—Captain Nelson.”

At that I turned, and the subject under the dissecting knife immediately rose from the bench on which he had been seated, and came towards me.

“Good evening, Captain Mathews. What a fool I am not to have sooner recognized your back. But I have been taken up with the enjoyment of that bevy of females, lovelier by far than any of the flowers we saw last night in the Governor’s garden. The finest rose in the bouquet is Miss Simpson. Pray present me.”

“You are too late. She is already appropriated.”

As we had been speaking, a certain Dr. Vallière had attached himself to the group. He was a married man, about my own age, but none the less prone to affect the society of young girls, and on this occasion had preferred that of Miss Simpson to one of his own countrywomen, though they were so much in the majority.

“Who is he?” asked Nelson, as the pair strolled

off together. He exhibited far more chagrin than I deemed the matter demanded.

"He is a physician no longer in practice. His present place of abode is Three Rivers, half-way on the St. Lawrence, between here and Montreal. He superintends the iron-works there. As he came originally from France, Miss Simpson embraces the opportunity, as I would myself, to have her speech trained away somewhat from the provincialisms of the Canadian *patois*."

"Embrace it instantly, Captain Mathews! Your accent offends me highly."

"Small thanks should I get from either did I try to separate them," I replied with a smile. "Dr. Vallière is a fascinating man, most entertaining in conversation, and so fond of it that he has trained a pet parrot to talk lest he should ever be lonesome."

"But I sail to-morrow."

"None of your yarns can compare in vital interest with the doctor's stories of his unjust imprisonment here in Quebec. He was gaoled for making cannon balls at his forges to supply the advancing rebels in '76."

"What a companion for Miss Simpson! Let us hasten to the rescue."

"But he was acquitted, and since his enlargement the gallant doctor has been a hero in the eyes of the fair. He is prominent at all our social gatherings, both up and down the river. There was no evidence

of consequence against him, and I, for one, have always believed in his innocence."

"There you was mistaken, Captain. I am ready to take my oath that man is guilty. He hath not an honest face. Down with the French!"

The pair under discussion came near us presently in their promenade, and might have continued on their way without comment on my part, had not Miss Simpson observed my companion, and therefore been at the pains to recognize myself.

"Good evening, Captain Mathews. Is not the sky superb?"

I merely bowed assent, so that she and her escort might continue on their way; but I reckoned without Nelson.

"It reminds me of a sunset I saw in Jamaica," he said. "But, pardon me—Captain Mathews will present me."

I could do no less, and after a few moments of triangular converse, in which the French doctor was unable to take part from his lack of English, he was left with me whilst Miss Simpson walked off with the naval Captain.

"*Quel dommage!*" exclaimed Vallière.

"Never mind! He sails to-morrow."

"I also."

"To Three Rivers only."

"What matters it, so that I be far hence?"

"With your own family, while your rival will be breasting the billows of the Gulph."

"On the *Albemarle*?"

"Yes; he is her Captain."

"A queer one, you will allow. See how much shorter he is than Mademoiselle Marie. He needs his hat to level his head with hers. And what a uniform!"

"Captain Nelson may be careless about his clothes—many seamen are; but he is, at least, immaculately clean, which all seamen are not."

"Neither without nor within," laughed the doctor.

But I replied in all seriousness—

"I made the acquaintance of Captain Nelson yesterday only, but I deem him a young man of exceptionally high principles. He has been at sea since he was twelve years of age, and has had little opportunity to cultivate the society of females. He regards them all as goddesses."

"We know better," laughed the doctor again. "But I am forgetting the vow of celibacy your esteemed General Haldimand has condemned his staff to take."

"He has done nothing of the sort," I answered in heat. "He does not approve of his officers marrying in war time—that is all."

"Oh, la! la! I would I could, by association with a Scot, like yourself, for example, perhaps unconsciously acquire some of the virtues for which your nationality is famed, such as the steadfast belief in the integrity of your own kind—*au diable* with the rest of the world."

"General Haldimand is no kin to me."

"But he is of the same kind, since you have become so closely patterned after his model—a precious poor one, believe me. I hate to see a man of honour, like yourself, reduced to playing the spy on these humble Canadians."

"Humble traitors, a lot of them."

"They are not to blame. How is it that with all your vigilance you have been unable to capture any of the rebel spies that have been making so much mischief among the habitants? Are you not yet aware that a road has been cut to Missisquoi Bay, to further the invasion of this Province by way of Lake Champplain, the St. Francis, and Yamaska?"

"Last spring we succeeded in discovering the trail one Moses Hazen had blazed from Albany nearly to Sorel, if that is what you mean."

"So General de Riedesel has told me."

"You have intercourse with him?"

"As neighbours in a desolate country—nearer than most, though the Great River divides us. The Baroness has been pleased to open the ball with me at one of our Three Rivers festivals. Last February she and the Baron both honoured me with their presence at one of the theatrical entertainments I had the pleasure of managing and taking part in—just to while away the long winter evenings for soldiers and civilians alike, stranded in a snow-bound wilderness. It was Madame's first winter among us, and naturally she found it long and dull."

It gratified me to hear of this *entente cordiale*, for Vallière had never been restored to favour at headquarters, and that was why he had such an ill word of General Haldimand. My sense of justice recoiled from treating a man with suspicion who had cleared himself from all the charges brought against him in the handsomest manner possible; but His Excellency was Scotch, rather than Swiss, in his adherence to a personal dislike.

"Madame de Riedesel is indeed an adorable female," sighed the doctor, "though her husband is so plain of face. Then, too, she is from Europe—such a grateful change from these *gauche* belles of Quebec."

Considering his irritation at his *tête-à-tête* with one of the despised Quebeckers having been interrupted, I thought the remark uncalled-for, and made haste to revert to the subject that was uppermost in my mind.

"Have you no suggestions to make, doctor, as to how we might progress more rapidly in the detection of the means whereby the rebels continue to hold such free intercourse with their allies in this Province?"

"Ah, my Captain; you are seeking traitors in the wrong galley—that is all."

"What do you mean?"

"But this. One of your so-called loyalists came to me a few days ago at Three Rivers, asking for work at the forges. He evidently believed the scandalous accusations brought against me six years ago, and

looked upon me as a friend. He assured me that he also was of the Lafayette party, and most anxious to assist in the preparations I am still supposed to be making for the reception of the Congress troops. So much for the lies circulated by my enemies ! ”

“ Was he Canadian ? ”

“ Not he ! English—from Massachusetts. One of those pretended Tories for whom you and your General cannot do enough ! ”

“ Leave my General out of this, if you please,” I said, curtly.

“ Pardon ! I find it difficult to forget my injuries when the author of them is concerned. To suffer imprisonment in an enemy’s country is one thing ; to be unjustly confined among one’s own friends in the beloved land of one’s adoption is another. Think you I can ever rest till some of the true culprits be discovered ? ”

“ How could you understand this New Englander ? ”

“ He spoke the Canadian *patois* fluently. His wife had been a Quebecker, he said. He won her while left behind sick in her home after Arnold’s raid, and she had returned with him to New England, but was now dead, and he had become a rover, as they had no children.”

“ But the deceased wife has fourteen nephews and nieces in Canada.”

“ Indeed ! Has M. Robinson dared to approach you ? ”

"Not directly. But tell me—what became of him? Did you give him clearly to understand that you were *not* a sympathizer?"

"La, la! For what kind of a diplomat do you take me, Mathews? I gave most eager attention to all he had to tell me, and asked for more."

"You let him go?"

"Surely. He will return with incriminating documents, which I shall immediately turn over to you. He said he was coming to Quebec for the purpose."

"Good heavens! I wish I could sight him!"

"Calm yourself, my good Mathews. I expect him to report to me at Three Rivers on his way back to Vermont, the section of country his fancy seems to favour at present. Meanwhile, let me beg of you to cease harrowing the habitants, who ask only to be let alone by both sides. Give closer inspection to the horde of so-called loyalists that is pouring into our land with demands far in excess of their needs or merits."

I had had experience enough with these newcomers to agree with Vallière to a certain extent, and therefore did not resent his insinuation as I otherwise might have done. I had investigated, as far as possible, the truth of the talès told by refugees as to the hardships endured before they left the English colonies, as well as their sufferings *en route* to Canada, and had found a few of them fictitious.

" 'Tis better that we should benefit nine undeserving than that the tenth, the deserving one, should go without relief."

" If that is the way you look at it, Mathews, proceed, and be cheated. Perhaps you can inform me why these same loyalists are so anxious to get land on the border line, since they, of course, can have no inclination to keep up intercourse with the colonies that have driven them out."

" They are not being humoured in that respect, I assure you. His Excellency is too wise in the forecast of future trouble. These new settlers—many of them very desirable, let me tell you—are being granted land in the upper part of the Province, in the vicinity of the Great Lakes—those that have not gone directly to Nova Scotia."

" That is well—as far from the boundaries as possible, and as far from the Canadians, with whom they have nothing whatever in common. There is certain to be friction between two races so widely divided by blood and religion—by manner of present life, as by past traditions."

" Exactly what General Haldimand says."

" I am honoured."

" If you will keep your eyes and your ears open, Dr. Vallière, you may be of great service both to His Excellency and to General Riedesel."

" *Perfidious Suisse!* Stupid German! No, I prefer to consult with you alone in these matters, Mathews. A man of parts, like yourself, is entirely

competent to judge of the truth or falsehood of whatever information comes my way."

I thanked him suitably for his high opinion of my ability, being perhaps over-ready to credit myself with an astuteness denied to the two distinguished soldiers of fortune. It was decidedly a feather in my cap to have enlisted in our service an educated man like Vallière, whose post gave him excellent opportunities for playing the spy, were he so minded, upon newly-arrived loyalists, as the majority of them were sheltered in houses of logs put up for them at Machiche, near Three Rivers, until lands could be assigned to them elsewhere. The doctor could be very useful to us, and I had no doubt he would be so disposed, if one spoke him fair and treated him like a man of honour. "The burnt child dreads the fire," and it was entirely unlikely that he would daught to bring suspicion upon himself by acting otherwise than in the interests of Government.

By this time the clouds had dissolved, and the sky was golden down to the wavy line of the dark blue mountains, but a horned moon hung aloft, with Venus in superior conjunction just below it. Jupiter would soon be visible nearer the zenith, and my half-unconscious watch for him attracted Vallière's attention.

"I see you are still interested in astronomy," he remarked.

"So far as a rather fine telescope will permit. My father gave it to me when I was coming to

Canada, thinking it might enable me to sight foes at a distance—more easily accomplished on the Scottish moors than in the thick woods of this country.”

“ So you have used it to study the stars instead ? ”

“ After a fashion. At least, it lends appreciation to the discoveries of others.”

“ I had not heard of any—recently.”

“ Doctor ! Is it possible that a man of science, like yourself, is not cognizant of the fact that William Herschel during the past year has added a seventh planet to our solar system—one that has hitherto been regarded as a star of the fourth magnitude ? ”

“ Wonderful ! Wonderful ! ”

“ Be not sarcastic, my friend. You French are simply jealous because your instruments were not strong enough to make this momentous discovery.”

“ Strange I had not heard of it. What does M. Herschel call his new planet ? ”

“ The *Georgium Sidus*.”

“ He might have hit upon a happier name. Were I a fixed star of the fourth magnitude, what you would call a sun with a nice little solar system of my own, I should not thank any officious astronomer for proving me to be merely a planet, without any light of my own, just a member of a small family circle.”

“ We cannot all be suns.”

“ Some of us would rather be satellites, when the planet is Miss Simpson. Think you she has not had a surfeit of that naval officer’s society ? ”

I was recalled to my duty as His Excellency's deputy, and therefore in a measure host to Captain Nelson. By this time he was probably bored with the girl's small talk, but there was no symptom of *ennui* in either man or maid, leaning side by side over the Battery wall, as we approached them.

"Horatio!" she was saying. "It hath a gallant sound."

"It never pleased me so much before," replied the Post-Captain.

Heaven preserve us! Had they already got to the point of calling one another by their Christian names? Lucky for him the *Albemarle* was not to be long in port! That Miss Mary was quite capable of taking care of herself was evidenced by her comment.

"Too much of a mouthful for ordinary speech! It must needs be shortened to Horry, or Ratio, before one could use it familiarly."

"I am sometimes called Horace."

"Too classic for Canada, and not so fine-sounding as Horatio. What a name for declamation aboard ship, through a speaking trumpet—like this."

She made one with her hands, and in a loud whisper, with an overdone rolling of the r, she pretended to startle the Lower Town with the name "HORATIO!"

"Think of the terror that must strike into the heart of an enemy. His very masts would tremble."

Nelson laughed, which is more than I should have done in his place.

"Your voice hath great carrying power," he said.
"I am sure you sing."

"Nothing but Scotch songs and a few Canadian chansons. I am only a miserable mezzo, when I fain would be either a soprano or a contralto—would scale the heights or plumb the depths, instead of sticking in the middle."

"None of us aspire to mediocrity, but so sweet a speaking voice must be tender and touching within its range."

"Oh, very," said the girl, smiling. "Oratorio is wherein I excel. Have you heard Handel's latest?"

Thereupon the daft lassie sang "*Ho-ra-ti-o*," softly to the air of one of the Amen choruses. Both sacrilegious and silly, it seemed to me, but Nelson made a parade of noiseless applause with his hands, in which Vallière joined.

"Never did I enjoy sacred music more!" cried the naval officer.

It beat me to understand how a man in a responsible position could abide such foolery. He was in bad health, forbye, and on the eve of sailing out to be chased by the enemy's ships, as it turned out, yet here he was bandying words with a saucy female, and allowing her to make jests upon his Christian name, a liberty I should permit neither man nor woman to take with the humble one I answered to.

"Keep on singing, Miss Simpson," I felt it my duty to remark. "You will draw a crowd immediately."

" You would be the first to throw me a penny, would you not, Captain Mathews ? "

" A sixpence, truly, if he be not too Scotch," said Nelson ; but, as if to show me he meant no offence, he slipped his arm familiarly through mine.

I never knew a man with so great a desire to be loved—call it love of approbation, or what you will. Yet I have heard him rave about honour, as if the attainment thereof were his sole aim in existence. Miss Simpson, meanwhile, engaged Dr. Vallière in the airy badinage to which his temperament and his tongue were so peculiarly adapted.

" I hate even the sound of the French language," said Nelson. " That is the sole reason I am resigned to sailing to-morrow. But I may be back in the autumn."

" The *Albemarle* seems a fine ship," I remarked, looking down to where she lay at her distant anchorage.

" That is just what she is not. She is over-sparred ; sails well only before the wind. She was built by the French—merely to run away. Had I but the ear of the Admiralty to get a decent ship and a chance to do something besides convoy duty, what might I not achieve ? How would you like it yourself, Captain, if you were called on to play the mother duck to a brood of over thirty unruly ducklings that would not keep together, nor near the parent, but persisted in scattering themselves over the pond at the risk of being snapped up by the hawk enemy ? "

"The merchant service hath ever been self-sufficient."

"Till a foreign frigate appears on the horizon. Then they scuttle to cover—get so close to me I fear to hit one should I open fire on the foe. A pretty job it is!"

"We are all too ready to think we could make our mark, if differently placed. The most that can be expected of any of us in this life is to do the best we can, *under the circumstances*. Every man has his handicap, whether or not it be visible to his neighbours."

"The hero is he who overcomes his limitations—as I shall do."

I laughed in my sleeve at the vain boaster, which goes to prove that it is never safe to underrate the possibilities of a man, at least of a young one.

CHAPTER IV.

A CALÈCHE DRIVE.

I WENT betimes to the Château next day, being anxious to repeat to the Governor the gist of the conversation I had had with Vallière, and to discuss with him some method of using the doctor as an *aide* in the detection of rebel spies among both loyalists and Canadians ; but His Excellency was not in the mood for hearkening to me. It may have been that he distrusted the source of my information, or he may merely have felt like relaxing the reins of discipline, wherewith he drove himself as hard as any one under him.

"Let us throw care to the winds, Mathews," he said. "You wrote letters enough yesterday to satisfy the most voracious appetite. Neither Lord Germaine nor Sir Henry Clinton will starve should he not see more of your penmanship for a season. Besides, the Baroness wants to go to Montmorenci."

Here was the secret of his desire for relaxation. Madame and her children always rolled ten years off my General's back when they came to Quebec.

"Is the surprise you have in store for her there quite ready?" I asked.

"Quite; but not a word of it, Mathews, even to one of the little girls. They can go with us, and we shall have a *pique-nique*. You may invite also the Captain of the *Albemarle*."

"He sails to-day."

"Not till the out-going tide this evening. So says the pilot."

"Have you seen him?"

"No; but the Post-Captain has been here himself this morning to pay his *adieux*. These sailors are early astir. I asked him to wait for our excursion, and he seemed to think it would be worth the loss of the morning tide to have a closer view of that wondrous waterfall he had seen from the deck of his frigate. Madame and the children will go in the carriage with me. He can ride with you."

I raised no objections, though it seemed to me a shocking waste of time to go jaunting over the countryside, when there was so much to be done in town. It was nothing to me how many tides Nelson chose to lose before setting out on his voyage to the Gulph; but I felt it would have been more in the way of my duty to have stayed at home and kept a sharp look-out for the spy, Robinson, who might even then be in the city.

As it turned out, Nelson was no rider, and preferred to take a *calèche* for the seven miles down the river to Montmorenci. He picked out the vehicle

with the highest springs and the lowest back to be seen, so that with a lively horse between the shafts, our two-wheeled craft provided us with sufficient excitement. I kept my seat solidly enough, but the naval captain, being of lighter weight, clung to my arm in genuine alarm as we swung through Palace Gate, down the steep hill and across the long bridge over the St. Charles into more level, open country.

"Over there to the left," said I, "the French army was encamped in '59, when Wolfe stole a march upon them by attacking the town upon its steeper side. That circular embankment you can barely see from this road was mounted with cannon, and it commanded the bridge of boats that crossed over yonder to the General Hospital. It was in that 'Ring,' Montcalm was prepared to make his last stand, as it was along this Beauport shore we are coming to, quite near the Falls, that Wolfe made his unsuccessful attack some months before his successful *coup* on the Plains of Abraham."

"That is where genius counts," said Nelson, "to be able to see the point where one is not expected, and to rush in there." He drew a long breath as he continued—"Alas! that all the glory has been here won already!"

I smiled indulgently. Did he imagine himself in the class with General Wolfe? They had nothing in common, to my mind, save ill health and gentleness, combined with a fiery spirit.

"It is a pity you are not stronger," said I.

"Pity? I like not the word. I shall live to be envied, mark that, Captain. And these are the very hills that Wolfe was looking upon, whilst I was in my cradle!"

Assuredly they were beautiful that day, standing out with a clearness that foretold rain, and seeming to change their shapes and relative positions as we sped onwards. I prefer riding, myself, but there was somewhat of exhilaration in the pace our stout Canadian pony maintained, uphill and downhill alike. Nelson marvelled that our driver could keep his seat on the narrow shelf in front of us.

"I find it difficult, even with your strong arm to cling to, Captain Mathews. The perils of the deep are naught to this swaying. I verily believe I am turning seasick."

"Do you know the meaning of the word?"

"I am never well when it blows hard."

Here was a confession for a sea captain!

"It is only a few miles further. We can get down and walk, if you prefer it."

"Walk? Horrible! I am no walker, except on the quarter-deck. This hot, dusty road tempts me not. Who would dream it led out of Quebec? I have been used to think it was always winter in Canada."

"The winter roads are better, especially those that lead across the ice to the Isle of Orleans or to Point Lévis. The habitant, instead of being shut in by his mountainous snow-drifts, welcomes them for

the making of highways out into the world. Nothing can be done on the farm, why should he not visit his more distant relations ? ”

“ An idyllic country ! ”

“ Not exactly. They are not a quarrelsome people, coming easily to blows, as the Irish would, nor carrying knives in their belts, like the Spanish or Italians, but they are very fond of disputatious arguments. To hear one of these, you would think that blood was to be shed the next instant, but none ever flows. Their favourite vent is in public speaking, for which they have great talent, so that we have good cause for anxiety when a village orator mounts the stump in front of the church and tells the ignorant folk that the French are coming back to overthrow the rule of the hated English. Indians from Caughnawaga, opposite Montreal, guided a large company of Canadians down to Boston harbour to see the French ships riding at anchor there.”

“ Such wind will not fill their sails.”

“ But it does. There are still plenty of men alive who fought under Montcalm, or the yet more venerated Lévis, idol of all Canadians. They tell the younger folk of the glorious victories of the French at Oswego and at Carillon, and cease not to lament the insignificant skirmish on the Plains of Abraham that changed their destiny. They forget the long hours of forced labour without pay, the dreary shovelling of earth for embankments. 'Tis true the present Governor employs forced labour for

his public works, but at least he pays for what is done. If the British had not stepped in and taken this French colony, it would have rebelled against its Mother Country just as surely as ours have done. Their taxation, their oppression and wrongs far exceeded aught from which the English colonials ever suffered, and the Canadians were better trained to fighting."

"Had England wanted to retain her own colonies, she had been wiser to have left the French unmolested?"

"That was the only way. So long as there was a wholesome fear of the French and Indians, our colonies clung to the power which protected them. Once the foe to the northward was removed, they seized the first cause for revolt."

"Were there none among them disposed to trust the past record of England for fair dealing, and to wait for a change of ministry?"

"Thousands; but they were overruled by the shouting minority. In every civil war—and this is one—you will find that the more respectable party, on both sides, is led into extreme measures by a fluctuating mob that cares naught for the principles involved, but seeks a fight for what is to be gotten out of it. Should you land at Nova Scotia on your way out to sea, you will find there a fine settlement being built up by Tories from the English colonies, learned, cultivated folk, many of them, who have

been reduced to poverty for their adherence to conservative principles."

" Their loss is Canada's gain."

" To be sure ; and the years to come will show whether or not Congress can secure such desirable settlers as these they are driving out at the point of the bayonet, even as the Huguenots were from France."

" It must embarrass poor Provinces, like this and Nova Scotia, to have so many of the needy landed on their shores."

" It does indeed ! His Excellency has helped a number of the most destitute out of his private means, though he is not a rich man, and he has to trust to a dilatory Government for reimbursement. We cannot see the wives and children of those who are fighting for us perish for want of succour."

" His Excellency's secretary dives into his own pocket at times ? "

" Not a very deep pouch, as you may guess, but I own to having *fliped* it once in a way. What to do with the loyal is one of our problems ; what to do with the disloyal is another."

" You appear to me over-anxious in the latter regard. France has not actually made any overtures to the Canadians, has she ? "

" You are aware of Admiral d'Estaing's proclamation at the beginning of the war ? "

" No ; what did he say ? "

" I can remember a good deal of it, since I have

often been called upon to translate if for the benefit of my brother officers. It begins—

“ ‘ You are French-born. You cannot cease to be so. That which all men hold dear has been torn from you, even the name of your country. To force you, in spite of yourselves, to raise parricidal hands against her would be the greatest of calamities, and you are threatened with it.’ ”

“ Were they ? ”

“ Never. They were asked to remain neutral. An appeal is next made to their ancient attachment to the King of France—‘ Should necessity carry his arms, or that of his allies, into a country still dear to him, you need fear neither fire nor devastation. The Indians who loved him, and at one time called him their father, shall never be allowed to employ against them their cruel methods of warfare.’ ”

“ The Count speaks more confidently than your friend, Brant, did last night.”

“ He knows them not, as Joseph knows his brethren. The Proclamation continues :—

“ ‘ As a nobleman of France, I need not say to those among you born to the same rank, that there is but one august house under which a Frenchman can be happy and serve with pleasure. The Canadians who saw the brave Marquis fall in their defence—could they be enemies of his nephews ? fight against their ancient leaders ? arm themselves against their relations ? At the very thought the weapons would fall from their hands. I need not

say to the ministers of the Church that their evangelistic work will need special protection from Providence——”

“As it will get none from Congress.”

“It is necessary for a religion that those who preach it form a corps in the State, and there should be no body of men more esteemed, none with more power to do good, than that of the priests of Canada, taking part in the Government, for their exemplary conduct has merited the confidence of the people.”

“That was a telling shot, I can well believe. I have observed all the way up the river, as well as here, that the size of the church is out of all proportion to the dwellings of the habitants. The priesthood must have a strong hold upon them.”

“That is why we Protestants fear to let the clergy have the political power they are for ever trying to grasp. It would mean that they would rule the country. But let me make an end of the Count d’Estaing.”

Despite the swaying and jolting of our vehicle, I delivered the conclusion in a grandiloquent style that reminded me of Miss Simpson and her oratorio—

“An inexhaustible source of wealth and commerce is more easily acquired by a union with powerful neighbours than with strangers of another hemisphere, where everything is different, and sooner or later jealous and despotic sovereigns will treat you as *the conquered*. I declare formally in the name of His Majesty, who has authorized and

commanded me so to do, that all his old subjects of North America can count upon his protection and support. Done on board the vessel of His Majesty, the *Languedoc*, in Boston Roads, this 20th October, 1773, and signed ESTAING, Commander of the Squadron."

"Humph! He is better at proclamations than at fighting," said Nelson. "He threatened, but was afraid to attack Jamaica in '79, though he had a fleet of 125 warships and transports, and there were only 7000 men ashore to oppose them."

"Still, the seed he planted in this Province, Captain Nelson, fostered by later emissaries, has yielded a large harvest that appears to us to be merely waiting the hand of the rebel-reaper to garner it."

"The French are at the bottom of the whole war; but so long as we can hold them and the Spaniards at bay on the sea, they will find it impossible to land an army, and there is no need for you to be weighed down with a sense of coming disaster. You are old before your time, Mathews. Join with me heartily in the enjoyment of this my last day ashore for many weeks to come."

The buoyancy of his spirit was infectious. It was a continual surprise to me, as to all who knew him, how gallantly he could rise above the prostrating bouts of sickness that continually beset him. I grew ashamed of my gloom—a great, strong man like myself, who had never had a day's indisposition since

the ailments common to childhood. Here was a frail bit of humanity, with no constitution, who could not only meet with fortitude his own hardships, but could encourage others to do the like. I was told that when one of his newly-enlisted midshipmen showed signs of fear at climbing to the mast-head, he himself would race up ahead of the trembling boy, and wave his arm at the top, as if to show there was no danger. Truly it is "the spirit that quickeneth."

His inherent hatred of the French hindered him not from waving a hand at the small Canadians we saw along the roadside, nor from exchanging a cheery greeting with one Madame seated at her spinning wheel, and another drawing her bread from an out-of-door oven. The nation as a whole he might despise; the individuals he would regard as brother and sister wherever he met them. So we were driven onwards till we careered down the last long hill and then up again at break-neck speed to turn into the short avenue that led to His Excellency's substantial stone country-seat. He and the Riedesel party had just arrived, though they had started half an hour before us. Ours had been a much more rollicking gait than was permitted to the staid horses of the Governor-General.

The little girls—Augusta, Frederika, Caroline, aged ten, eight, and six, and even two-year-old America—called from the country of her birth—were all there, the three elders chattering in English much more freely than their mother was capable of doing.

Their shyness soon vanished before Captain Nelson's frank, sailor-like advances. What wonderful knots he could tie for them—and untie, like magic—with a piece of stray rope! I never saw the child that could resist him, and if there were older people who could, it was simply because he had not been at the pains to exert his charm.

CHAPTER V.

AT MONTMORENCI.

You Scots and English, who are never done extolling tiny streams and miniature waterfalls, have no conception of the gigantic form these things take in America. Montmorenci is not the most noted cataract on that continent, but it is higher than Niagara—a great, full-hearted body of water, tossing in rapids before it pitches itself over the cliff in a mass of white foam. Captain Nelson wished he could see it in winter, when I told him about the huge cone that was formed at its foot by the spray, from the top of which the more venturesome Quebeckers shot off in sleds that took a leap in mid-air before they landed on the ice far below, right side up—generally. More than one of our young officers, I regret to say, had been seriously injured whilst learning the trick of steering those swift-going, iron-shod sleds. Nelson professed a great desire to have an opportunity for trying the sport, but I was thankful it was the summer-time he was with us, since without doubt he would have risked his life in an attempt at navigation

essentially different from finding a way through the currents and shoals of our great river—the which, by all accounts, he had distinguished himself in doing. Aught that was daring to the point of foolhardiness always made irresistible appeal to him, which was the more surprising when one considered his frail physique.

We had luncheon in the spacious dining-room of Montmorenci House, a meal made merry by the presence of the children. The General appeared to them the *beau ideal* of an indulgent grandfather ; but Captain Nelson was like one of themselves, and his fun-making soon dispelled what slight embarrassment they might have felt at being seated at table with their seniors. His Excellency gave his arm to the Baroness as we left the table, while his little wife, as he called Augusta, claimed his other hand ; Nelson had Frederika and Caroline, and, lest the baby, America, should be left in my care, I delivered her over to her nurse, and followed the party through the pine trees to the edge of the bluff over which the river made its gallant plunge. There the Grand Surprise awaited Madame. On a previous visit she had expressed a wish to get over into the middle of the Falls—one of the foolish ambitions females are so apt to cherish—but General Haldimand had spared no pains or expense in its gratification. He had had a little summer-house constructed, with an approach from the bank, on top of one of the last boulders, round which the water boiled into foam before it

took its final leap. The Baroness uttered a cry of delight, and, with the stately grace of the old courtier that he was, His Excellency handed her across the succession of short foot-bridges that trembled with the commotion of the water beneath, into the chalet on the islet-rock. Augusta held back in alarm till I offered her a hand, while her younger sisters clung close as limpets to Captain Nelson, even after they had crossed to the summer-house of their mother's dreams.

I had to tell her exactly how the feat of building it had been accomplished—with what daring the timber-swingers had placed in position the eight stout logs on which the framework rested. She was content to sit there quietly for a long time, but the children soon tired of the tumbling, roaring water. They wished to get to a wider place, where it would be safe for them to do their own tumbling and roaring. There they could hear not the sound of their own voices, so Nelson and I took them in charge for a stroll above the Falls, where the river winds between high, rocky, wooded banks, in a narrower channel, that increases the velocity of its dark-brown water, studded with boulders and flecked with foam—soap-suds, the bairns called it. They threw in sticks for the pleasure of seeing how madly they were tossed about before being swirled towards the inevitable dash over the cliff, and they were insatiable in their desire to see what was “round just the next turn.” So we went further than we intended, and presently

came across a lad and a lass fishing in rather dangerous waters, one might have remarked. He wore the kilt, the most convenient costume for leaping from boulder to boulder amid-stream, and the girl down in the hurly-burly was barefoot like himself. The youth, I regret to say, was my own nephew—Robert Fraser; the female was none other than Mary Simpson! She was not at all overcome with maidenly confusion, when Nelson lent her a hand to climb up the steep bank, and then, with a sailor's handiness, helped her to squeeze the water out of the hem of her skirts, which had got wetted. He even offered to assist in the donning of her hose and shoon, but she replied saucily—

“ You must be well accustomed to bare feet aboard ship, Captain Nelson, so marvel not at mine. My shoes are drying over on that sunny rock. I got them soaked awhile since. These are the lassies I have seen at Samos, are they not? They look tired and warm. It was too long a walk for them to have come here from the house of His Excellency. Let us all sit down, and Captain Nelson shall tell us a sea story—a nice, cool one.”

She placed the small Riedesel girls upon her outspread skirts, as she squatted on the grass, and thus tucked her bare feet out of sight. Nelson sat facing her, his hands clasped round his knees, while I had a few words apart with my nephew.

“ What are you doing here with an English Miss,

when the purpose of your being in the Province is the study of French ? ”

“ We came to the Natural Steps, on a picnic with the Canadians in whose house I live. They are still up there, but Miss Simpson and I strayed down this way for the chance to cast a fly or two in peace and quiet.”

“ Quiet ? ”

The laughter of Miss Simpson, Nelson, and the children was making the woods resound.

“ It was quiet enough till you came along, Uncle Robert, with that funny-looking little chap, who seems to know my Polly.”

“ Your Polly, indeed ! ”

“ My Mary, my friend, my pal, my comrade—what you will.”

“ She is old enough to know better, if you are not.”

“ She is but seven years older than I am, Uncle Robert. You must remember I am now fifteen—no longer a child.”

“ I am aware of that. You are old enough to know better than to waste your time talking English when you ought to be hard at the French.”

“ Mary talks French with me.”

“ A pretty sort—*patois* ! ”

“ No, indeed, Uncle. She has studied with the Ursulines.”

“ Harken to me, Robert Fraser. Your mother wished you to be placed in a French family, where

you would hear no word of English spoken, and myself was at the pains to find a lodgment for you with genteel folk. Is it fair to us, I ask you, that you should squander your opportunities gallivanting off with an Englishwoman ? ”

“ Scotch,” replied the lad, with due humility.

“ Of Scottish parentage, I grant you ; but she was born in this country, and therefore considers herself the natural ally of these traitorous Canadians.”

“ Alexander Simpson was of General Wolfe’s army, Uncle Robert. You know it as well as I do. His daughter is even as loyal. She has herself told me to have naught to say to Dr. Vallière, for example, since he was not sound in that regard. He is with us to-day ; we left him upstream.”

“ You had done better to have stayed there with him. The Doctor is the one above all others whose society you ought to cultivate, for his French is Parisian. You might feel flattered should he ever condescend to address you.”

“ There ! She is singing. Let us go to hear.”

The lad caught my arm and hurried me towards the group we had left. Much he recked of my strictures ! Nelson seemed quite carried away by this nightingale of the Canadian woods, and her “ *claire fontaine*,” though for my part I had rather hearkened to the white-throated sparrows, whose unique refrain sounded antiphonally across the stream above the noise of the rapids.

“ Now then, the bear story ! The bear story ! ”

shrieked the small girls to the sailor when the song was ended, and, nothing loath to have all eyes upon him, especially the witching brown pair of the belle of Quebec, he began—

“Once upon a time, when I was quite a small boy, I was sent on board one of two ships that were going on a voyage of discovery towards the North Pole, where it freeze, freeze, freezes all the year round, and there is no land, only ice mountains. Sometimes a cliff breaks off, as high as the Falls here, and comes sailing down on the high seas to terrify us poor mariners. Well, the wind went down, and we were stuck up there—could not move away from the ice, for it froze harder and harder all about us. It was so hard that the sailors climbed over the side of the ship and played games upon it ; but we officers were worried to think how we could get out.”

“You was an officer so long ago ? ” asked my nephew.

“To be sure—a midshipman ; but I sailed as a coxswain for that voyage, because they objected to taking any middies with them. We had fog and we had clear weather, and we tried sawing our way through the ice. But it was twelve feet thick. It looked as if we should be held there all winter, and we had not provisions to last. So we set out in small boats to see if we could not find a passage into open water. One of our officers shot a walrus.”

“You ? ”

“No, Frederika, I could not ; their faces looked

too human. This one was only wounded, and it went below deck—under sea, I mean—and came back with the whole family to attack us. We had a hard time beating them off with our oars.”

“ But about the bear ? ” persisted Caroline.

“ I am coming to that. I went after it at night—for it is never dark up there in the summer time. It was foggy, though, so that neither I nor the boy who was with me could be seen leaving the ship. None of our seniors knew what we were about till the mist cleared away towards morning. Then they caught sight of two small boys chasing a big white bear across the ice. He would have made just two bites of either of us had he caught us ; but Providence put a channel of open water in between. I was planning how to cross this, when the Captain signalled us to return. My comrade obeyed, but I did not, though the bear was chasing me by this time. He could easily swim across the open channel, though I could not, and I had my gun raised to strike him with the butt end of it, for I knew that one bullet would never kill so huge a brute. It would only wound him, and make him hug me all the tighter when once he got me into his terrible clutches.”

“ But he did not get you ? ” from the breathless Frederika.

“ No, for here I am. The ship fired a cannon, and that scared the beast into a long, slow trot in the other direction. What a glorious thick skin he had ! I should have been a very proud boy had I been able

to take that home for my father's study in the Rectory."

"And you got out of the ice?" asked Augusta.

"Yes; for here I am. We had everything ready for leaving the ships, had put provisions into small boats, and had begun to drag them over to the biggest channel of open water we could find, leading in the right direction, when the wind changed to the east, and a passage was made wide enough to let the ships through. None of us would have been left to tell the story had we remained there all winter."

Miss Simpson made a pretence of shivering.

"That is a nice story for so warm a day. It cools one off delightfully. Where did you go next?"

"To India. There I could do naught but dream of the icebergs I had seen in the north. I had been a stout, rosy-cheeked boy, like Master Fraser here; but a year and a half of tropical climate was too much for me. I fell ill, and had to be sent home to England."

"To your mother?" asked the kindly Augusta.

"No, my dear, I had no mother. She died before I was your age."

"Poor Captain Nelson!" sighed the children's chorus.

Miss Simpson said nothing, but she looked her sympathy, and, with the spell of those liquid eyes upon him, he answered absently the questions of the small girls, whose interest waned with the passing of the bear.

"When you was well again, where did you go?" asked Robert.

"To Gibraltar. Five years ago I passed as lieutenant, and came across to Jamaica."

I did not hear the account of his succeeding adventures, for at that moment a messenger came to me from His Excellency. My presence was immediately requested at Montmorenci House. Nelson rose from the grass to return with me, but the little girls laid violent hands upon him, and forced him back on the grass.

"No, no!" they cried. "It is only Captain Mathews that is wanted, not you. One more story, please, just one!"

I waved him a laughing adieu, for I knew I could walk back more quickly if not handicapped by children.

"If you are happy——" said I.

"Happy? I would not call the King my cousin," he replied.

When I reached the house I found Madame de Riedesel and General Haldimand on the front gallery, bending their heads together over a paper on which were some badly-written French verses—

*"J'abjure de bon cœur le Pape et son Empire
Calvin nouvelle doctrine est l'objêt qui m'attire.
J'abandonne en forme la messe et la loye
Calvin et sa reforme a tout pourvoir sur moy.
Il faut que je ruine les feux au Purgatoire
Calvin et sa doctrine sont ceux qui je veux croire.
Je combattrai toujours le pape et sa cœur
Calvin et ses discours enflament mon amour."*

"The serpent in the Garden of Eden, is it not?" said the Baroness.

"No loyal Canadian could have written it," I replied. "Can it be emblematic, the Pope standing for His Majesty, Calvin for Lafayette?"

"It may be so," remarked the General; "but the lady was quicker in her intuitions than either of us."

"The spaces between the lines are wide enough to permit of something being written between," she said. "Let us hold it to the heat."

There was none in the dining-room fireplace on so warm a day, but a few embers remained in the kitchen since the preparation of our luncheon. So, while cook and scullery-maid stared in amaze at the invasion of their domain, I used bellows on their dying fire, and His Excellency held the paper to the glow, which, in a manner resembling magic, brought to light the following, written in milk between the lines:—

"If you can keep your promise to have 500 men ready to join us on our arrival, we shall no longer delay our coming. Send us word, finally, by the messenger who takes this."

"Where is the messenger?" I asked. "Who is he?"

"Gustave Tremblay," said the General.

"Humph!" I thought. "One of the men so kindly released from the press-gang yesterday. He may even then have had this traitorous document in

his possession. Strange that he should be again in the same locality as Miss Simpson. Perhaps she was going down Mountain Hill to meet him."

"How did he happen to be caught?" I asked His Excellency.

"Back there, by the stables, he was overheard talking with the driver of the *calèche* that brought you here, urging him to let him take his place on the way back to town, as he was in great haste to get there. One of my grooms, who knew the knave, questioned him as to his errand, and in the assurance of not being betrayed by a fellow Canadian, he drew this sheet from his sleeve, and said that he had orders to deliver it without delay to some one in Quebec."

"To whom?"

"That is the perplexing question, Mathews."

"Robinson," I said to myself. "Robinson, without a doubt."

Aloud, I said—

"We can, at least, question him."

"That is impossible, for he has made his escape."

"How did that come to pass, sir?"

"With the connivance of my groom, I am sadly afraid. His curiosity was excited by this mysterious letter, which Tremblay said he could trust to no hands but his own for delivery, so he snatched it from him. And then he was none the wiser, for he cannot read. So despite the fearful, even tearful,

objections of the carrier, he appealed to my coachman—a loyal Swiss—who at once had his suspicions that all was not above board, so he brought the paper to me. By the time he returned to the stables, Gustave Tremblay had disappeared. Had he been a more experienced detector of criminals, my good man had proceeded with more caution."

"Does the groom know where Tremblay lives?"

"He says not. We have already asked him, for my first idea was to send him on horseback after the rogue."

"Useless. These Canadians will never betray one another."

"I have had no cause, hitherto, to doubt the loyalty of this particular groom, but it might be better for you to go yourself in pursuit, Mathews. If you saw the man yesterday, you would know him again. But what have you done with Captain Nelson?"

"And with my children?" cried the Baroness. "Neglectful mother that I am! The interest of this inquiry has made me forget them."

"Your daughters are with the naval officer, Madame, and he is held in thrall up the stream, half a mile or so, by a belle of Quebec—Miss Mary Simpson."

"The same he recommended as governess for my little girls? It is kind of him to make them acquainted."

The General and I exchanged glances. We doubted Nelson's disinterestedness in the matter.

"She is a siren," said he. "The Post-Captain is under her spell."

"But my children!" cried the Baroness, in growing alarm.

"She is woman enough not to let them fall into the water," I grudgingly admitted. "Look, yonder they come!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAIL OF THE TRAITOR.

It was Baby America who had given warning of the approach of her sisters by trying to escape from the detaining hand of her nurse to run to meet them. They must have set off soon after I did, Nelson probably remembering the call of duty at last. The children looked tired, as if he had been walking too fast for the pair that had him by the arms ; Caroline was perched high on Miss Simpson's shoulder.

"What a charming picture!" exclaimed the Baroness. "A veritable Diana!"

Now that she was relieved from her anxiety with regard to her offspring, she was prepared to credit Miss Simpson with every grace imaginable.

My nephew had preferred to rejoin the party of Canadian picknickers, but Captain Nelson told me the small girls had refused to be parted from Miss Simpson. She must take them in turn to carry back to their mother.

"I offered to aid in the convoy duty," he said ; "but they pronounced my shoulder too bony.

They wanted a nice plump one to sit on, like Miss Simpson's."

As the girl was exchanging polite speeches with Madame—to whom Nelson had introduced her—I had a word aside with His Excellency.

"If there is any one likely to know where is the home of Tremblay, it is this Miss Simpson. She might even direct me to it in the *calèche*."

"No, no, Mathews," said the General, smiling. "We shall put no such penance upon you. Ask her where he lives; that is enough. There is a horse or two in the stable here. Take the best, and let the demoiselle drive back to town in the *calèche*, with the Post-Captain. He may perchance enjoy her society even more than yours."

"How he can be so taken up with a low-born beauty——"

"Tut tut! Mathews. We were all young once. For the safety of the navy I have no concern. It is my own officers I seek to preserve from temptations of this nature."

Now that she had gotten her hose and shoon on, the temptress surely did look alluring—as much of a lady as the Baroness herself; for with an unusual quantum of adaptability, she had instantly caught the air of the *grande dame*. This was no longer the bare-legged hoyden we had found wading the Montmorenci with my nephew. I felt myself a brusque boor, as I intruded upon the talk of the ladies.

"Will you permit me to have speech with you for a moment, Miss Simpson?"

Her eyes met mine like the clash of steel. She felt trouble in the air, being forewarned, perchance, by our encounter of the day before.

"What do you wish of me, Captain Mathews?"

"A suggestion as to the probable whereabouts of a friend of yours who has made his escape from us—as he did from the press-gang yesterday."

"That was very neglectful of Captain Mathews—to let a friend of mine escape."

"His Excellency desires me to discover if you know where this Gustave Tremblay lives. He has been caught carrying a letter from the rebels to one of their sympathizers, who are only too common among us."

"You suspect that one of them is the daughter of Saunders Simpson? A soldier who fought under Wolfe?"

"There are many in the English colonies who fought under Wolfe who are now fighting against the King they swore allegiance to at that time."

I am not a man to be easily moved, but I own it set my blood in rapid circulation to see the beautiful Diana in a temper. The presence of the Baroness and His Excellency restrained her not a whit. She even stuttered in her haste to vent her wrath upon me.

"You—you—w-would set a thief to catch a thief—is that it? Let me tell you then that not a hint shall you get from me regarding the whereabouts of any of my friends—not one."

How much more she might have said, I know not ; but Captain Nelson came to her side at this juncture.

" Our good Mathews is a bungler," he said. " Having let the enemy escape, he is bent on blaming somebody for something."

" I did not let him escape. I have not seen him—since yesterday. All I want to know is where this Gustave Tremblay lives, and that I have asked his friend, Miss Simpson, to tell me."

Her smiles could follow quickly upon her frowns, it appeared. She had a merry glance for the naval officer ere she turned to me defiantly.

" Gustave Tremblay lives at L'Ange Gardien, in the house next the church. That ought to content Captain Mathews."

If I hoped to overtake the rascal before he reached home, I must be off at once, so I hurriedly took farewell of the company, whose gaiety would not suffer eclipse through my departure. I was confirmed in that opinion as I mounted the horse of His Excellency, and rode off. The sound of voices and laughter showed that both myself and my errand were already forgotten.

When I had left the grounds behind and turned my face eastward on the open road, I met a stiff breeze blowing up from the Gulph. That meant rain, and I hoped the party, which included those tender little children and their mother, in a delicate state of health, would get back to town without a wetting. The General had, to be sure, a closed carriage at

Montmorenci, but it was not so roomy nor so comfortable as the open one in which they had come from town. It took me some time to detach my thoughts from the scene I had left, but I was suddenly recalled to the obnoxious quest I had undertaken by the horse I rode casting a shoe. I dismounted, and found that the whole four were loose—and a blacksmith not to be had till a mile or so further along the road! I walked the distance, cursing the delay, and I cursed still more roundly when the smith told me he had completely reshod that horse only the week before.

“Some one has been drawing the nails out quite recently,” he affirmed.

“The groom!” I said to myself.

But it was needless to expect sympathy in that score from this other Canadian. We British were all outsiders, interlopers, whom it was no sin to deceive at every opportunity. Whilst he was at work within, I stood at the door of the blacksmith's shop, too much put out to lend an ear to his chatter, as it was generally my policy to do. Should I tell him my mission, he might contrive still further to delay me, so I waited, impatiently, while thunder rumbled back and forth among the mountains. As I started off again, dark clouds had massed their forces for a storm. The wind rose first, but the rain followed shortly in large drops, then blinding sheets and gusts that hid the Isle of Orleans from my sight—all my surroundings but the few feet of drowned road directly before me. Even my thick uniform was no

shield against such a downpour, and had I been wise, I had turned back to town, there and then, to hunt for the man Robinson, whom I was assured was at the bottom of the affair ; but I could not think of facing the General in the morning with a tale of a wetting having diverted me from the course he had marked out for me to follow.

So I bent low over the back of the beast to meet the attacks of wind and rain that increased in violence with every mile I travelled. The water dripped from the brim of my hat and trickled down the back of my neck. It blew up my sleeves and soaked in at my boot-tops, till there was not an inch of dry territory anywhere on my person, when at length I guided the horse carefully down the last long hill that led to the house next the church at L'Ange Gardien. It proved to be that of the curé.

"Gustave Tremblay ?" he replied, in answer to my inquiry. "He lives on the other side of the church. You must have passed his cottage coming down the hill, if you have ridden from Quebec."

My travel-soaked appearance gave that impression, and I would not take time to undeceive the good priest, nor accept his invitation to a comfortable meal and a change of clothing.

"It will be of a clerical cut," he said, smiling ; "but a dry soutane is surely better than a wet uniform."

"I shall be wetter yet before I find my man,"

said I, with a cheerful adieu, not knowing how truly I spake.

Leading the tired horse by the bridle, I made my way up the hill again slowly, for torrents were rushing down it. The rain had now settled into a hard, steady fall; but the lightning continued with a vividness that might have alarmed a more timid man—with less on his mind. My own horse would never have turned a hair, but the General's needed a soothing after every flash and peal of thunder.

The second door at which I knocked was opened by a slight, dark young habitant of perhaps two-and-twenty.

"You are the son of Gustave Tremblay?" I asked.

"No, monsieur. I am Gustave. My father, who is dead, was Thomas."

"Then it is not you that I seek, but an older Gustave, the father of many children."

"That must be my cousin, Gustave, son of Joseph. He lives at Château Richer. Marie and I have but two children. Would you come in, sir, to see them?"

"Thank you, no. I have urgent business with your cousin."

Madame Tremblay, a smiling-faced girl, still in her 'teens, peeped over Gustave's shoulder at the unlooked-for caller on such a night. Assuredly she was not the mother of a large family.

So I continued riding to the next village, though

it was a risky manner of procedure after the dusk had crept out of the woods to surround me. Every hill on the road had been "gullied" by a torrent, and every stream I had to cross was swollen to three times its natural size. My horse had difficulty in fording these, and, being strange to me, I had not the same confidence in his sure-footedness as I should have had in the stepping of my own good grey, Oliver Cromwell. The knave I was chasing had had a long enough start to have reached his home by this time, and I doubted not he was snugly sheltered there against the inclemency of the weather, upon which he counted to shield him from pursuit. He reckoned without a hardy Scot, to whom rain and sunshine were alike, though I own to being mightily disgusted at the drenching I was getting.

The family of Gustave, son of Joseph Tremblay, were all at home when I reached Château Richer—eating their evening meal in the kitchen, into which I was ushered by a small daughter of the house. The man seated at the head of the table was not the one I sought. He apologized as heartily as if the fault had been his own, for bringing me out on such a night, and I responded with apologies for the water that was trickling from my garments to the detriment of Madame's spotless floor.

"There is a Gustave Tremblay in every village from here to Tadousac," said her husband.

Had Miss Simpson known this, I vaguely wondered.

"The man I seek has, like yourself, a large family."

"We all have—those of us who are old enough. And we are all related, more or less nearly, to one another."

"The Gustave Tremblay I have seen is a short, dark-complexioned man."

"We are all dark-complexioned and short, Monsieur."

"He owns a schooner——"

"Ah, that must be Gustave Antoine, at the other end of this village—the first house after you cross the Sault à la Puce. If he be not the one you seek, you must ride on to S. Joachim—Ste. Anne—as far as your horse will carry you—and begin again at daybreak. It may be a fine day to-morrow. This is July, the storm will not last."

I thanked him, and rode out into it, facing the darkness that seemed all the blacker for the cheery fireside I had left. What was the object, as Dr. Vallière had said, in harrowing these peaceable Canadians? I had been well content to have left them unharrowed that particular night; but my horse would at least carry me to the end of Château Richer, though that village of a single road stretched itself for several miles along the water front. The zest had gone from my undertaking. Was it possible that Miss Simpson had purposely set me off on a wild-goose chase? She had not known of the storm coming on, which made all the difference. She would

not dream I would continue my search in spite of it, though she herself was not lacking in the national persistence. I would ride down the river, though it should take me days to do it, until I had seen for myself every one answering to the name of Gustave Tremblay. A second time he should not escape me.

The next who bore it was a man over eighty, seated in the chimney corner, tending the soup-pot swung over the open fire of logs. The contents smelled good to a hungry man, though I knew that meat, fish, and vegetables were probably boiling there all together. I stood with my back to the blaze while my wet clothes steamed, and I hearkened to the whole history of the Tremblay family, from the first who landed in the colony—a private in the regiment of Carignan-Salières. I was reluctant to leave his fire, and so let the garrulous old man ramble on. He had a son, Gustave, it appeared; but he had died at the age of twelve, and the name had not been transferred to another son, though half a dozen had arrived to fill the vacancy. When at last I succeeded in pinning the old habitant down to the information I sought, he gave it to me clearly enough.

“It must be Gustave Tremblay of Beauport, that you seek. He it was who married the sister of Jacques Michaud, of the Chaudière. They have twelve children—Marie, Marcelline, François——”

I did not wait to hear the rest, nor to learn exactly how it had come to pass that this particular

Gustave Tremblay had come to settle in Beauport. I was too angry—with Miss Mary Simpson. I had now not a doubt that it was to her the traitor was trying to deliver the letter snatched from him. Why else should she send me post-haste down the river, when the Gustave Tremblay that we sought lived up the river, between Montmorenci and Quebec? She might descend from a long line of loyalists; she herself was in league with spies and rebels.

Much more I said in my wrath, as I turned my horse's head townwards. Once the lights in the Château Richer cottages were left behind, the road stretched before me, black as ink; the rain still fell persistently, and more than once a fallen tree barred my advance. But the wind was now with me, and had my horse not been so greatly fatigued, I should have made better time on the way back. He was fain to turn into the Montmorenci stables, but I urged him onwards, though I knew it was useless to dream of capturing the guilty Gustave now. Miss Simpson would take care to warn him that I was on his trail when she passed through Beauport on her way home. Captain Nelson would never be the one to hinder her. On the contrary, he would be more inclined to participate in the enjoyment of the prank she had played upon me.

What a lively ride they must have had together in that risky *calèche*, which would demand the sailor's holding on to her, doubtless, as he had done to me. There would be no word of seasickness on

the way back to town, that I could swear, but I hoped he was by this time getting a good tossing on his way down to the Gulph, and a better one when he got there. It would be no more than his deserts should he be horribly seasick in return for being beguiled into staying so long ashore by a female of doubtful loyalty. Was he not to blame that the two rascals were still at large who were giving me such a damned disagreeable ride on such a night ?

When at length I reached Beauport, I had difficulty in finding a lighted window—the habitants had all gone to bed. The house of Gustave Tremblay was among the entirely darkened, but I had the satisfaction of routing his wife up to open the door. She was in her bedgown, and surrounded by a horde of sleepy children, also robed, or rather disrobed, for the night. The husband and father had not been home for a week—so she affirmed, but I doubted her word, as I should have been inclined to doubt the word of any female, since I had one to thank for my drenching. I showed the warrant made out for the arrest of Gustave, though it meant nothing to his wife, who could not read, and then I inspected every spot in the house and barns large enough to conceal a man. He was not recumbent in any of the built-in beds, nor hidden beneath one, nor had he crawled up the wide chimney for safety, as I had heard of some spies doing. The bird had flown.

Tired and dejected as I was myself, I forced the horse to carry me home to Quebec, and stabled him

comfortably with Oliver Cromwell, at an early hour in the morning. Nobody likes to be baulked in a little game he has set out to play, even if it be only a pastime, but in a matter in which the fate of a colony was involved, it was maddening to have been made the victim of a practical joke. I tossed on a wakeful pillow, breathing anathemas against Mary Simpson. What had she been doing in Lower Town yesterday? Was she on the watch for a messenger with a letter? Was she aware that this man had one for her, and was that why she had objected to his impressment? Had she gone down to Montmorenci, towards the Falls, on purpose to meet him? Had he known of the picnic at the Natural Steps and been at the Falls by appointment? Had Miss Simpson spent the last evening pleasantly with Mr. Robinson, whilst I was well out of the way? He might be an admirer—a widower—why not?

So far did my sleeplessness send my suspicions, I was ashamed of some of them when morning broke, and therefore went to the other extreme of belittling the whole. It was not worth while to breathe a word in the ear of His Excellency—yet. Few passed between us regarding the outcome of my mission. I scorned to screen myself behind petticoats, and therefore said nothing of the part Miss Simpson had played in the escape of her friend. The more people that should be informed of her trick, the better pleased she would be. It would not occur to her that such a one might create a prejudice against her at

head-quarters. Her peculiar type of humour appeared to gratify the navy; the army would have none of it.

The third of July was hot as the second had been, despite the intervening storm, but I settled myself for a day's hard labour to make up for lost time. The copying of letters into cypher was no easy task, to the accompaniment of flies that buzzed round the ink-well, and hot air that stirred the window-curtains and pervaded the library like the breath of a furnace. I longed to be out in the open, but since I had proved myself a failure in action, I must stick to the pen. As if he divined my thoughts, the General laid his hand upon my shoulder—a familiarity he seldom displayed, even with the nearest and dearest of his staff, which I flattered myself that I was.

“If you did not run your quarry to earth, the fault was none of yours, Mathews. Of that I am convinced. *Pouf!* Let the letters stand.”

“They stood yesterday, sir.”

“And can stand till to-morrow. The English packet has already sailed, under convoy of the *Albemarle*. Here is the next matter of moment on hand—a letter from Vermont. It was brought to me last night by a young man called Robinson.”

“The devil! So that was his little game?”

“Is it that you speak?”

“No, sir. I merely recalled the fact that the spy Vallière told us about was so named.”

“’Tis not uncommon, is it?”

" Oh, no ; quite common in the English colonies, I should say. Shall I translate the letter for you ? "

" No, I do not care to hear the French of it. I obeyed orders, and sent troops to the frontiers of Vermont in the spring to induce the people to declare themselves, that we might protect them against Congress ; but nothing came of it, as you are aware. Now I am weary of M. Chittenden and the Allen brothers, with their professions of friendship. Had not Lord Germain commanded us to keep the door open, I should have shut it in their faces as soon as we got word of the defeat of Cornwallis. Since that time there has been no sincerity in their protestations."

" I doubt if there ever has been any, though they appear to think we are easily deceived."

" Be that as it may, I want you to take this precious epistle out to Samos, and see what Mabane thinks of it. If you and he find anything in it worthy of response, we can get hold of this fellow Robinson again and send an answer back by him."

" Do you know where he is ? "

" He agreed to come to Woodfield this evening, when I told him I should be there ; but I do not feel equal to the exertion. That is why I am sending you. I wish you to make inquiries also for the health of the Baroness and her children, after the fatigues of yesterday. I trust they got safely home before the storm broke."

I hoped so too, having felt its fury. Even in a

closed carriage, the experience would not be agreeable. It is true that the General was far from well at the time, but I credited him with a desire to drive me from the desk. He always concealed his kindness under a peremptory order, lest any should suspect he was not at heart the stern disciplinarian he appeared.

CHAPTER VII.

OUT AT WOODFIELD.

It was with keen delight that I exchanged the chair for the saddle, and felt my good Oliver Cromwell bounding between my knees. The fiercest heat of the day had passed, and already a cool breeze was rippling the surface of the St. Lawrence, as I came in sight of it on the road of St. Lewis, without the Gate. The high-road skirted the Plains of Abraham, but turned nearer the cliff after they were past. I was always pleased to have occasion for a chat with my fellow-countryman, Doctor Adam Mabane, of Edinburgh, who had been eighteen years in Canada, as surgeon to the garrison, and was now a Judge in the Province, one whose straightforward words and ways were often highly displeasing to his colleagues on the bench—and off it. He was one of the few among his councillors whom His Excellency could trust, and the only one at whose fireside he sat as a friend. Mabane was a man of forty-eight at this time, turning grey at the temples—a cousin of the poet Thompson, which may have accounted for his

inveterate habit of indulging in poetical quotations, chiefly from Shakespeare. His disposition was kindly—to his friends. What his foes thought of it was another matter.

As to the Baroness de Riedesel, I was pleased also at the prospect of seeing her again. None could be long in her presence without feeling peace descend upon him. I could imagine the comfort she had been to her husband throughout the war, sympathizing in the reverses he had met at Saratoga and elsewhere, and sharing, as she had done, all the hardships of camp life. Not even an American historian has aught but praise for the brave lady who left a comfortable home on the other side of the Atlantic and came alone among strangers, speaking a strange tongue. She had brought three little children with her, one a babe in arms; the fourth had been born on this side, and now a fifth was expected.

Presently I turned in at the Woodfield gate, hospitably open, and quickened Oliver's pace to a canter as I rode up the shady, tree-bordered avenue. The sunlight that flickered through the arch of leaves on that winding way was a blessing, while on the hot, dusty highway it had been a curse. As the garden came into view on my right, I saw the white dresses of a lady and three children. Apparently they were playing hide-and-seek among the currant-bushes, for a shrill young voice was piping up—

"Onery, twoery, tickery, teven,
Allabo, crackabo, ten and eleven.
Ping, pang, musky dann,
Tweedlum, twaddlum, twenty-one,
Black beaver, white trout,
Eary, ary, you are out."

I did not *hear* all those words—just enough to recall the rhyme which I had used in my own childhood. Where had the Riedesel lassies learnt it? From Mistress Elizabeth Mabane, probably, who kept house for her younger brother; but she was not nimble enough to be playing with them. Hearing my horse's steps, the game was forsaken for the gratification of feminine curiosity. I marvelled at the speed of the Baroness over the lawn, in the wake of her children. But it was not Madame, only another female of the same height—Miss Mary Simpson.

She dropped me a courtesy, in which I detected irony, and I should have passed her by with all the hauteur at my command—which was considerable in those days—had not Augusta, Frederika, and Caroline seized upon me without ceremony, demanding that they should be allowed to ride my horse before the groom took it away. Oliver was a friendly beast, though spirited, and he raised no objections when the three little maids were placed upon his back, one behind the other. They clamoured that there was room for America also, and despite my demur, Miss Simpson caught up the two-year-old, who had toddled within grasping distance

of her voluminous skirts, and mounted her in front of Augusta. Her two chubby hands clutched tightly at Cromwell's grey mane, and her eyes filled with a fearful joy, as I set him going at his slowest walk.

"Somewhat rash——" I began.

But Miss Simpson silenced me with a laughing gesture.

"I hold her firmly, Captain Mathews. You can walk the horse by the path that goes round the house, then he will not need to turn about and spill his cargo."

I am not specially fond of children—not of all children indiscriminately—as some men profess to be. I regard them as individuals—some to be encouraged, some chidden, all to be kept in their place; and it did not appear to me that the back of my tall horse was exactly the place in which their mother would like to see those bairns. Attractive little mortals they were, babbling away in their broken English, repeating the one I had heard, as well as other counting-out rhymes Miss Simpson had evidently taught them, for she corrected errors as we went along. After a time she addressed me from the other side of the horse.

"I have to thank you, Captain Mathews, for being here this afternoon."

"Indeed?"

I had been wondering what brought her, since I was not aware that she had any acquaintance with

the doctor or his sister ; but, under the circumstances, I could not very well inquire.

"It was good of you," she continued, evidently with an effort, "to speak so kindly of me to the Baroness."

"Great Heavens ! I never spoke of you to her in my life. Why should I ? "

"Then who was 'the Captain' that recommended me to her so highly as the person most suitable to hold French converse with her little girls ? "

"The naval officer, she meant—your friend, Horatio Nelson."

"What does he know of me, or of the quality of my French ? " she asked, with a blush that became her.

But I hardened my heart, and answered ruthlessly—

"Nothing whatever. He understands neither females nor French."

Anger deepened her colour still more, and she had been red enough at the outset, since her races with the children. With one hand she held on by America, but with the other she stroked Oliver's soft nose, as she said—

"What a rude master you have, beastie ! "

Her touch made the horse toss his head—no more than his master was he used to the caresses of women—and the smallest Riedesel would assuredly have come toppling to the gravel road had I not caught her and restored her balance. We were near the house

at the time, and America's cry of alarm brought both the doctor and his sister to the doorway.

"Gudesake! What a handsome couple, and what a fine family!" he exclaimed, with that touch of vulgarity for which the elderly Scot is famous.

I own to reddening at the remark, but it seemed to restore Miss Simpson's equanimity, and she replied in the vernacular.

"Thank ye kindly, doctor; but we'd like a laddie or twa."

"Hoots, lass, ye must not be letting their mother hear ye. Her eyes are bad, after the driving yesterday, Captain, and she is lying down up the stair with the blinds drawn."

"Did she get a wetting on the way home?" I asked.

"No, no! They were all safely under cover before the storm broke."

I glanced at Miss Simpson, but she did not inquire where I had been when the storm broke. She hid her face behind the child she was lifting from the horse.

"I am sorry her ladyship is indisposed," I said. "The General sent me to ask——"

"Ah, you come on an errand, Robin. It was neither to see me nor to go a-riding with the weans and Miss Simpson that brought you out the road. Aweel, now that you are here, you shall wait to supper with us, and escort the young lady home."

"No, indeed, doctor!" she exclaimed. "I am

even now thinking it was time for me to be starting back to town."

"Tut tut! You were not making a move in that direction till I spoke."

He tucked the girl's arm within his own, and drew her towards the house. The Judge had taken a sudden fancy to her; so, it appeared, had his sister. Such an invasion of my stronghold made me vaguely jealous. This was the only place in the Province where I felt thoroughly at home. The Reidesel children clung to Miss Simpson's skirts in dismay when she proposed leaving them so early, and as an inducement to the prolonging of her visit, began to pester her with the French phrases she had taught them that afternoon. The mixture of tongues amused the doctor mightily, but his sister intervened.

"Hush, hush, weans! Ye'll wauken yer mither! Ah, Miss Simpson, I wish ye could be going home with them to Sorel."

"I should like it too," replied the girl; "but I cannot be leaving my own mother. I am all she has left."

"Come! Do!" cried Augusta. "You shall have the General's room when he is not there."

This *was* rash! The Baroness was not likely to place a hireling in the chamber of honour, specially built in her house for His Excellency to occupy on his occasional visits to Sorel.

"Look not so horrified, Robin," said the Judge, with a smile. "Bairns will be bairns; though, for

my part, I should consider no room in my house too good for Miss Simpson. 'She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested.' "

Miss Mary smiled and dimpled as if she thought the praise originated with Mabane. Her vanity had not been so flattered had she known he was merely quoting Iago.

"In this case I cannot do even so much as I am requested," she replied; "but it would please me vastly to come out to talk French with the children whenever they are here—without recompense. Please explain that to Her Ladyship, Mistress Mabane."

"I will e'en do so the morn, if ye will bide and sup with us the night."

"It will delight me to stay, if I am permitted to depart—alone—immediately after we have supped. It will still be daylight."

"We shall see about that," said the Judge. "If this gallant here had the spunk o' a louse he would be saying that naething would give him more pleasure than a tramp of ten times three miles with the belle of Quebec."

"Captain Mathews is an honest man," said the beauty, dropping me too deep a courtesy for the occasion.

I had not the nimble wit that could cope with hers, so I merely mumbled something into the neck of America, whom I was carrying into the house. She

treated me as she had done Cromwell, but, happily, I wore my own hair—had no wig to be set askew.

“How brawly ye look wi’ yer heid touzled, Robin,” said Mabane. “’Tis what ye need, laddie—twa-three weans to tak’ the starch out o’ ye.”

“If you could promise me a lass like this, doctor——”

I tossed America high as I could reach, and brought her down again, shrieking with laughter, to clasp her fat arms about my neck—a pleasurable sensation, I allowed, and one that I had not experienced since my namesake nephew was a baby. Poor Robin! He would be fancying himself in disgrace with me, though I could not blame him for having his head turned by one who had succeeded in bewitching older and wiser folk.

The Baroness herself could not have received more honour at table. Where would Miss Simpson sit, and which of the small girls should be placed next her? One on either side, if they had their way; but the Judge claimed her for his right hand—my accustomed seat, save when I yielded it with a good grace to His Excellency. America had been carried off by her nurse, but her three sisters provided sufficient entertainment for us all. They must tell their host and hostess about the *gay pique-nique* at the Falls, and about the wonderfully friendly naval officer who had had such wonderful adventures with bears and other beasties.

"He must be above the ordinary, that young Nelson," said Mabane.

"As he has been at sea since he was twelve," I remarked, "he cannot have much education."

"A fig for book-learning!" cried our host—and it came well from so omnivorous a reader as himself. "Give me the man who can handle his ship, his horse, his sword, his ploughshare, like a man. I care not what the instrument may be, provided he use it with skill."

"Even the rod of correction," said Miss Simpson, with a glance at myself across the table.

She, no doubt, thought me cut out for a school-master, and pictured me using the said rod upon herself for her trick of yesterday. The Judge and his sister did not understand the hidden meaning of the sally, but they saw that it was directed against myself, and the lady of the house hastened to defend me.

"The pen is mightier than the sword with Captain Mathews now, but it has not aye been so, nor will it aye be."

I bowed my acknowledgments, and Mistress Mabane continued—

"I am thinking it is the Baron de Riedesel that ought to be here with the rod of correction this verra minute. There! there! Augusta! You have put quite enough of that damson jam on your scone! Frederika! You need none at all on your short-bread. It is cake—no' like loaf-bread! Caroline,

dinna reach across the table! *Certes!* what would yer mither say of yer behaviour—when we have company, too!”

Like the genuine Scot that he was, Judge Mabane could not refrain from putting a rider on his sister’s praise of myself.

“What is all your experience in the field or at the desk good for, Robin, when you have had none at the fireside?”

Fearing that he was about to enter upon some of his ill-timed jests about matrimony, from which the presence of females never deterred him, I begged to be excused before the children had finished eating, and said—

“May I have a word with you in private, doctor? His Excellency wished me to ask your opinion of a letter he has just received from Vermont.”

“Nothing private about that, I swear. We can go out on the gallery, though, where it is cooler.”

As I had hoped and expected, Miss Simpson tried to make her escape in an opposite direction, but the Judge calmly took her by the hand and drew her along with him out to the wide verandah, planting her in my favourite seat, that which commanded the view both up and down the great river. Sillery Point lay to the right, shutting out the stretch of water beyond it, while to our left was Pointe à Pizeau, hiding the ravine up which Wolfe had

marched his men that momentous morning in September, twenty-three years before. Had the attempted landing been made closer to us, by way of the next stream-bed to the westward of the one actually followed, Samos Battery might have been heard from. It was quite near the doctor's house, which had been called therefrom Samos Manoir by its previous occupant. To the eastward was a stretch of blue water, ere the stout, bare shoulder of Cape Diamond, jutting out into the stream, closed the view on that side. The voices of the timber-swingers rose to us from below the cliff, on the verge of which the house was built, and over the way was the long string of whitewashed houses bordering the river highway, and dominated by the church of St. Romuald. Beyond that was an undulating ocean of trees, with a solitary white spire standing up like a lighthouse; and on the horizon a wavy purple band—the mountains of Megantic and Vermont.

“You will get a rest from those rollicking weans out here, Robin,” said the Judge. “Now for the letter. Read it aloud.”

I hesitated, but Mabane was bound, as usual, to have his way.

“I am ready to take my oath that there will be nothing in it harmful to Miss Simpson, or to any other female,” he said.

So I kept my doubts of her to myself, and did as I was told.

* " To His Excellency, Governor-General Haldimand, at Quebec, June 11th, 1782.

" " HONOURED SIR,

" " That nothing may be left undone, which can promote the present negotiations, we will, if your Excellency thinks proper, immediately send a number of private agents in favour of Vermont into the New York and New England Provinces by selling them tracts of land on the frontiers ; and further, if your Excellency thinks it advisable, we will endeavour to raise a regiment or two of able-bodied men from the other provinces and station them in Vermont, under pretence of protecting the frontiers. In raising these, great care would be had to enlist the more loyal, or at least moderate men, and none should be officers except such as are well known and tried friends to Government. These to be commissioned in the name of the Government of Vermont, by your Excellency's orders, and the advice of such commissioners as your Excellency should appoint for that purpose. Such regiments to be supported by the King, and be always ready to act in and out of Vermont, as your Excellency shall order. Thus far I have not deviated from the principles of my employers, the ruling men of Vermont. But my fear lest something should interfere to prevent our reunion with Britain, induces me to propose to your Excellency an immediate recognition of Vermont, by a secret Treaty with them, to be signed and ratified

* Original in the British Museum.

by Governor Chittenden, General Allan, and the Council, declaring Vermont a British Province, and engaging to use every prudent measure to promote His Majesty's Government until His Excellency can protect them in a publick declaration—although I am not authorized to make this proposition yet. I am persuaded one of the same purport from your Excellency would be acceptable to the Government and legislative authority of Vermont. I am sent by Governor Chittenden, General Allen, and their privy council to engage on behalf of Vermont that the authority and most of the populace in that state are desirous to come under the British Government, on the conditions offered by your Excellency. They have likewise promised to abide by any engagement I shall enter into for them, provided the same be kept a profound secret till Great Britain can assist and protect them, and provided they shall not be obliged to go out of Vermont to make war with the other states, they will receive the King's Troops and garrisons, and will join them to oppose any troops or forces who shall invade Vermont to prevent the reunion with Great Brita in. They have likewise promised never to take arms again in opposition to the British Government, nor to assist Congress on any pretence whatever. I left the Assembly convening for the purpose of obtaining a vote in favour of Government or neutrality.' "

I read to the end, with due solemnity, as if to

impress the Judge with the importance of the document. If I did not succeed in so doing, I had, at least, one listener who hung upon my words as never female had hung before. Miss Simpson rose reluctantly from her chair in answer to a summons from Mistress Mabane. The little girls were now ready for bed, and wished their playmate of the afternoon to go upstairs to kiss them goodnight. She lingered as if she would have liked to hear the doctor's verdict, but he waited till she had gone before he turned to me and said—

“Lay it at the back o' the fire, Robin.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RIDE HOME.

THE doctor rose, and bade me accompany him for a stroll about the grounds. Perhaps he had become restless, not being so enured to long seats as I was, but I noticed that he looked sharply about as if expecting to see some one lurking in the shrubbery.

“What is the matter?” I asked at last. “Have you lost any one, or anything?”

“Yes. I have lost sight of the man who came nearly up to the front door whilst you was reading that letter. Your red coat must have frightened him, for he slid off into the bushes hereabouts. I did not wish to alarm Miss Simpson, but I was glad when she left us. Let us go down the avenue as far as the gate, Robin. You keep a look-out on that side, as I shall on this, though, if the chap really wished to escape notice, of course he would not come this way at all.”

“No; he could get away over the edge of the bluff, either to Sillery or towards town. But why should he wish to escape?”

"That is what I do not understand. He was a man I have never seen before, to my knowledge."

"Some follower of Miss Simpson, perhaps."

"You talk as if she were a servant lass. I'm ashamed of you, Robin! People of that class do not make for the front door. No, it was you he was interested in. He did not look either at the lady or myself."

Then I remembered.

"His Excellency told me that Robinson was to call here this evening for an answer to the very letter I was reading. When he saw only the Secretary present he thought it not worth his while to come in. Would I could have got hold of the rascal!"

I told the Judge all I knew about him, and he agreed with me that there was nothing to be gained by further search. Robinson evidently feared me more than he did His Excellency, and with that salve to my vanity, I was forced to be content, though in the back of my mind was the query: How is it that a spy always chances to turn up in the vicinity of Miss Mary Simpson?

"You do not think the Vermont letter worth considering?" I asked the Judge, when we were once more seated in peace on the piazza.

"No; when you recall Governor Chittenden's letter to Congress a couple of years ago." (He quoted from it at length with that admirable memory of

his) : * " " If the United States have departed from the virtuous principles upon which they first commenced the war with Great Britain, and have assumed to themselves the power of usurping the right of Vermont, it is time, high time, for her seriously to consider what she is fighting for, and to what purpose she has been for more than five years past spilling the blood of her bravest sons. This Government have dealt with severity towards the Torys, confiscated some of their estates, imprisoned some, banished some, hanged some, etc., and kept the remainder in as good subjection as any State belonging to the Union. And they have likewise granted to worthy Whigs in the neighbouring States some part of their unappropriated lands, the inconsiderable avails of which have been faithfully appropriated for the defence of the Northern Frontiers.' The two epistles do not sound well together on the same warm evening, do they, Robin?"

" The Vermonters evidently think we are too stupid to see into their designs."

" We should be dense indeed did we not realize that they are merely using the British connection as a red rag at a bull to frighten New York and Massachusetts into letting them come into the Union as a fourteenth state."

" There was surely some sincerity in their professions of friendliness at the beginning of the war."

* Original in the Haldimand Collection of Documents in the British Museum.

"Naturally, Robin; and at every reverse of General Washington those professions increased. Had Great Britain succeeded in subduing her rebellious colonies, as seemed not unlikely a year or two ago, Vermont would have taken virtue unto herself as being the only one among them which had remained loyal. How quickly she would have sped for her reward! What privileges would she not have claimed, even though from the first she had been in secret correspondence with Congress, as well as with us. Her one aim has been to avoid absorption into New York or Massachusetts."

"The General remarked long ago that he would not trust Vermont troops in the Province, whilst there were so few of our own to defend it. Once the Green Mountain Boys became aware of our weakness they'd up and take the whole country for Congress. The Canadians would offer no resistance."

"It was smart of the Allens, you will allow, to make such promises to us that their country has been neutral ground throughout the war. Its frontiers have not suffered from Indian raids like the rest."

"But that neutrality has been an equally good thing for us. We have had so much less of our own frontier to defend."

"I am told," said the Judge, smiling in his whimsical fashion, "that at least half our prisoners claim to be from Vermont. One would think it was the most populous of the English colonies, instead of being the most sparsely settled."

"And whenever a spy wants to get clear away, he, too, pretends he has come from, or is going to Vermont. The devil take that Robinson!"

"Well! Have you settled the affairs of State?"

Miss Simpson stood in the doorway, cloaked and hooded for her return to town. It was scarcely dark yet; but, as in duty bound, I proffered my escort.

"No, no," she replied. "I cannot dream of taking you away when matters of such importance are under discussion."

"Importance?"

"Does not the Judge so regard them?"

"Not of half so much importance as your safe return to Quebec," he said.

"But I can go alone, or I can stay later. Please—please go on with your discussion, gentlemen. The fate of a colony, of a solid slice of His Majesty's dominions is at stake."

The Judge and I exchanged glances. He might have been at the pains to explain to her the true state of affairs, but I never had any notion for the meddling of females in politics, so I said—

"If your man can ride my horse in to-morrow, doctor, I shall be pleased to walk with Miss Simpson."

"Hoity toity! Why not give her a ride too? My sister will lend you the pillion she often sits on behind me."

"Cromwell is not accustomed——" I began, and Miss Simpson continued—

"I am not the sister of Captain Mathews."

"He doesna wish ye were either, mark me," said Mabane.

I seriously objected to the overloading of my horse. I weighed twelve stone myself, and Miss Simpson, I was sure, not less than ten. But the Judge laughed at us both.

"Gin Oliver Cromwell is not good for so much on a three-mile ride, you had better change his name, Robin."

Thus it came to pass that I found myself in the embarrassing position of taking the road to Quebec with "Diana" seated behind me. I was glad of the friendly dusk, but sorry that my good grey was so familiar a figure upon that particular highway. Miss Simpson was no rider, I soon discovered. I doubt if she had ever been on a horse before. So nervous was she, that she clasped her arms tightly about my waist, and when I tried to get Cromwell off the walk, once the darkish avenue was left behind, she cried in real alarm—

"Please! please! Captain Mathews. I am being shaken to pieces."

"A proper punishment," I said to myself; but continued aloud, "You need not be afraid. This horse is more sure-footed in the darkness than the one I had last night; and the road is better; so is the weather."

I swear she gave me a slight squeeze, perhaps by way of asking forgiveness, and I am free to confess,

at this distance of time, that the pressure of her arms produced a pleasurable emotion within their circuit. No one but my mother had ever so embraced me—believe it or not, as you like. A soldier is apt to go to one extreme or the other—either to lose himself in vain intrigues, or to ignore the sex entirely, as I had done. Like many another, I was intuitively aware that the sea was not one along whose shores I could paddle barefoot with impunity. Once wet with the spray, I should plunge in headlong and be lost. Therefore I kept my boots and hose on. I saw the snare even as this maid with the sympathetic voice continued—

“ Poor Captain Mathews ! We talked so much of you after you left us last night. We feared you must be getting very wet.”

“ I was.”

“ Captain Nelson was sure you had the constitution to withstand a drenching better than he could have done.”

“ He has no physique.”

“ But what a spirit ! Ah, Captain Mathews, would that some of us stronger folk had the like ! ”

“ He talks boldly enough. I know not how he may appear in action.”

“ I can vouch for his being a veritable British lion for gallantry.”

“ Indeed.”

“ Yes ; for 'tis the mind that makes the hero, not the muscle.”

"Humph! Without the muscle some of your fine heroes would never live to tell their fine tales."

"What if they do not live? Is not a glorious death better than a long humdrum life?"

"I doubt it, and I also doubt if any seeker after glory would pursue it so valiantly could he be made aware that his fame was to be posthumous."

At this remark Miss Simpson ventured to give me a shake—an indisputable one—which she had every opportunity to do, situated as we were; but it was atrociously presuming of her at the same time to burrow with her forehead into the back of my right shoulder-blade.

"La! la! But I find you amusing, Captain Mathews."

"I am intensely gratified."

I stiffened my backbone as well as I could under the circumstances, and in that way became aware that the young person behind me was shaking with laughter.

"Have a care to your seat, Miss Simpson. Cromwell is finding this hill somewhat arduous climbing with two on his back. You may slip off behind if you are not mindful."

"Indeed, Captain, I dare not hold on more tightly, lest I should crack your ribs. What I was laughing at was the man on foot we passed a moment since. Did you not notice him?"

"Where? Who was he? Which way was he going?"

My mind jumped to Robinson at once, though I might have guessed he was not the individual that had stirred my companion's mirthfulness, which lay near the surface in season and out of season.

"It was a gentleman walking in from Sillery, I suppose, though when I caught sight of him he was facing neither way, but standing upright at the roadside, prepared to make a grand salaam as we passed. I wonder you did not observe him."

"I saw some one salute you, but was too much occupied helping Cromwell pick his steps on that stony hill in this bad light to notice who it was."

"He recognized us both, even in this bad light, and took off his hat with a great flourish and a broad smile at the sight of you in such a predicament."

"Who was he?"

"Doctor Vallière."

He was about the last man I had cared to have seen me so handicapped. My General would understand the compulsion that had been put upon me to obey the doctor's orders—when the doctor was Mabane—but it might be difficult to convince another physician that I was merely taking medicine. Vallière was such a gossip, too. It would be all over the town before the end of the week that the invulnerable military secretary to His Excellency had at length yielded to a universal conqueror.

When we came to the last stretch of straight, level road, Cromwell, eager for his stable, broke into a canter; but the lady behind me objected, being

sure she would fall off. So we stalked solemnly towards the St. Lewis Gate under the stars—the same that had looked down upon Wolfe's army as it lay on these Plains the night before the town was captured. The memory thereof could not have laid hold of my companion as it did of me, for she was not born till the year after the Conquest—so she kindly told me.

“ You, of course, were in the thick of the fight,” she remarked.

I wondered how old she thought I was, but I merely remarked—

“ The 53rd was not engaged.”

“ That is the regiment you have always belonged to ? ”

“ Since I have belonged to any.”

“ And in '59 you were, of course, too young to belong to any. Forgive me, Captain. You and your uniform seem so inseparable that one fancies you have never worn anything else.”

“ I wore the kilt in Scotland.”

“ Like your nephew. How delightful ! You may have been as nice a boy as my Robin.”

Her Robin, indeed ! She was at least further in his confidence than his uncle. It appeared he was keen to go bushranging, but afraid that his stern relative would not hear of his forsaking the study of French.

“ Just as if that were essential to the making of a man ! ” said Miss Simpson.

"It is somewhat essential, at this time, in this country."

"But not half so necessary as a knowledge of woodcraft. Remember Braddock's defeat."

It was not likely that I or any other military man would forget the snare that unfortunate commander had been led into, during the last war, through his inability to adapt himself to the fighting conditions of a new, wild country. Now General Haldimand had whole companies trained as scouts, drilled to walk on snow-shoes, to set up tents out of doors in which to sleep, summer or winter. Miss Simpson was probably ignorant of these manœuvres, but it would be decidedly *infra dig.* for me to enlighten her. She was already far too deep in the councils of men, as her next remark gave evidence.

"Was not Judge Mabane mightily impressed with the Vermont letter?"

"No more than reason."

"But reason calls for serious consideration of the matter, doth it not?"

"It hath received all the consideration it demands."

"You think it too late to reclaim that colony?"

"'Tis never too late till Congress hath admitted it to the Union."

"And you think it will not be let in immediately?"

"Not before the end of the war."

I was annoyed at myself for giving her even so much satisfaction, but those strong, slim arms of hers seemed to be squeezing out of me all she wanted to know. To create a diversion, I endeavoured to call their owner's attention to the constellations, a subject in which I have always been deeply interested; but even the position of the North Star, by which her latest conquest, Captain Nelson, would now be steering his course, failed to elicit more than a passing remark.

"I shall fall off, if I keep tipping over backwards to stare up at the sky. I should drag you with me—then where would we be?"

"Cromwell knows his way home."

"Your concern is only for him? There is such an aloofness about you sublime astronomers, I feel myself truly lucky to have got one into my clutches."

"I lay no claim to the title, for I have never made any researches in astronomy. Have you heard that Herschel is studying the heavens diligently, hoping to discover a satellite to his new planet, the *Georgium Sidus*? He is convinced it must have one, if not more."

"What if it has? I am more engrossed with matters pertaining to the planet Earth, since most of us were born and brought up on it."

After this flippant speech, I saw it was useless to try to enlarge her knowledge of the heavenly bodies; but I refused to continue the discussion of the affairs of Vermont, around which her interest centred. I

would express no opinion as to the good or bad faith of Governor Chittenden and General Allen; the advantages or the disadvantages to the Green Mountain Boys or to ourselves, of having them with us under British rule. She saw naught but advantages for both sides, and she chattered on about these, with her customary overdone enthusiasm, till she dropped, light as a feather, from the pillion, when I brought Cromwell to a standstill in front of her mother's door.

CHAPTER IX.

MY NEPHEW IN TROUBLE.

ROBERT FRASER came to me the very next day, to ask a favour—

“Uncle Robert, the messenger to Sorel with letters for General Riedesel is paddling all the way in a canoe. Cannot I go with him ? ”

Miss Simpson was probably at the bottom of this request, but I must not allow my prejudice to affect my judgment. It might be the best thing possible for the boy, to get him away from Quebec for a time, since he seemed to be wasting his opportunities, so far as a study of French was concerned. He would learn more by seeing ever so little of the methods of a man like General Riedesel, and I knew the Baroness would be kind to him for my sake. His manners were genteel, and he was such a good scholar for his age that his mother, my only sister, had hopes of his entering the ministry of the Established Church of Scotland, but I feared the root of the matter was not in him. Personally, I never expected to see him “wag his heid in a pulpit.”

He could swim, he was a good paddler, having learned the accomplishment from the Indians on his first arrival. If he decided to follow the profession of arms—and all his inherited tendencies were in that direction—the soldier in the American service needed such requirements as could never be obtained in the older countries.

So I let him go, with my blessing, and then settled myself down to a customary endeavour at the disentanglement of the affairs of the Province. I have already hinted at the worry and annoyance the influx of English settlers into Canada was giving us. There was truly no limit to their demands for assistance, and we often had cause for suspicion that the less they had left behind in the rebel colonies, the more they wanted when they came to us; if indeed the betterment of their fortunes were not the prime reason for their coming. Had they all been genuine loyalists, our labours had been less, but even among those who were sincere there was much jealousy and fault-finding. No new settler must be granted more land, in a better situation, more seed corn, more implements, more cattle, sheep, or horses than his fellow, since who could judge correctly the full extent of the sacrifices each had made for the maintenance of the British connection? Every man, and more assuredly every woman, thought that there were no sufferings comparable to his, or hers; and we were latterly forced to rely entirely upon our own judgment in the distribution of the favours a paternal

government was disposed to shower upon these immigrants, giving according to evident needs, and not according to non-evident deserts.

The worst class with which we had to deal was the land-grabbing adventurers, who cared neither for King nor Congress, but put up a specious claim for farms which they would speedily sell and escape back to the States with the proceeds; but frauds apart, there was enough real destitution among these new colonists to give us constant anxiety regarding their disposition and provision. Some came to us with nothing but the clothes they stood in, and those much the worse for wear. It could not be otherwise, considering the long journey through the wilderness. Delicately nurtured women from the towns of the English colonies took up the northward trail often with Indian guides, as the husband and father, if not already killed in the war, would be serving in a loyal regiment, and his helpless wife and children left at the mercy of a ravaging mob. General Haldimand never learned to steel his heart against such cases, and it was often my place to serve as a barrier between him and the refugees, as I understood their tongue more readily, and flattered myself also that I was a better judge of their needs and merits. We had to do the best we could with those that came to us, regardless of their previous circumstances, though we tried, as far as possible, to secure work for all. Some of the stronger females, accustomed to such occupations, as we gathered from their

hands and their manner of speaking, not from what they said, we set to do washing for the garrison at Sorel, where Madame de Riedesel exerted herself to find sewing for the more dainty-fingered, though the nuns had practically the monopoly of that craft all over the Province.

Besides their reception, when they actually had passed the boundaries into Canada, we spared no pains to rescue approaching parties of forlorn refugees who sometimes made their whereabouts known by a column of smoke rising above the tree-tops along the shores of a waterway. The commanders of vessels sailing on Lakes George and Champlain were enjoined to keep a sharp look-out for such signals, and never to disregard aught that might indicate the presence of a loyalist company. Thereby came about the undoing of my nephew, though how he happened to be cruising so far from Sorel with that particular party at that particular time, I was long in discovering. Howbeit, along in the first week of August I received at the hands of one of our trusted Indian runners a letter dated July 25th :—

“Somewhere in the woods to the

“ East of Lake Champlain.

“ DEAR UNCLE ROBERT,

“ I cannot be giving you an exact acct. of where I am, because I know naught myself, saving that I am a prisoner and look to you to have me exchanged with the least possible delay. I ask this

not so much on my own account as on that of the other men who were captured with me, they being anxious to return to their wives and families, of the which I have neither." (The young rascal! I should say he had not; but my eye ran rapidly along the strip of birchbark on which the lettering stood out with commendable clearness.) "I was aboard the snow, *Seneca*, sailing on Lake Champlain on Tuesday last, and we saw a smoake ashore, which our Captain was assured was a signal to take on board a large party of expected folk from New England loyal to our King. But it was not; the smoake proved but a decoy to bring us to land, and when I went in the small boat with three others to fetch the people out to us, a band of rebels, outnumbering us four to one, else we should have engaged them, came between us and our boat, so that we were obliged to capitulate, which we did with honour—all but the man left in our boat who made haste back to inform the Captain of the snow what had befallen us. Our party has now been joined by a company of the Green Mountain Boys, neutrals they call themselves, who will be pleased to act as agents for our exchange. This way of life pleases me mightily in the meantime, much more than that of the Canadians, but lest I should entirely forget my winter's French, I have taken this, the first opportunity to advise you of my plight, but at the same time to assure you that you need have no fear for my well-being. I am learning much of

woodcraft, surely as important a part of a gentleman's education as the study of languages."

"The vagabond!" I said again to myself. "So much for having trusted him to go with that messenger. Business and friendship should never be mixed; still less business and kinship. He will get no more commissions from me—he and 'the other men' forsooth! What right had he to go off on that snow on Lake Champlain? He should have come straight back here when his errand was done."

Well, the weather was warm and I trusted that the mosquitos were giving him a taste of what life in the woods really meant. 'Twas not convenient to exchange either him or "the other men" immediately. 'Twould do him no harm to suffer a bit of hardship as a punishment; though I doubted if he would so regard it. We had not taken any rebel prisoners for some time, simply because we had no place to confine them. Every available building in Quebec was filled with needy loyalists. It hurt my pride to think of a youth, so well brought up as he, spending days or weeks in the society of those turbulent mountaineers who might even inoculate him with some of their vain republican ideas, but I saw no chance for his immediate recall. The fact of his being my kinsman sufficed to deter me from putting forth any special effort on his behalf. Such, however, was not the view of the affair taken by Miss Mary Simpson, whom I chanced to encounter on the

Esplanade early one hot afternoon, when she forced me to stop and parley with her, despite the blinding glare. I would not withdraw with her into the shade, lest she should think I wished to prolong the interview, but she appeared to suffer in the sunshine less than I did.

"Poor little Robin!" she said—though he was well-nigh as tall as herself, and would be taller ere he stopped growing—"You will go yourself straight-way to liberate him, will you not, Captain Mathews?"

"Go? Where should I go? I know not where he is, and moreover I have other duties more pressing than the pursuit of runaway nephews."

"But he did not run away, though he might have done so, sooner or later, had you not granted him permission to seek the wilds."

"I gave him leave to go to Sorel—no further. He had no call whatever to be off sailing on Lake Champlain."

I was provoked to be discussing the subject with this inquisitive female, whose society I had not sought, but when I moved onwards to get out of the sun, she accompanied me with the greatest assurance.

"You cannot blame a lad so fond of the water as Robin," she continued, "for seizing any opportunity to sail as far as he could. Before he left we hoped he might have a chance to ascend the Richelieu."

"You knew he was going? You knew all about it?"

"He came to say goodbye before he left—

naturally. We are good comrades—why should he not? I wished him a pleasant trip on the St. Lawrence to Sorel, and the fulfilment of the hope that he longed for—to go further. That also was natural.”

“And now you think it is natural for me to get him out of the scrape he has got himself into, as quickly as possible.”

“Surely—your sister’s son—and such a bright boy!”

I have already stated my reasons for not wishing to move immediately in the matter, and every word Miss Simpson said but confirmed me in that resolution. She might be a worse “comrade” for him than even the Green Mountain Boys. To all appearance she had encouraged him in his wandering from the path of duty; now let her suffer on his behalf, for I doubted if he was suffering on his own.

“You will at least be writing to him, Captain Mathews,” she persisted.

“Probably.”

“By an Indian runner? The same that brought his letter?”

“Probably.”

“Then—it would not be too much to ask you—would you—could you not send one also from me?”

“Probably. I will see about it when you have it written.”

“But it is here—I have done it.”

To my astonishment she drew forth a neatly

folded sheet from her kerchief, saying as she did so, with a degree of pride—no doubt in her penmanship—

“ See, you can read it, if it please you.”

“ I have no such desire,” I retorted brusquely ;
“ but may I enquire what induced you to write ? ”

“ I also received a letter from Robin—by the same messenger that brought yours, but as I know not the Indian language I was unable to arrange for sending a reply.”

“ But you wrote one and trusted to a chance meeting with myself to have it despatched ? ”

“ No chance in the matter. I came here on purpose this afternoon to see if you would be gracious enough to grant my request.”

“ How did you know where to find me ? ”

“ That is a far easier affair than to influence you. The whole town is aware that at five minutes to nine of the clock Captain Mathews walks up Fabrique Street to begin his day’s work. At two he takes a stroll on the ramparts and back by the Esplanade.”

“ My dinner hour and my evening diversions are also noted ? ”

“ To be sure, though your nightly vigils on the Battery, looking at the stars, are not counted a diversion—by most of us.”

“ You flatter me. I had no idea my habits were of such interest to the townsfolk.”

“ It is their regularity that is so diverting. Some of the housewives set their time-pieces by you.

' Here is Captain Mathews with his telescope under his arm,' I heard one say the other day, ' it must be eight o'clock.' "

I could not find this so amusing as Miss Simpson appeared to do. No man likes to think he has become an automaton. The shadow on my face must have caught the quick eye of my companion, for she hastened to say—

" You need a little dissolute companionship, Captain Mathews, being far too straight-laced, too good for this world. As my mother would say, ' Ye havena enough o' the de'il in ye to keep the de'il aff ye.' "

" In other words, you think anybody can take me in ? "

" I should not say so—oh no ! Where you are looking for trouble you will ferret it out even when it is not there ; but until your suspicions are aroused you are too trusting by far."

I disliked extremely this discussion of my personality, especially with so slight an acquaintance, so I made an end of it.

" If it be dissolute companionship I require, I must hasten back to His Excellency," and I left her laughing merrily—but she had given me her letter for Robin.

Despite my apparent negligence, I had many anxious thoughts concerning his welfare during the weeks that followed. The runner brought in another letter before the month of August had passed, and

though shorter than its predecessor, I gathered therefrom that the lad was becoming more and more reconciled to his environment. The Green Mountain Boys were not doing any fighting, merely ranging the woods, keeping watch, he said—making trouble for both sides, said I. Robin appeared to regard this period as a vacation from the French grammar and the priest who had been so kindly instructing him in it. His letter was merely a rhapsody on the joy of the open life of forest, stream, and mountain. Perhaps I had been hard on the boy, expecting him to keep his nose between book covers, instead of letting him see somewhat of this wonderland of America into which he had been launched the previous autumn. Still it would not do to give him too long a rope—to let him turn bushranger and be lost to civilization as many young men, of as good family as his own, had been. He was the only son of my only sister, a widow, and therefore the last of our race, as I did not intend to marry.

But other matters drove my nephew for a time from my mind. The loyalists were trooping in on us thick and fast, now that the break between England and her colonies appeared to be permanent and inevitable. The majority of them went by sea to Nova Scotia, our front door, but a sufficient number knocked at our side door, the St. Lawrence, to provide abundant anxiety for the General and myself, regarding their disposition. We had grown ultra-suspicious with respect to men who came in

without their families ; but there was one who had such a plausible story to tell he won us both over to believe in his honesty of purpose. He had, he affirmed, served with the Queen's Loyal Rangers, and was now anxious to prepare a home for his family in Canada before sending for them. The insinuations of other settlers we ascribed to jealousy ; he was such a fair-spoken, well-bred young man, for a colonist, and he claimed to have Scotch and Swiss ancestry, which may have influenced us both. At any rate we were not keen on disclosing our mistake to our *confrères* when we discovered that one had been made. The General conferred only with me in the matter.

" This Robinson man—— " he began.

" Robinson ? You do not mean to tell me that is his name."

" To be sure—I thought you heard it, Mathews."

" No. That is not the name he gave me when I made out his land grant."

" Nor did he give it to me, now that I think of it," continued His Excellency. " I recognized him as the messenger from Vermont and congratulated him upon his desire to stay among us. The details I left to you."

I had not deemed it necessary to acquaint the General with the confirmation of my suspicions that the Robinson man was in reality a rebel spy, but I told him now, lest we should again be at cross purposes. The rogue had already sold the land granted

him, on the plea that the winter in Canada would be too severe for his tender young children and delicate wife—he a widower and an adventurer, as I knew him to be ! He had announced his intention of returning to the States to endeavour to find a refuge for this mythical family with relatives further south.

“ He will make his peace with Congress—if he has ever been at war with that august body—by giving information about our resources.”

“ That is what I fear,” replied the General. “ ’Tis a pity you did not succeed in capturing him that night at Woodfield ; but now another chance seems to be offered. He is escaping by boat this time, so I have been informed. It would be possible for a good rider on a good horse to reach Three Rivers before he does, as the wind has been steadily westward for three days and more.”

I knew what was in my commander’s mind, but I hesitated to volunteer. There may also have been some truth in Miss Simpson’s insinuations that I was so fixed in my daily habits that I abhorred any deviation therefrom.

“ I have no desire to make public the latest of the frauds perpetrated upon us,” continued His Excellency. “ Now that we know just where the road of Hazen is, it might not be difficult to overtake the rascal on it, if he be not overhauled before he leaves the St. Lawrence.”

“ He may not stop at Three Rivers.”

“ But he will, for it is on the schooner of one,

Michaud, going home to Trois Rivières, that he has set sail. The Canadian will not venture near Sorel with a doubtful loyalist as passenger. Robinson has pretended he wishes to go to Machiche—so much have I learned from a trusted spy. I would we could lay hands on one of these rebel emissaries and make an example of him."

My wish was the same, though I was not caring to be the layer on of the hands. I knew enough of my own capabilities—incapabilities I should say—to dislike being set to a task in which I was likely to fail; but the General had unlimited faith in my powers of carrying through aught that I undertook. Frequently I was able to assign to others rôles I felt myself unfitted to play, but here there seemed no escape.

"You have seen the scamp at last," urged His Excellency.

"Yes, I have good mind of his pleasing address, and of thinking at the time he was young to be talking of wife and family."

"He cannot be so young as he looks, if, as you say, he won a Canadian bride here in '76, but he is older than he looks—in iniquity. A ride to Three Rivers will not come amiss to you, Mathews, nor even a sail across to Sorel to enquire for the health of Madame de Riedesel, and to give her husband a description of this latest spy we have let slip through our fingers."

I had not much liking for my errand, and still

less for leaving so much correspondence to be attended to by incompetent hands in my absence ; but there was a sting remaining from the taunts of Miss Simpson that spurred me to action. She had sent me down the river on a wild-goose chase ; I might now be going up the river on another, but at least I should remove myself for a season from the spying housewives who set their clocks by me.

CHAPTER X.

SPY-HUNTING.

ONCE started, it felt fine to be astride Cromwell's strong back for so long a ride, though the road was bad and the country uninteresting. The Laurentians save their finest hills for the decoration of Quebec harbour; here were smaller wooded eminences rising from tree-covered plains, with an occasional rapid river to vary the monotony. I lay the first night at Batiscau, and was told by the boatmen there that a schooner had passed upwards early in the day, doubtless the one I sought.

I was in the saddle again at daybreak, and arrived at Three Rivers late in the afternoon. The *batteau* men assured me that they knew every vessel that passed up and down the great river, and that the one owned by Michaud had already sailed onwards into Lake St. Peter.

"But not yet will it have reached Sorel, monsieur. See, there is no wind. We could row you across to overtake it."

"Dare I flatter myself," said a new voice at my

back, "that Captain Mathews has come so far to see me?"

"You dare not," I replied, turning to shake hands with Dr. Vallière.

"It is a fine time of the year for going up the river," he said, after I had declined his invitation to be his guest for the night.

"Yes, but I go no further."

"Then you are not *en route* to the Upper Posts?"

"No; I may cross to Sorel, that is all."

"In search of your nephew, I presume. Ah, the claims of relationship cannot be ignored. They alone can prevail upon Captain Mathews to leave his beloved desk and his beloved General."

"Nothing of the sort. My nephew is but reaping what he has sown, by his own foolhardiness. He shall not receive aid from me a whit sooner because he is my kin."

"Perhaps less soon, O Spartan uncle!"

I bowed in acknowledgment of the compliment, which was not undeserved. Then I bethought myself—here was an opportunity to test Vallière's knowledge of his neighbours, as well as his attachment to Government.

"I am on the trail of your friend Robinson," said I. "He has found it more to his interest to take his despatches to headquarters than to you. He was last seen leaving Quebec to sail up this way on the schooner of one Michaud of Trois Rivières."

"Michaud? I know of no one so-called who

owns a schooner here. It must be Michaud of the Chaudière that is meant. He owns a boat of good size."

"To be sure," I exclaimed, impatient at my own stupidity. "I ought to have remembered the brother-in-law of Gustave Tremblay. I must turn back at once."

"Why so? Michaud may sail far from home on his schooner. Is he not the most likely man in the world to be taking an escaping spy wherever he wanted to go?"

"These boatmen tell me that Michaud's vessel has already passed on into Lac St. Pierre."

"Were I in your case I should get one of them to row me across immediately to St. Francis, where one can hire a guide to the beginning of Hazen's route to Albany. Without a doubt that is the way Robinson will seek to return."

"So the General and I surmised, but I had no instructions to follow him so far."

"And a cautious Scot never goes beyond instructions."

"His Excellency trusts me to go as far as it seems good to me."

"Then leave your horse here, change your uniform, embark in a flat-boat, and you will reach the mouth of the St. Francis, as soon, if not sooner than the man you seek."

"What is your objection to my uniform?"

"Too brilliant for bush trails. Remember Fort Du Quesne."

"I have no stomach for skulking behind trees."

"No, you would rather stand out and be shot by an enemy using the breastworks provided by nature, as Braddock's men were."

"Robinson is only one man. I think I can handle him."

"Yes, if he ever lets you get sight of him. One glimmer of that red coat of yours through the trees will warn him to take to his heels, or to lie flat as an Indian in the underbrush."

"'Tis the only coat I have with me, so it must suffice."

"That is easily arranged. You and I are of the same height, girth, figure, age, bearing; you shall doff your scarlet jacket and don the *coureur de bois* trappings, which I wear when I go a-hunting. The heavens will not fall should you alter your garb!"

I had no notion of wearing another man's clothes, having never done so before, but that last remark recalled Miss Simpson's insinuations. Here was an opportunity to demonstrate my adaptability. The doctor bore me off to his house, near the forges which he superintended, and ere long had me strapped into the buckskin breeches and leggings, the soft leather jacket of the ranger, even to the cap, decorated with many ribbons. Vallière was somewhat of a dandy, and his hunting costume was of the finest material throughout. When he saw me in it he struck an attitude.

"A fine figure of a man, though I say it who should not, Mathews, considering how like it is to mine own. There! With the cap on you might pass for myself. Good, good! Make Robinson believe that you are Dr. Vallière, and he will tell you all you want to know, will perchance come back here with you, to be my guest. Then we have him!"

"Play-acting is not in my line."

"But you have the talent for it—latent, I'll allow. Ah, what would *she* say could she see you now. None of your lady-killing tricks while in my clothes, Mathews." He poked my side.

"The last offence I am like to be accused of."

By this time we were striding to the strand to engage my boatmen, and I quickened my pace, to indicate my dislike of the topic, but the doctor persisted—

"Oh, la, la! Very fine talk from the gallant I saw riding into Quebec a few weeks ago with the most radiant star of that city perched behind him, her arms clasped lovingly about his waist."

"Humph! Now I remember she did see you as we passed."

"Truly, but you were oblivious to all but her. 'Hath Fate at last overtaken my friend Mathews?' I asked myself."

"'Tis likely I should fancy a female whose loyalty to Government is under the gravest suspicion."

"You don't tell me!"

Immediately I wished I had not, having as yet no actual proof.

"I am perhaps over-suspicious," I began, and stopped, but the doctor continued.

"So it was lugging a fair maid to justice that you were about that evening, not returning from a pleasure ride. Pray accept my apologies. I have always thought that so exceedingly lovely a woman could not be morally sound."

"I know naught against her morals—nor do you," I retorted in heat. "In stating my doubts of her loyalty I referred to the intercourse she keeps up with the suspects among the Canadians—this man Michaud for example."

"That is curious," said the doctor, changing his tone. "They are not of the same class in society. Robinson, on the contrary, is quite the gentleman. Is she by any chance acquainted with him?"

"Not so far as I am aware. Another of her 'friends' is Gustave Tremblay."

"Which one?"

"You may well ask that."

In the end I unburdened myself of all my score against Miss Simpson as I had not done, even to His Excellency. It would be a serious affair for her when he took hold of it; but to talk things over with a light-hearted man of the world, such as Vallière, simplified the whole situation for me. He was willing to credit any female with any obliquity that could be placed on her shoulders, but he had

no opinion of the ability of any to make her deeds equal her desires. All that Miss Simpson was capable of doing was tricking me into that fruitless chase down the river.

"I trust you may not be on such another now," said the doctor, sympathetically.

"For that I cannot vouch, but I have come thus far under the orders of General Haldimand, who seldom makes mistakes."

Vallière sighed significantly, and I saw the blunder I had made. He seemed more of a friend to me there than he had done in Quebec, on my own ground, and I felt forlorn at the thought of leaving him—homesick fool that I was. In the end I spent the night with him, for the change of costume had taken time, so had our conversation, and when we reached the shore of the great river the boatmen had decided among themselves that it was impossible to accomplish before dark the long row across that wind-swept widening of the St. Lawrence, known as Lake St. Peter. My errand may have been suspected whilst I was in the doctor's house; and one could always count upon obstacles being placed in the way of a Government official seeking a suspect.

"Robinson will be becalmed till morning," said Vallière by way of consolation, "and you will be the better of a rest after your two days' hard riding."

He entertained me so delightfully all evening that we sat late; but I rose at daybreak and sallied forth without waking him, for it might take time

to get the boatmen started. As good luck would have it, I saw a sail flapping against a mast in the fresh morning breeze, and it was with little more delay that I struck a bargain with the boatman to ferry me over the lake. The wind would help Michaud's craft too, I feared, but as he would not dream of a pursuer I trusted he would not hasten along the trail. Vallière had provisioned my knapsack the night before, and with Indian guides I should not suffer from hunger in the woods at a season of the year when game was plentiful. I drew a long breath as I looked ahead at the wavelets dancing in the morning sunshine, enticing me onwards to the thick greenness of the forest we approached. It was unjust to blame Robin too much for venturing into the wilds. Every man feels their allurements, sooner or later, and the younger he is the stronger the pull towards primitive living.

Nevertheless, I realized the deficiencies in my early training, when we had landed at length and found—or thought we had found—the Canadian end of the trail Moses Hazen claimed to have blazed from the River St. Francis, and to have made four trips upon it from Albany the preceding summer, as an emissary of Congress to the Canadians. We had sent out one scouting party after another till at length this route had been discovered the preceding spring. I knew the Mohawk tongue as well as I knew the French, but that did not enable me to keep pace with the long, loping stride of my Indian

guides, and honesty compels me to admit that before the day ended I was completely fagged out. I was no bushranger, having ever been attached to the regular army, not to its scouting contingent. I soon became aware that my three Caughnawagas were annoyed at my slow progress, and at my inability to perceive signs that were plain as a pikestaff to them of the track that should be followed. Despite the lighter garb of Vallière I was wearing, I found the heat of those dense woods mightily oppressive, and I had not the aboriginal agility for leaping fallen trunks, gliding through underbrush, across bits of swamp or over hidden streams. Moreover, the mosquitos molested my guides not at all, evidently preferring the ungreased skin of a white man for their pasturage. Especially did they harass me the night we spent in the forest, and I envied my Indians lying like logs, though the slightest motion on my part sufficed to open an eye of one of the three.

Never was dawn more welcome than that which shone pale through the thick screen of trees next morning, and before that day of torment was over we came upon traces of a deserted camp fire—the embers black and still warm—the campers could not be far distant. It would take too long to tell how far we chased that will-o'-the-wisp through the woods. We lost Hazen's trail and found it again ; we thought Robinson was surely upon it ; we were equally sure he was keeping away from it ; and finally we found

nothing, but were found ourselves by a scouting party of Indians from the Loyal Block House, under Joseph Brant. He did not know me at first in the ranger rig-out, and his surprise at meeting me so far from civilization was not complimentary. I was not yet an old lady, devoted to her knitting and the chimney corner.

"We seek an escaping spy who came to us as a loyalist," I explained. "Have you met any one on this trail?"

"None save a young lad whom we have made prisoner because he had a letter upon him that none of us could read," replied Brant in the Mohawk tongue. "He would give us no explanation of it, nor would he tell his name."

"Robinson, undoubtedly!" I cried, in pardonable excitement. For once I had not taken up an arduous trail in vain. "He seems only a stripling, though in reality a widower. Where have you got him?"

Dragged roughly forward by two Indians, I did not recognize him till he threw back his head and looked me squarely in the face. Good Heavens! It was my own nephew. His hands were tied behind his back, and he had not a word to say for himself. This was the outcome of my leaving him so long in Vermont. He had become a letter carrier—to us or to Congress—more likely the latter, since he had refused to tell Brant anything about the one found on him. He seemed to have grown

several inches, or it may have been the woodsman's garb that made him appear slimmer than the kilt he had formerly worn. He was as tall as Brant himself, and burned almost as dark.

"Where is the evidence against this lad?" I asked, and one might judge from the quaver in my voice that I was the suspected party.

Joseph handed me a letter. I knew it by sight. It was the one I myself had sent him—from Miss Mary Simpson! I should have to read it now, to convince the suspicious Brant that he had made a mistake, but had he? My gorge rose when I saw what the minx had written—what she had with insufferable effrontery made me the means of despatching to my innocent young kinsman. I turned my back to the Indian chief, so eagerly scanning my face, and stepped to a spot where the sunlight splashed generously through the leaves upon the sheet:—

"Quebec,

"August 7, 1782.

"MY DEAR ROBIN,

"You will be thinking it a Cruel Fate that holds you fast among the Rebels, but it is not *cruel*, on the contrary a most *fortunate circumstance*. You mind of the matter upon which we spake at such length the night before your departure? Now is your opportunity to play a man's part in that *momentous affair*—to bring about a natural union between two peoples already united in their *Love of*

Liberty. It is not the hope of HONOUR to ourselves that should inspire our exertions towards this happy end, but the thankfulness of a *Great and Free People.*

“So make the most of your time to enquire concerning their disposition towards us. You are sufficiently acquainted with military affairs to be able to estimate how many men are actually available for service in Canada ; and you likewise are aware, from our recent talk, as from information gleaned at Sorel, how much support they can count on here. Be not in haste to return till you have discovered *all that we wish to know*, for I deem it truly lucky that you should be just where you are, just at this time. If you should chance to be entrusted with letters of importance, and can direct them to me, I shall not fail in accomplishing their delivery in the proper quarter. The gratitude of a united country will be ours later, but in the meantime, it might be wiser not to let it be known who is your Quebec correspondent, though should it come to pass that you be recognized as the nephew of our Governor’s chief adviser, that which you have to say upon the points at issue will carry more weight. Write soon again to

“ Your attached and faithful

“ POLLY.”

The jade ! She had dared to make use even of Robert’s connection with myself for the furtherance of her traitorous ends. I should see to it that the

boy was shipped out of her reach so quickly that he would not have time even to make his adieux. His "attached and faithful Polly" had landed him in a fine pickle. Fortunately for him, his captor was not an Englishman. As it was, I had difficulty in soothing Brant's suspicions. He wished the whole letter translated into the Mohawk tongue for his benefit. I shrugged my shoulder and thrust it carelessly into the pocket of my ranger coat, as if it were a matter of no consequence.

" 'Tis one I myself forwarded to the prisoner—from a female friend."

" His squaw ? " grunted the Indian chief.

" He is rather young as yet—— "

Another grunt—" So tall a brave ! "

" This is my nephew," said I at last, irritated by Joseph's persistency.

" I knew not that Captain Mathews had a family in Canada," said he.

" Nor have I, save only this boy, who shall not be here much longer, since he hath begun to prove troublesome."

Robert began an eager protest, but I silenced him with a question.

" Whither were you bound when captured ? "

" To Sorel."

" Was he heading towards Sorel, when you met him, Colonel Brant ? "

Robin reddened through his tan at the doubting of his word, and he spake in heat—

" I was heading neither way, but hiding in the underbrush till I should see who went by."

" And when you saw they were friends, why did you not openly declare yourself ? "

" How was I to know they were friends—the bloodthirsty brutes—— "

" Hush ! " I said sternly, " if you value your scalp. We have to use ugly weapons in war time. These Mohawks have been persecuted by the rebels and despoiled of their lands, even as other loyalists. You should have known their Colonel, at least by sight."

" His men had grabbed me before I could see who their leader was. He had me searched and he took my letter, and I would not tell him my name or my business. He had already insulted me sufficiently."

" Walk in front now, with the Indians, and give Colonel Brant your word of honour that you will not try to escape."

He gave it grudgingly, and we took up the trail to Sorel, for Brant assured me that Robinson was not upon the Hazen road, else had he surely encountered him. I was but too eager to take his word for it, since the zest had gone out of my expedition at this discovery of Robert Fraser in league with rebel sympathizers. I reproached myself that I had not sooner delivered him from his predicament, and I knew that I should miss him sorely should I be obliged to send him back to Scotland, the which it

seemed imperative that I should do. In no other way could I safeguard him from the influence that had led him so far astray.

By the time we reached Sorel, he had turned sulky and would tell me nothing whatever about the information he had gathered for Miss Simpson. I brooded so much on his delinquencies, that I had no heart for the exchange of courtesies with the Riedesel family, but took the first opportunity for crossing to Three Rivers to regain my horse and uniform. To my surprise, the latter was not to be found. Doctor Vallière himself was from home, and his valet was not aware in what safe place he had hidden my garments. Cromwell looked jaded, instead of being rested after his three or four days in the stable. I glanced sharply at the manservant, wondering if he had a taste for riding, but as if in answer to my thought, he remarked that he had never mounted a horse in his life.

It was a disappointment not to see the amiable, witty doctor again, as my spirits needed heartening, with that load upon them of a recreant kinsman about to be sent home in disgrace. I placed him under guard so soon as we reached Quebec, lest he should have speech with his temptress, and two days later I bade him a sorrowful farewell on board the packet for England. I wished with all my heart I were going with him and could shake off the cares of a troublesome colony from my back for good ; but I held my tongue, and the lad held his. We Scots

are always ready to vie with one another in stubborn muteness ; so I learnt naught of Mary Simpson's schemes from Robert Fraser. I gave him a letter to my sister, explaining that her son would be safer in Scotland till the war was over.

CHAPTER XI.

NELSON COMES AGAIN.

HE walked into my quarters with the freedom of an old acquaintance, his hand outstretched, his thin face alight with friendliness. What an affectionate, fascinating young fellow he was to be sure!

"You old sinner!" he cried. "You have never stirred from that chair since I last saw you. Who could keep on copying silly letters on this magnificent September day? Come out! Come out! There's a tingle of frost in the air. It beats any wine you ever drank. The leaves are all red and yellow. Never saw I such colouring."

I had not deemed him a man given to the worship of natural beauties, saving those of the feminine order, but he was apparently so delighted at being once more in Quebec, everything charmed him.

"I have not had the leisure to look at the trees," I replied.

"Phew! Time you looked at them then!"

He recked little of the anxieties that weighed

down the General and me but, freed from his own responsibilities aboard the *Albemarle*, he felt that all the world should be gay. He was like a schoolboy off on vacation, and he behaved to me as if I were the stern elder brother, who had to be cajoled into going birds'-nesting with the younger. His frolicsome humour reminded me of the nephew I had banished, and had been so sadly missing ever since he sailed.

"What have you been about?" I presently asked.

"Nothing of any moment, save that I was chased by three ships of the line and the frigate, *Iris*, off Boston harbour. They all beat me in sailing, so I had to run into the shoals of St. George's bank, where they, drawing more water, could not follow me. Peace is in the air, Captain Mathews, why make a galley slave of yourself any longer? Let the colonies have the liberty to misgovern themselves. They will make a mess of it sooner or later, never fear. We are better off without them, without this French province too—let them all go. We can whip France and Spain at sea and keep our blessed England safe from harm."

"You talk at random," I replied slowly. "What would become of the tens of thousands of loyalists seeking a refuge under our Government, should we give up Canada? They could expect no mercy at the hands of the rebels, so many of them having taken up arms against Congress."

" Had they had no harbour of refuge to run into, they might have stayed at home and made peace with their neighbours. How many would have fallen out with them, think you, but for the grand hopes of what they were to get from King George ? "

" Hope springs eternal—— "

" The hope of Honour—that alone is worthy of a lodgment in the breast—not the hope of what is to be done for a man, but the hope of what he can do for himself, for his country, for England, home, and beauty ! But what chance is there in the service, now that a disgraceful peace is about to be consummated ? The sun shines ! Let us make merry ! Is there not an entertainment in the town one can go to this evening ? "

I lifted the *Gazette* from the mass of papers on my desk.

" *Miss in Her 'Teens* is to be played at the theatre to-night. Doors open at five ; performance begins at 6.30."

" I should rather be taken where I could meet ' Miss in Her 'Teens.' "

" Miss Simpson is undoubtedly over twenty."

He flicked my ear with the feathered end of my quill, as he sat on the arm of my chair.

" Lord ! But you have grown in perspicacity, Mathews, since last we met. That is the very lady whose acquaintance I wish to renew."

" Prince William Henry is in port, and Admiral Hood. These are men who might be of use to you."

"Bah! The Prince is only a middy—quite beneath the notice of a Post-Captain—and Hood I know already. You cannot inform me on naval matters, Mr. Secretary. Stick to your ink-pots."

"And you to your ship."

He laid his arm across my shoulders.

"There is no harm, is there, Mathews, in my wish to hold further converse with so fine a talker?"

Ought I to have told him the further evidence of her disloyalty I had discovered? I might have shown him her traitorous letter to Robert, but where was the use? Let this sailor ashore have the sort of enjoyment that he sought. Miss Simpson would find it impossible to tamper with the allegiance of a Post-Captain of His Majesty's navy, and he would contrive to meet her, whether I consented to chaperone him or not. Even should I tell him of her transgression with regard to my nephew, he was not in the mood to consider the seriousness thereof, but might even find excuses for so young and pretty a maid.

"The first Assembly of the season is to be held to-night in the house of Mr. John Menut on St. John's Street. I have paid my subscription."

"And therefore it cannot be wasted. You must go."

"I am entitled to take a wife, but since I have none, would you be willing to come instead?"

"Would I not? My good Mathews, try me! I will be to you the most devoted spouse!"

"I doubt it not—until a superior attraction appears. I warn you, however, that we men are much in the majority at these affairs. You may get little dancing, if any."

"I want none."

"You may perchance find a seat at a card table, though His Excellency hath done his utmost to discourage gaming among his officers, particularly the subalterns who frequent such places."

"And I have less money to lose than the poorest among them, but the navy can take care of itself. I am rich in conversation that craves a receptive ear. Let us go."

* * * * *

I shall not attempt to describe in detail the Assembly we attended, for even were the lapse of time less, I am ever more given to remarking upon general effects than particularities. The affair differed in no respect from others of the sort whereby Quebeckers sought to while away the long winters—even in war time—for the cares that lay like a pall on their rulers did not disturb the gaiety of the ruled. From an old *Gazette* I cull this description—

"It may not be unworthy of remark, that whilst the more intelligent statesmen are busied in predicting the fall of nations, and the vast similarity between the state of Britain and Carthage, a remote province of the Empire has exhibited an Entertainment, the expence, profusion, and elegance of which

may vie with the most celebrated repasts of Apicius.

"On the 18th was given a Conversation by the harmonious conjunction of Civil and Military. The dancing commenced at eight, after the necessary prelude of tea and coffee, and was continued with that gaiety and apparent satisfaction, the ever concomitant attendant of the amusements and diversions of this metropolis."

My eye lights upon another high-flown effusion in this same old news-sheet :—

"Sure you will rather listen to my call,
Since beauty and Quebec's fair nymphs I sing.
Henceforth Diana in Miss S—ps—n see
As noble and majestic is her air ;
Nor can fair Venus, W—lc—s, vie with thee,
Nor all her heavenly charms with thine compare."

Who was the second female mentioned I cannot remember at this late day, but Miss Simpson had already given me good cause to remember her. The "noble and majestic air" accorded well with the ballroom finery she had donned for the Assembly.

"A line of battle ship with all sails set," remarked my companion when first she "hove in sight." It beat me to understand how she and the other females present could contrive to present so elegant an appearance, in so great a contrast to their ordinary attire. True they did not sparkle with jewels as women of a wealthier community would have done, but for making much out of little, for spending days and hours plotting how to produce

a genteel appearance with a paucity both of means and materials, the Quebec girls of that day were inimitable.

Nor were the men far behind them in bravery of array. Besides the usual full dress uniforms, naval and military, there fluttered the kilt of the Royal Highland emigrants. Even civilians, in the matter of knee-buckles and shoe buckles, waistcoats of figured velvet or coloured silk, added brilliancy to the scene. There was Doctor Vallière, for example, the gayest of the gay, in a maroon-coloured coat lined with light blue silk and a pair of Genoa velvet knee-breeches. He was dancing when we arrived, so that I had not an immediate opportunity to enquire of him where he had hidden my second best clothes. Before I could gain his ear I was addressed by Miss Simpson, who had moved in our direction attended by five of her admirers, like Saturn and her satellites.

Captain Nelson stood abashed before the charmer, so like and yet so unlike the hoyden he had last met in the woods at Montmorenci, fishing, or gambolling about with the Riedesel children. Fine feathers make fine birds, and she ignored his presence beside me with either indifference or forgetfulness, as she spoke—

“ May I enquire, Captain Mathews, what you have done with your nephew, my good little friend, Robert Fraser ? ”

“ He sailed back to his home in Scotland by the last packet.”

A social gathering is no place for recriminations, and fearful lest I should betray the anger that boiled up within me at the sight of her, I replied with such suavity that the lady was completely deceived as to my sentiments. She reproached me prettily for having deprived her of one of her *very dearest* associates—and much more for the benefit of the adoring circle in which Nelson formed an arc. None but he had an idea of the age, or rather of the youth of the “lamented comrade.”

“It is delightful of course for Robin to go home,” she continued; “but I shall miss him terribly—the dear lad—no one to fish with——”

“I am devoted to the sport, Miss Simpson,” said the Post-Captain. “If you can show me a stream in this countryside that has a trout in it——”

“Captain Nelson! The *Albemarle* has returned—how fortunate! As I lose one comrade I regain another. But the kilt—it is not worn in the navy. You could not leap the burns as my Robin did.”

Her Robin, indeed!

“He was a useful messenger,” I interpolated, but she paid no further heed to me, having Nelson now wriggling at the end of her line. He was ever able to answer her in her own vein.

“Where is the sailor that cannot endure a wetting, fair lady? If your boulders are more slippery than our decks I would fain feel them under foot.”

Such was my disinterested desire that the Captain of the *Albemarle* should have the special

society he came to seek, I contrived to engage the other men in conversation on military matters, and was not surprised to see my naval acquaintance presently walk off with the belle of the ball on his arm. There may have been a diversity of opinion as to her belleship, but I well knew Nelson's mind on that subject.

"*Bon soir, M. le Capitaine!* How comes it that you have left the study of the stars for a night's enjoyment under a roof?"

"Good evening, Doctor Vallière. It is true that since duty keeps me within doors most of the time I prefer to spend my leisure in the open, but I am a subscriber to these assemblies."

"Bound to get your money's worth—not that you are fond of dancing, eh?"

"I can dance as well as my neighbours, but in the society of this town, where English-speaking females are so scarce, I prefer not to enter into competition with the younger gallants."

"Plenty of *demoiselles* to be had for the asking."

"Not enough to go round, as you may see for yourself. It is the men here who are the wall-flowers."

"*Quel dommage!* And so fine they look too, kicking their heels against the partitions. You yourself, Captain, are a sublime spectacle. I am relieved to observe that you have more than one uniform. So stupid was it of me to have put your other one away in so safe a place that even my

servant could not find it. He brought your clothes when he came with me to-day. You will find them at your lodgings when you return this evening, and my man will appropriate those I lent you—unless you desire to keep the suit for future use."

"No, thank you. My adventure therein was not sufficiently successful to warrant my attempting more of the same."

"You found your nephew, I understand, not Robinson, on the Hazen road."

"Who told you?"

"Robinson himself."

"The devil!"

"Not at all. He is the same young man I had seen before, and he went no further than Three Rivers this time, when he heard you had crossed Lac St. Pierre in search of him. I persuaded him to join the loyalist settlement of Captain Conrad Gogy at Machiche, instead of going back to the States."

"You did, eh? And was he given more land there?"

"I believe he paid for it with the money he took from here."

Doubtless my annoyance showed in my manner, for the doctor exerted all the arts at his command—and they were many—to make me forget the circumstance. He regretted that I had arrived too late for the refreshments, but he guided me into a side room where he had been assured something

stronger than tea and coffee was to be obtained. To reach this chamber without passing through the throng of dancers, we crossed a hall into a kind of ante-room, and at the entrance thereunto Vallière drew back and put a finger to his lip, motioning me to keep silence. Not suspecting in the least what there was to be seen I too took up the rôle of Peeping Tom, and saw as good a play as ever I witnessed, one that might have been entitled, *The Siren and the Sailor*, for it was Mary Simpson teaching Nelson to dance.

She dropped him a low "cheese" curtesy, telling him at the same time to "make a leg" in response. Then she lifted her petticoat in front, high enough to display feet no smaller than his own, and signified her wish that her partner should place himself in a similar attitude, facing her, which he did, not ungracefully, but the mentor was dissatisfied.

"That is the wrong foot forward," she said. "See! If I stand beside you it will be better."

She thrust her slipper out where he could see it, twirled about, made him twirl too, held out her hand to clasp his, took him by the shoulders and even rumbled his hair in making him master the correct postures, bade him place his arm about her waist, tip-toed with him back, and forth—Heavens! How Nelson was enjoying himself! But there stood Vallière, doubled up with mirth, and applauding noiselessly.

"'Ssh! They will pause for breath in a minute

—at least he will—she never. Ah, that *demoiselle*! The bold mariner has best be warned against the darts of Diana. What ails you, Mathews?" We had now withdrawn beyond earshot. "Jealous? *Eh, bien!* I had forgotten this was the girl of the evening ride on Cromwell. *N'importe.* The sailor soon goes back to sea; then we landsmen can undertake a work of reform."

"You are labouring under a wrong impression," I said with all the dignity I could muster, "if you place me among the admirers of Miss Simpson. Have I not already hinted at the good cause I have for disliking her? I am vastly chagrined that she so quickly has made a fool of one for whose presence I am accountable."

"Oh, la, la! You brought him for an evening's entertainment, did you not? *Bien*, is he not getting it? That is the trouble with you, Mathews. You desire to make your friends happy in your way, not in their own. You could have forgiven your naval friend for sipping this excellent Burgundy with us, would even have cracked another bottle in his honour—hang the expense!—but you see he prefers to regale himself as did 'rare Ben Jonson,'

"'Drink to me only with thine eyes
And I will pledge with mine.'"

The doctor's attempt at English was as droll as his attempt at singing. Either would have drawn lightning from a darker cloud than that upon my brow.

"Now you are in sympathy with me again, Mathews. I believe in giving to everybody what they want—even to Robinson."

"What? More of him?"

"You are at last in the humour to receive the news that he did not remain at Machiche, but succeeded in making his way back to the rebels."

"When?"

"After you had passed down the river again with your restored relation whom I have been told he claims as an accomplice."

"Robert Fraser? Impossible!" But my heart sank, for how did I know to what lengths the siren yonder had led the foolish lad? "I have sent him home."

"By so doing you have scotched the snake, Mathews, not killed it."

"What mean you?"

"Who is the party in Quebec from whom Robinson was carrying letters, and to whom those brought by your nephew were to be delivered?"

"He brought none. Brant had searched him thoroughly before I encountered the party."

I thought it unnecessary to enlighten the doctor as to the one letter that had been found in Robert's possession. To His Excellency alone would I impart that information—when the proper moment arrived.

"Robinson told me, Mathews, as a huge joke, that the boy who had expected to meet him on Hazen's trail encountered the stern uncle instead."

"Do you mean to tell me that you actually had speech with the spy and let him go?"

"I knew not he was going. He appeared to like us so well that he intended to stay among us, and he will come back—one can always be sure of that, when there is a lady in the case——"

This was more than I could swallow.

"If there be a female mixed up in the affair, doctor, our duty regarding her shall be done, were she ever so much of a lady." I placed my glass upon the table and rose to my feet. "'Tis high time I took my naval acquaintance away from here."

"Let him be, unless—pardon me—you doubt the quality of his company."

The doctor was bent upon applying the corkscrew to me, but I have ever been a man of temperate habits, and I had not drunk sufficient to loosen my tongue—as he had expected no doubt that I would. I sincerely regretted having given him a hint of my suspicions with respect to Miss Simpson, for Heaven only knew what use he might make of whatever information came his way. He might even try to reinstate himself with His Excellency by forestalling my complaint against her, since I had not yet evidence enough to justify me in making one. Vallière might have secured more from the spy Robinson, and be trusting to his apparent frankness leading me to suppose he had told all he knew. He was a clean-sweeping new broom in the service of Government, and I was loath to put him on the trail

of the merry maid we had been watching but a moment since. We had spied upon her sufficiently for one evening, but how was I to get Captain Nelson away from her? He answered the question himself, by presently appearing in search of me.

"I have had my turn," he said cheerfully, "and now I am ready to take leave. The throng around Miss Simpson is too great for an invalided seaman like myself to buffet with."

He had not appeared much like an invalid an hour since, I thought, but what I said was, "There are other dames aplenty."

"Not plenty; not one apiece, as you warned me; and only one in the room—for me."

CHAPTER XII.

THE BIRTHDAY FÊTE.

FOR the succeeding ten days I saw but little of Captain Nelson—only enough to be made aware that he was pursuing the acquaintance of Miss Mary Simpson with avidity. Half measures were not for him, he threw himself with whole-souled enthusiasm into aught that claimed his attention. I heard of his appearance at the gatherings in the Freemason Hall, above the Freemason's Inn, kept in the Chien d'Or building by Captain Miles Prentice—Miss Simpson's uncle—and I doubted not that the dancing lessons were being continued.

Since we had let the notorious Robinson slip through our fingers, correspondence between Canadians and rebels was going briskly forward. I found it hard to convince myself that Miss Simpson was a prime mover in the matter, especially at this time, when she was no doubt as much occupied with the naval officer as he with her. No, there must be some one else, still out of gaol, with abundance both of money and of opportunities for obtaining information,

who was keeping warm the spy-trail between Albany and St. Francis. Undoubtedly Miss Simpson was mixed up in the treasonable intercourse—her letter to my nephew proved that ; but, knowing her as I now did for a strong-willed young person, who would follow a route she had marked out, regardless alike of conventions and of consequences, I had little hope that the removal of one pawn from her board, in the person of the amiable Robert Fraser, would permanently block her game. Instead of telling all I knew about her to His Excellency, and shutting her stubborn mouth against his inquiries, or mine, it seemed wiser that I should stand back and watch developments. The forcing of her hand might enable her more-desired accomplice to get off scot-free.

Rear-Admiral Sir Samuel Hood was the person above all others whom Captain Nelson should have danced attendance upon at this period, since he himself had but little influence or hope of advancement in the service ; but, unfortunately, he was never of a calculating disposition, except as regards the designs of the enemy, and he would rather idle away his time ashore in the company of Sandy Simpson's silly daughter, who could in no way further his fortunes. Still, the Admiral did form a favourable opinion of him in Quebec, and it bore fruit afterwards. I have often remarked that men of means and position are apt to be attracted towards those who have a sincere contempt for both, because they are

so continually sought for what they have, not for what they are. The Post-Captain honoured the Rear-Admiral for his share in Rodney's great victory over De Grasse ; but for Prince William Henry he showed no special predilection, though he too became a friend in after years.

Nelson came to me one morning in the last week of September. I scarcely knew him, so much had ten days in port improved his appearance.

"You are like another man," said I, and he straightened himself up to make me one of the dancing-master bows Miss Simpson had taught him.

"'Tis this fair Canada of yours. And to think that I groaned when I was ordered here, being sure that I should suffer in your cold, damp climate. Never did I breathe such air ! It is like champagne."

"But not intoxicating."

"I cannot answer for that, Mathews." He shook his head with a touch of seriousness. "Sometimes I think it hath gone to my head so completely that I see all things through different eyes."

"Your eyes are bright enough, for that I can vouch, and you have a colour in your cheek like a lassie's."

"That is not the chief improvement. I grow stronger every day—sleep well, eat well. Lord ! if it would only last !"

"You are not away yet ?"

"No, thank heaven ! I do not sail for two whole weeks to come. The day after to-morrow is my

birthday. Imagine the joy of spending it on land!"

"But far from family and friends——"

"Not from friends, Mathews. What do you call yourself?"

I laid my big hand over the small, nervous one that rested on my table. There was something about him so irresistibly winning, one could easily credit the reports that sailors and officers alike worshipped him.

"Truly, I am your friend, Horatio," I spake from my heart.

"Then you will not refuse to come upon my birthday excursion. Some of my other friends have set about the arrangement of an all-day picnic to take me to a place where I have never been. I want to go."

"Where?"

"Up the Chaudière as far as it is possible to penetrate, and yet be back to the St. Lawrence by sundown."

"The sun sets early. It is the end of September, nearly."

"We know that, and therefore we shall start early. We have engaged half a dozen of the small boats of the country. They hold eight each, including an oarsman or two to row us upstream. The guests will all be English. I would not have any French. You are to come, Mathews. I shall take no refusal. Look not at your overladen desk—a

cargo of rubbish that is not worth delivery. Throw it overboard."

"Why the Chaudière? There are other lovely spots about, much more accessible."

"I have a fancy to see the end of the route by which Benedict Arnold made his entry into the Province."

"Not half so picturesque as that taken by Wolfe in his attack on the town."

"I have climbed the very path with the daughter of a man who did it along with Wolfe, thank you kindly, sir. I have also seen the battlefield of Ste. Foye, where Lévis whipped you the following year; and I have been to the Château Beaumanoir, haunted by the ghost of the poor lady murdered there by order of the wicked Intendant Bigot, you were telling me about; and to Ste. Anne de Beaupré—hence my cure; and to the Jesuit Mission at Sillery—Judge Mabane is a rare old barque; and to the Isle of Sorcerers, a much more romantic name than Orleans."

"So only the Chaudière remains?"

"I should not say so; but in the remaining wonderful sights of your wonderful countryside, that river is the one I most desire to visit."

"And to fish?"

"We shall take our lines, of course. But you will come, Mathews—and will His Excellency?"

"He would like to be invited—not to go. He never goes anywhere for pleasure, except to Montmorenci."

" And to Samos. I had a game of cards with him the other night at Doctor Mabane's."

" Yes, he plays ; but remember he is in his sixty-fifth year. One cannot expect him to take part in picnics that will involve so much bushranging as this you have planned."

" The Judge is coming, though—and the Prince. Oh, it will be glorious ! "

" No females, of course ? "

" Why ' of course ' ? Think you we would go without them ? They will be in the minority, as at your assemblies, and we may have to admit a Canadian girl or two, but only those who are Amazons, who can keep up with an inexperienced man of my size tramping a forest trail."

" The daughter of Wolfe's Provost-Marshal, and the like."

" Her like is not to be found in Quebec, in America, in the world ; and I might include some of the other planets were I so well posted about them as you are, Mathews."

I was pleased at this assurance that Nelson had to all appearance been keeping her out of mischief, for the time being, and pleased too at the prospect of an opportunity for observing her more closely, myself unmarked when he would be with her, so that haply I might arrive at some solution of her very peculiar conduct. With that end in view, I placed myself in the same flat boat with her and the naval officer for the sail up the St. Lawrence on the

forenoon of September the 29th. It was one of those crisp, clear days for which Canada is famed, and Miss Simpson looked radiant as usual, though her attire was simple, as befitted the expedition upon which we were bound. Nelson began well by dividing his attention with some degree of impartiality between her and the scenery of the St. Lawrence, as we rounded Cape Diamond, and were propelled swiftly upwards upon a rising tide.

"There! I knew I should see it again, Miss Mary!" he exclaimed. "There is the very path we followed in the footsteps of your father. One can get a glimpse of it among the trees. That is the very stream, is it not? Alas, for those who arrive in Quebec too late to assist in its capture!"

"Nonsense!" I remarked. "We still have France to beat. Her ships wage war in the open seas. You have not to contend with concealed foes, who try to stab us in the dark, like these Canadians."

Miss Simpson must needs take up the cudgels for her absent friends.

"Loyalty is a century plant. How can one expect twenty-two years to change the feeling of a conquered people? They do not love us yet—they never may."

"I hate the French as I do the devil," said Nelson.

"Why hate an honourable foe?" she asked.

"According to Mathews they are not honourable."

"The Gospel according to Mathews is not the only one," she laughed.

No man enjoys a punning upon his name, and lest I should show the annoyance I felt, I moved carefully across to the other side of the boat to grasp the hand of Judge Mabane, who came on board at Sillery Point. He received a cheer of welcome from the other boats as well, for he was more of a favourite with the younger generation than with his fellow councillors, whose greed he ever sought to restrain.

"Hey, Robin!" he cried, slapping me heartily on the knee as he sat down beside me. "Any more rebel spies skipped into the Province and out again?"

"We have captured one of their mail-bags—private letters only; but it appears that everything we do, or plan to do, is well known to Congress."

"Much good may it do them! Cease from troubling."

"You might lose some sleep yourself, doctor, did you realize, as keenly as the General and I do, how puny are our defences, and how certain the Canadians are to rise *en masse* to welcome any rebel force that appears."

"They did not so in '75."

"But they did. How else could Arnold's men ever have reached the Chaudière Basin?"

"Any one of us would have done the like, Robin—would have warmed and fed human beings starving in the wilderness in winter."

"Not the foes of our country. Scots, such as you and myself, would have let them starve."

"Perhaps. But we are a sterner breed than these Canadians, who, like their climate, are 'frosty but kindly.' Cheer up, Robin. Washington has too much work for his troops elsewhere to dream now of taking Canada, even should he care about adding a French Catholic State to the conglomeration already in the Union."

"He would, if he could, transform an enemy on his northern frontier into a friend."

"A better friend without annexation. What have these folk in common with English-tongued Protestants? Washington is shrewd enough to be aware that England's policy is the best—let them alone."

"But England had to conquer them first."

"Conquer France on this Continent, you mean. Their sting is drawn. Let the Canadians abide in peace."

"That is exactly what we wish Congress to do, and what is not being done. A feeling of unrest is over the whole country, due to these proclamations from the French allies of the rebels and to letters full of promises from the rebels themselves."

"Well, well; let us forget it all for the day. 'Twas a graceful compliment you paid this young naval officer, getting up this birthday excursion for him."

"I had naught to do with it—am but an invited guest, like yourself."

"Not the 'onlie begetter,' eh? Captain Nelson must have made the most of his time in friend-making since the *Albemarle* came into port."

We exchanged smiles at his complete engrossment in Miss Simpson's conversation.

"The beauties of Quebec are worth a siege, are they not, Robin? Let us talk to the lassies."

"Not enough of them. None to spare for an old bachelor like me."

"Hech, sirs! Ye call yourself an old bachelor, and you are a good ten years younger than I am. Watch, now!"

He challenged one of the Misses Prentice—Miss Simpson's cousins—to throw him an apple from the boat nearest to ours, and what with a cross-firing of words and missiles of one sort and another, he brought the whole party in touch with one another, and into a gale of merriment. His talk had soothed me into forgetfulness of my anxieties, or it may have been the lapping of the water on the sides of the boat, the dip of many oars, the cheery voices and laughter all about us.

Howbeit, care was left on the great river without, as a swift turn of the oars brought us through the gap that widened immediately into Chaudière Basin. That circular expanse of smooth, shining water, bordered by steep, wooded banks, into which we

were ushered so suddenly, brought a cry of delight, even from those who had seen it before.

"Paradise regained!" cried Nelson. "Here could one camp for ever—the world forgetting, by the world forgot!"

"Yes—in the summer-time," said I.

"There you go, you Surgeon Kill-joy," was his response. "Let us be happy while we may. Where are the boatmen taking us? Do not we land here?"

His question was answered by another quick turn that took us out of the Basin as unexpectedly as we had been taken into it. By an opening to the right, we left the calm pond for the rapid river that fed it. The Chaudière runs almost parallel with the St. Lawrence before it turns southward, and we rounded more than one curve which tested the muscles of the oarsmen in stemming the rapid current and in avoiding rocks and shallows, ere we came in sight of the Chaudière Falls—not so high as the Montmorenci, but of the same generous width and volume of water. In Europe the spot would have drawn hordes of sight-seers from every nation; in the depths of the Canadian woods it was rarely visited. But we did full honour to it that clear September day. There was no wind to stir the red or yellow leaves of the birches, maples, beeches, and they stood still in their brave attire, breathlessly awaiting the wintry blasts that would shortly strip them—a last stand, but a gallant one, with colours flying.

We all felt the stimulus of the season, but Nelson

was the first to propose climbing the high wooded bluff to gain a view of the cataract from the top. Dangers and difficulties always strongly attached him. The less venturesome of the party were content to be rowed back to the Basin, to make the ascent there by a path which could be followed through the woods to the Falls. Dr. Mabane returned in the company of the Prentice girls, but Miss Simpson, Captain Nelson, Prince William Henry, and I, were set ashore close to the Falls for the purpose of scaling the cliff.

I have never had much taste for the society of princelings, but in this instance the lad of seventeen seemed to prefer my company to that of the other pair, though it occurred to me all hands might be called upon to aid in hauling the female up the rocks. Captain Nelson seemed somewhat light for the undertaking, but I should have remembered he was a sailor, who could climb like a cat, and, moreover, by the time "Diana" had girded up her petticoats, a hand here and there was all that she required. There was a great deal of laughter between the two as they pulled themselves upwards by the bushes, or rested for some minutes in the crotches of overhanging trees. They loosened so many rocks in their ascent, and let so many saplings fly back in our faces, that the Prince and I found it safer to keep alongside rather than before or behind them, and so we had the doubtful benefit of their scraps of conversation. When it occurred to me that the effect might be

unwholesome upon the son of my sovereign, I tried to withdraw him from the vicinity ; but, like Robert Fraser, and every other laddie who came within sound of her rippling laughter, he refused to remove himself beyond the danger line. The beauty and the Post-Captain talked so loudly in order to hear one another above the roar of the Falls, that we were eavesdroppers more often than we—I, at least—desired. I can remember but one bit of the frivolous talk that passed between them, as it gained significance from later events.

“ You have been here before, Miss Simpson ? ” Nelson asked.

“ Several times,” she replied, “ though I never climbed this cliff before.”

“ Your picnics are usually to the Basin only ? ”

“ Yes ; but I have gone further than that. The Michaud family are friends of mine—dear little children ! Their cabin is quite a distance up the stream.”

“ You shall take me there for a walk.”

“ After luncheon, perhaps. Madame Michaud would not have such fine fare to offer you as what is packed in those baskets in the boats.”

“ How did you come to be acquainted with a person living so far from Quebec ? ”

“ She was at the school I attended, though an older girl than myself, and she married very young, an illiterate man, but a good husband. It is hard for her to be buried thus in the woods ; but her sister

did worse, for she took up with a man from Boston, who came this way with General Arnold, and fell sick at their door. Madame nursed him back to health, but he repaid her by carrying off her sister as his bride, and she did not live in Boston a year."

"Robinson!" I said to myself. "Robinson, without a doubt. He is probably an old acquaintance of Miss Simpson."

But I put the matter from me resolutely, being determined for one day at least to be care-free.

It was a very gay repast at which we were finally seated beside the Falls, on a sunny, grass-covered space that lent itself to the opening of hampers, the drawing of corks, the distribution of plates and glasses, the rapid consumption of the viands that were hailed with glee as each unexpected dainty appeared. Dr. Mabane excelled himself in the high-sounding phrases with which he proposed the health of our guest.

"May he beat the inconstant billows into froth for Neptune's tankard; may he be safely piloted through the shoals and currents of life's tumultuous stream, and may he at last be brought safely to his desired haven!"

Nelson's eyes met Mary Simpson's at the concluding phrase, as if to proclaim before witnesses that here was the haven in which he desired to rest. Often in this, my old age, I have pondered on what the result to England—to the world—might have been had he anchored there. Would the Battle of the

Nile have been unfought? Would Trafalgar have had a different outcome, had the hero of those fights relinquished at this time his animating desire for distinction? I can remember every word of the spirited response he made to the Judge that day, beside Chaudière's tumbling waters. He added to his height by stepping on the trunk of a fallen tree, and for a minute he stood, poised, with a swift glance over the assembled company seated or stretched carelessly out on the grass amid the wreckage of the feast, every face upturned to his own.

"Ho, landsmen all!" he cried. "Be not dismayed that Fortune seems to frown upon your arms, that King George appears like to lose the greater part of his possessions on this continent. What matters it? Are not Hood and Rodney still on deck? 'Tis our destiny to control not the land, but the Sea! So long as it shall roll, so long as this mighty cataract shall pour over the cliff into the mightier St. Lawrence, our

"England that *never did*, she NEVER SHALL
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror."

We sprang to our feet and cheered—hats in the air, kerchiefs flying. England was not yet mistress of the seas. It was the stripling who spake to us that day in the Quebec woods, that was destined to make her so.

Something of his sublime confidence inspired us all to forgetfulness of that dark day for our country

which was already dawning, of the humiliating treaty that was about to be signed with the colonies. We all hoped for peace, yet dreaded it, knowing not how far the dreams of Washington and his adorners, and the ambitious views of the French might carry them.

CHAPTER XIII.

DOWN THE ST. LAWRENCE BY MOONLIGHT.

It was too chilly to sit long upon the grass. The company split up into twos and fours for the following of the stream upwards. I wandered away from the rest, seeking open spaces in which to enjoy the sunshine through the rich hues of the leaves. Enough of them had already fallen to make a rustling beneath my feet, an accompaniment to the sound of running water, with which there is no music on earth to be compared. As I idly sauntered on, having no fear of losing myself with Chaudière's rushing in my ears, I came at length to a clearing of considerable extent, in the middle of which was a substantial, though small house, built of logs, plastered without and whitewashed tidily.

"The Michaud mansion," said I to myself. "Perchance Miss Simpson and her escort may be calling within."

The door opened at that moment, but the man who came out was not Captain Nelson, but Doctor Vallière, gaily slapping his leg with what looked like a whip, so I judged he must have ridden here. He hailed me in his accustomed lively manner—

" Captain Mathews! Lost in the woods? Let me serve as your guide back to civilization."

" You also are far from home, doctor."

" Professional duties."

" I was not aware that you still practised."

" Nor do I as a usual thing; but I have lately gotten hold of some excellent matter for inoculation, which I have been testing on the habitants of yonder cabin."

" Children, I suppose. I wonder Madame Michaud did not object."

" She is a woman of intelligence, not like her husband, who is from home."

" In the English colonies, most likely."

" Indeed? Is he one of your suspects?"

" A prominent one. I thought I had mentioned his name to you. He is, moreover, the brother-in-law of the rascal Robinson we have been hunting."

" Perdition! There were no men about the house when I was there just now. Madame wished to have the inoculation done whilst her husband was away, because he objected to it, as so many of these ignorant Canadians do."

" Likewise the Indians. I pray you, do not attempt to introduce any of your inoculating matter among them. The small-pox is a disease we have brought them, poor wretches! and it is generally fatal. They would not understand the virtue of inoculation as a preventive, but look upon it as a forerunner of sure and swift death."

"Bad medicine, in short."

"Exactly."

"There is not much danger of my practice extending further than this. I have exhausted all the matter at my disposal, and I brought it over here merely to oblige the curé at Lévis, who is interested in those children. But you haven't told me what brought you here, Mathews. On the trail of Robinson?"

"No, I am on a picnic."

My tone must have seemed apologetic to the doctor, for he laughed aloud.

"Marvel of marvels! And pray, where is the rest of the party?"

"Scattered through the woods or along the stream, gathering beechnuts, fishing, flirting, what not. We were all young once, doctor."

"And, my faith, we still are! Were I a bachelor, like yourself, Captain, I should not be straying off *alone*."

"His own company is not to be despised by a man with a clear conscience."

"*Mon Dieu!* then mine must be very muddy. I hate to be alone."

"Join our picnic, then."

"No; I am afraid I should not be welcome. All English, I suppose?"

"Naturally, since it is a birthday fête in honour of Captain Nelson."

"Who has no love for me. No, thank you, Mathews. Your whole garrison seems to be in the woods to-day."

He had caught a glimpse of a gay tartan through the trees, and I could not blame him for declining to mix with the merry-makers. Once a man has been sent to Coventry, in military circles, it is most difficult for him to reinstate himself. I could not expect the subalterns at the fête to have my mature breadth of mind with regard to Vallière.

"Walk with me a bit farther, Mathews," he said. "My horse is tethered close to the road on which I came here from Point Lévis."

"You have dropped your whip."

"Oh, no! That was just a stick I had picked up. I can get another."

He cut a hazel switch from a sapling ere he mounted and rode off with a gay wave of the hand.

"'A fool, a fool. I met a fool i' the forest.'"

After such fashion did Mabane chide me for playing truant. When I told him of my encounter with Vallière he seemed surprised.

"What the devil has he to do with inoculation? He is not even licensed to practise in this Province."

"He was merely doing it to oblige a friend."

"Nice sense of obligation he must have! I should not like him to test his matter on any weans of mine."

"He is not likely to," I retorted dryly.

"Don't be too sure of that, Robin. I have not forsworn matrimony like you and your General. I am waiting for the lass who shall convince me I cannot be doing without her."

“ So am I.”

An end was put to our badinage by the signal for embarkation. The darkness of late September came early upon us, but the moon was already high in the heavens ere the stragglers along the trail were all collected and the last of our boats had left the secluded Chaudière Basin for the wide and lonesome waters of the St. Lawrence. The evening was cool, and we sat close together for comfort, the females drawing over their heads the hoods of the capes they wore, though dishevelled locks peeped out at the sides to the ensnarement of susceptible swains. Nelson forced me into the same seat as himself, with Miss Simpson between us, and the Misses Prentice facing us beside Judge Mabane, wrapped in his Inverness plaid, the folds across his chest, and an end over each shoulder drooping to the front, as he always wore it. There was no wind, and the tide was running out, so that the boatmen had an easy task at the oars, and Miss Simpson addressed our one in his own tongue.

“ Sing to us, will you not, some of your sailor songs, in honour of our guest ? ”

He called to his comrades in the other boats, and they pulled as close together as possible to keep time with their oars, as they joined in the chorus sung by the Canadian *voyageur* ever since he came to Canada, and who shall tell us how long before that—by his Norman forbears ?

La voile est à la gran - de - hu - ne, Di -
- sait un Bre - ton à ge - noux. Je
pars pour cher - cher la for - tu - ne, Qui
né veut pas ve - nir à nous. Je
re - vien - drai bien - tôt, j'es - pè - re. Sè -
- che tes pleurs, prie, at - tends - moi. En
te quit - tant, ma bon - ne mè - re, Mon
âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi.

The musical score is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and common time. It consists of nine measures of music. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

CHANSON DU MARIN.

“ ‘ La voile est à la grand-hune,
Disait un Breton à genoux.
‘ Je pars pour chercher la fortune,
Qui ne veut pas venir à nous.
Je reviendrai bientôt, j’espère,
Sèche tes pleurs, prie, attends-moi,
En te quittant, ma bonne mère,
Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi.’

“ Pour rendre le sort favorable
Chantent les marins à loisir,
If faut vendre son âme au diable
Et donner son cœur au plaisir.
‘ Je reviendrai bientôt, j’espère,
Sèche tes pleurs, prie, attends-moi
En te quittant, ma bonne mère,
Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi.’

“ Errant de rivage en rivage,
Enfin il amasse un trésor.
Et puis il retourne au village—
C’est pour sa mère tout son or.
Mais il lit ces mots sur la pierre,
‘ Je pars aussi, mon fils, plains-moi,
Mais dans le ciel, comme sur la terre,
Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi.’ ”

“ Too sad,” said Nelson, at the end. “ Could they not sing it faster ? ”

“ That would not be appropriate,” Miss Simpson explained. “ The sailor is leaving his home and his mother.”

“ What does the refrain mean ? ”

“ *Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi ?* My soul to God, my heart to thee.”

“ That is good. And what happens ? ”

“ He wanders all over the world trying to get

rich for her sake ; but when he comes home with his wealth, he finds his mother in her grave, and those words on her tombstone."

" 'Tis enough to drive one insane with melancholy."

" A Scotch song now, Miss Mary," said Mabane.

" I am afraid our guest would not appreciate such."

" Anything ! Anything ! So that you sing it."

" You flatter me, Captain Nelson. I have no cultivation."

" Nature is ever before Art."

Then it transpired that an Ensign of the Royal Highland Emigrants, seated in the bow of our boat, had a guitar stowed away there, and he brought it forth to strum upon whilst his comrades, far and near, joined in the rollicking Jacobite ditties Miss Simpson chose. It would have been impolite for them to have sung such in Quebec, where there were many, like myself, antagonistic in sentiment. If, as Miss Simpson had said, loyalty be a slow-growing plant, it is also a slow-dying one, and I could detect in the manner of singing those songs not a little of the enthusiasm for the banished Stuarts which had played such havoc among Highland hearts and homes. After the rousing choruses, reminders of the time when the Jacobite hopes were still high, the young voices drifted into such melancholy plaints as " Will ye no' come back again ? "

" You can take that to yourself, Captain Nelson," said Mabane. " I'll warrant you can do more for

your country than any Stuart that ever was born." And he little recked how truly he spake.

The Judge probably thought, as I did, that this order of minstrelsy had gone far enough in a loyal British colony, or what passed for such, and he fell into his usual trick of quoting—

" ' How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank,
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep into our ears ; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.' "

The soft air, the moonshine that paled the stars, the gentle lapping of the water along the sides of the boat, the dip of the oars, all heightened the enchantment.

" Captain Mathews does not like our songs," said Miss Simpson.

It is true that I am proud of my Whig ancestry. Neither Mathews nor McWhirter, my mother's name, had ever bowed the knee to Baal—that is, to Stuart ; but this was not the time nor place to stir up differences of opinion.

" He would prefer a psalm, no doubt," said Nelson ; and he placed his arm behind the lass to give me a friendly punch in the side.

" Some of my Covenanting forbears were shot down in bogs for singing such," I replied.

" Out of tune, perhaps," said Miss Mary, with irritating flippancy.

She was not deep enough in her feelings to understand what a man's traditions might mean to him.

Nelson had a finer instinct about it, and he changed the subject, though I noticed he had not changed the position of his arm. We were keeping close to the north shore to gain help from the current.

"Here again is the bluff Wolfe climbed with his men," said he. "It looks steep in this light for the hauling up of cannon."

"Not for Highlandmen," said Miss Simpson.

"Nor for sailors," said Nelson. "I understand he had some of them also."

"To be sure! Quebec would never have been taken without the navy. The French had none in these waters. The guard was removed from the hill-top up there. What was to hinder the British getting up?"

"You seem anxious to discredit the exploit, Miss Simpson," I remarked.

"No! no! Believe him not, Captain Nelson. But remember this. I was born in Quebec, since the Conquest, and I have grown up among these Canadians. I cannot avoid feeling somewhat as they do—what a crushing blow it was to lose their country after a fight of more than a century to maintain it. Think of the famine and hardships, the sieges and Indian raids their ancestors endured—only to be abandoned by the Mother Country in the end, and to have the victorious enemy settle for ever in their midst!"

She shivered.

"Are you chilly, Miss Simpson?" I asked. "My coat is at your service."

"Or my plaid," said the Judge. "Change places with me, Robin, and I can give the lass a wing o' it."

I made no move to obey, because I was too little used to boats to care about standing up in a moving one. Besides, I must own, I was not finding the proximity of Miss Simpson so unpleasing as I had expected. She answered Mabane herself.

"Thank you, sir. Captain Nelson's coat-sleeve is all that I require. It holds my cloak in place comfortably."

Despite the laugh at his expense, what must the sailor do but hold it more closely still?

"What I cannot understand," he said, "is why the Canadians should ever think of joining forces with these New Englanders, whom their fathers fought so long."

"They wish to insult Old England, that is all," said I.

"They will not go too far," said Mabane. "The priests, who are their real rulers, know that nothing is to be gained by exchanging one set of English masters for another. They could expect no such license for their religion in a republic which contains an element so intolerant as the Puritans of Massachusetts. Nor could they expect any recognition for their language or laws among a baker's dozen of wrangling colonies, each wanting its own way. The safety of their nationality depends on their adherence to England, who is far-off and indifferent to minor details."

"But," I argued, "the more benefits bestowed upon a conquered people, the more traitorous they become. In Acadia it was the same. Because England let the Acadians alone to do as they pleased, they never ceased intriguing to bring back the despotic rule of France, and then what a hue and cry when they were deported to a part of the country where they could do less harm!"

"Blood is thicker than water," said Miss Mary.

"That is so," said Nelson, heartily, "and I felt it myself when I captured a Cape Cod fishing vessel, called the *Harmony*. We needed a pilot, so we brought her New England captain aboard the *Albemarle*, but let him go again as soon as we had done with him. We never expected to see or to hear more of him, but—would you believe it?—he came sailing out from shore with a cargo of fresh meat, fruit and vegetables that brought joy untold to my good fellows, that had lived on salt pork, and sea biscuits full of weevils for so long."

"The Canadians are like the Jacobites," continued Miss Simpson, with no other motive than to stir me up, for she was Lowland, like myself. "They are loyal to an ideal, and concern themselves not with material advantages. The lilies of France are to them like their religion—a sacred hot-house plant, quite removed from the vegetable garden of self-interest."

"We, too, have our ideals," I replied, stiffening

the shoulder against which hers rested, "certain demands that duty, honesty, fidelity, lay upon us, which we endeavour not to disregard."

"There is no glory in those."

"Glory? Is that worth a struggle?"

"Some of us think so," said Nelson. "Since my boyhood I have ever seen floating before me a radiant orb that seemed to beckon me onward to renown. Would you not rather die, as Wolfe did up yonder, your life half lived, yet conscious that you had won a momentous victory for your country, than live out your three-score years and ten in mediocre happiness? Look at your Governor-General. Hath he much joy in rounding out his span?"

"No, for he is in bad health," said the Judge. "No man can enjoy his existence under those circumstances. But I doubt if Westminster Abbey and the plaudits of the multitude make much difference to General Wolfe where he now is—if, indeed, he knows aught about them."

"But his example——"

"Stimulates others to like achievements, Miss Mary. Therefore it is a fine bee in the bonnet, this 'radiant orb' our sailor laddie speaks of seeing. But for that we should not have so many hare-brained young idiots leading forlorn hopes, that whiles turn out to be not forlorn, but fortunate."

"You talk as if you believed the pursuit of happiness to be the aim and end of existence," said I.

"Well, is it not? The difference lies only in the

individual belief as to where it is to be found. One man thinks he sees happiness in fame, another in riches, another in good deeds, his neighbour in bad deeds; one in the pleasures of this life, another in the life which is to come. What would you? We all long to be happy for the time that we are here, be it eight years or eighty."

"Surely the best-lived life," said Miss Simpson, "is that which brings most happiness into the lives of others."

"If one has a love of approbation strong enough to make one happy in the doing of it."

"You would have us all a selfish pack, doctor," said I.

"Well, are we not? Even the Golden Rule signifies so much. To do unto others as we would have others do unto us is the safest way to get decent treatment ourselves. But this is serious talk for a *pique-nique*. Another Scotch song, Miss Mary!"

The hood had dropped back from her hair, and I can never forget the rapt face of her in the moonlight, with Nelson's profile just beyond it, as she lifted up her voice and sang—

"O waly, waly up the bank,
 And waly, waly, down the brae,
 And waly by yon river side,
 Where I and my love were wont to gae.
 I leant my back unto an aik,
 I thought it was a trusty tree
 But first it bow'd and syne it brak'—
 And sae did my true love to me.

DOWN ST. LAWRENCE BY MOONLIGHT 197

“ O waly, waly, love is bonnie
A little time, while it is new ;
But when it's auld it waxes cauld,
And fades awa', like morning dew.
O, wherefore should I busk my head ?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair ?
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he'll never lo'e me mair.' ”

If there be any more heart-rending song than that in the Scottish tongue, I should like to hear it. Being so close to the singer, I fell under the spell of her voice, her personality, or it may have been that there is something about music, even from an indifferent performer—as Miss Simpson undoubtedly was—that detaches the listener entirely from his accustomed groove, from present time and place. The song pierced me with a pleasurable pain, bringing back, as it did, all the regrets of my earlier life, the sweetheart I might have had, the honour I might have won, the friends I had lost and those that had lost their way. I came to myself with a start at the sound of one of Mabane's inevitable quotations—

“ The devil hath not, in all his quiver's choice,
An arrow for the heart like a sweet voice.”

The warning was timely, and I straightened myself up to lean away from the lass and look up at the constellations, more staid and trustworthy than the misleading moon that has through all the ages inclined the wisest among us to folly.

A more noble sight never met human eyes than Quebec presented as we rounded Cape Diamond.

A mist lay over the wide expanse of water towards the Isle of Orleans, but the city rose out of it like a belle in a gossamer ball-gown, the moonbeams catching a tinned roof here and there in lieu of jewels. The scattered lights above, the voices of the sailors aboard ship, the stir and motion of vessels preparing to set sail with the outgoing tide—I can shut my eyes and it all comes back to me.

“ I love the old town ! Do not you also, Captain Nelson ? ”

“ With all my heart, Miss Mary. Your ‘ city set on a hill ’ is worth all the bloodshed it took to win her. But, despite your sympathy for the losing side, you must not overlook the number of English lives—and Scotch—that were lost in the winning. But for them you would not be here, nor I, nor any of us, and think what it has meant to me ! Never in my life have I enjoyed such health and happiness ! ”

The man of action had become for the moment a mystical dreamer. I remember well how his thin face was illumined, and how his eyes shone. They had the faculty of seeing things invisible—radiant orbs, and such-like—whilst mine could see only that which was visible to the natural eye—aided by a telescope.

We were now ready to go ashore, and Miss Simpson was pointing out to Captain Nelson the different landmarks, undistinguishable to him in the moonlight, with a cane she held in her hand. That

was the College of the Jesuits, that the Church of the Récollets, that the Hôtel Dieu, and so on. As we put about to draw into the wharf, we found a stiff westerly breeze had sprung up, from which the shoulder of the Cape had sheltered us. Our boatmen had some difficulty in making headway against it. The lumpiness of the water round the landing-stage rendered our disembarkation somewhat awkward, especially for females. Miss Simpson was the last of them to be handed out, and as Nelson sprang up on the wharf to aid her, she held out to him the stick she carried, that he might pull her up by it, for the tide was low. It was a trial of strength for which he was by no means fitted, being a delicate chap at best, while she was a tall, strong young woman, who might have sprung ashore as easily as he had done, had she been so minded. But his spirit was equal to any attempt, and it was the slipperiness of the miserable cane between them that caused her hand to slide back along it, and she would have fallen across the thwarts had I not been there to catch her in my arms. I released her instantly when she found her feet.

"Pardon me, Captain Mathews. I nearly knocked you over."

"Not the slightest danger of that."

"True! Your straightness and steadiness are above suspicion. Even my ten stone could not make you deviate a hair's-breadth."

Why the chagrin in her tone? Had she expected me to embrace her when I had the opportunity, as

one of her young and foolish adorers might have done? I lent my aid to Nelson in getting her landed, as indifferently as if she had been her own mother, or a sack of flour. They were the last to land, except myself. I was to be taken further onwards, towards the mouth of the St. Charles, and put ashore at a point nearer my lodgings in St. John Street. The boatman had no sooner shoved off than I heard a shriek from the wharf.

“Oh, my stick! My cane! Captain Mathews!”

One would think it was a pearl necklace at least that had been left behind. I had heard something crack as I stepped from the seat to the bottom of the boat, and now I leaned down and lifted the cane in question.

“Throw it ashore!” shouted Nelson.

But the girl cried—

“No, no! You are too far out! It will fall into the water!”

Doubtless she expected me to direct the boatman to put about and restore the thing to her; but as I held it in my hand I noticed something that determined me otherwise. A white scrap protruded through the crack in the cane. There were undoubtedly papers concealed in the hollow of it.

CHAPTER XIV.

NEMESIS APPROACHES MISS SIMPSON.

It did not greatly surprise me that a messenger should arrive at my lodgings early the next morning, asking for a cane upon which the initials "M. S." were cut.

"Tell the lady who sent you," I replied, "that her stick is cracked. I shall have it repaired before I return it to her."

Hot-foot on his departure, came the girl herself. I had never before been honoured with a female visitor, and her coming embarrassed me exceedingly; but she was cool as the morning itself. I asked her to sit down, but she declined.

"I have merely come for my property," she said, "since you sent the boy back without it. I would not for the world put you to the trouble of having it repaired."

"Miss Simpson," I said gravely, "I fear I understand only too well your anxiety to recover that cane."

"What do you mean?"

She changed colour slightly.

"Since you are here, will you do me the honour to walk with me to the Château, in order that it may be disclosed, in the presence of His Excellency, just what this stick contains?"

She laughed nervously.

"You and General Haldimand are clean daft on the subject of plots and plotters. Even my humble little cane is open to the suspicion of having pointed the way to rebel invaders."

"Would it be too much to ask where you obtained this 'humble little cane'?"

"In the Chaudière woods, of course."

"Strange that you should become so strongly attached to so recent a possession."

"Pardon me if I fail to see how that concerns you, Captain Mathews."

She could assume a surprising amount of dignity when aroused. For the moment her presence seemed to fill my low-ceiled chamber.

"I am sorry to inform you that the matter becomes my affair when I find that there are papers; doubtless of a treasonable character, concealed in the hollow of this stick."

Her assumption of startled innocence was admirable.

"Give it to me at once, that I may see for myself."

"Unfortunately, I cannot comply with your request. My orders are to bring evidence of this nature immediately before His Excellency."

I held the cane away from her, but bent it open

at the crack far enough to enable her to see for herself that there were papers within. Then I placed it behind my back, out of her sight. I was no weakling, like Nelson, else I believe the handsome Diana would have fallen upon me then and there, to wrest her cherished possession from me by main force. She had a just appreciation of my physique, but underrated the strength of my mentality when she tried wheedling.

"Do let us take the papers out here, Captain Mathews, so as to see what they are about. You can have them; only let me have the cane."

"Tell me where you obtained it."

"In the woods at the picnic, as I have told you."

"I was not aware that the forests bordering on the Chaudière grew bamboo."

"I said not that I found it growing. It was lying upon the ground."

"Where doubtless it had been placed for the proper party to pick it up."

"You insinuate that I was the proper party?"

"That is how it appears to me."

"You are determined to place me under suspicion, if not under arrest. I wager there is not a thing in that stick to incriminate me or any one else."

"Come with me to His Excellency, and we shall find out," I insisted, slapping my left hand lightly with the cane, as I held it in my right. I should not have been loath to use it on the palms of the fuming female before me. "It is for him to determine

whether or not the matter is treasonable that we have here, and what shall be done with the person in whose possession it is found."

"That is all nonsense, Captain Mathews. You know as well as I do that the General takes your judgment in every matter of this sort."

"What if he does? I have to go through the form of opening treasonable documents in his presence."

"But you are not even aware that these are treasonable."

"If they were not, why the necessity for concealment?"

"You are bound to have your way, of course; but I cannot go with you—not this morning. I have an engagement."

"That will have to wait, I fear. It pains me to inconvenience a lady, but since you will not go amiably, I am forced to command your presence at headquarters forthwith."

"You arrest me?"

"Most regretfully," I bowed.

Her handkerchief went to her eyes, but it was only a pretence of weeping, though it caused me to relax my vigilance for the moment I was imposed upon. In that instant she seized the cane from my hands, and was out of the door with it in a flash! She must have taken my stairs in two leaps, for when I reached their head she was already at the outer door. By the time I looked out of it she was well

along the street, her skirts held high for running, and she waved the obnoxious stick at me in triumph as she turned the corner.

The hour was early. There were few people abroad as yet to see Miss Simpson proceed up Fabrique Street and take the brook at one spring, as I had no doubt she would do. But it would be the talk of the town within twenty-four hours, should even one person chance to see me in pursuit. I was not in the habit of showing myself on the street save in full regimentals; what Polly Simpson might do was of no consequence in comparison. It would take more than this episode to entice me into forgetfulness of my dignity far enough to indulge in a paper-chase that fine autumn morning. It was childish of the girl to think she could escape justice in this manner. But I acknowledged her to be clever enough to abstract the present contents of the cane and place harmless papers in their place before I could get possession of it; though it would be more in keeping with her character to burn up stick and papers as they were.

I remained quietly at home until I had dressed properly and made out a warrant for her arrest. Then I betook myself to the small house near the top of Mountain Hill. Mrs. Simpson, a decent old Scotch "body," without any pretensions to the gentility her daughter affected so successfully, assured me that the latter was not at home. She reminded me of a hen that had hatched a duck—which she

regarded as a swan, and there was something about her speech that recalled so forcibly that of my own father, I asked, quite irrelevantly, what part of Scotland she came from.

"Bridgnorth," she replied.

My father's own parish! After that, how was it possible for me to present the warrant for her daughter's arrest? I contented myself with asking where she was.

"Gone a-fishing with a gentleman o' the navy," was the reply, given with appreciation of the quality of the company.

"By herself?"

"There wad be others in the party, I doubt na."

I did doubt it; but I let that pass, and inquired casually if Miss Simpson carried a cane.

"What for would she be carrying a cane, sir? My Polly can jump the boulders without help in any stream hereabouts."

Having had a recent exhibition of Polly's agility, I did not dispute the assertion.

"Can you tell me where they have gone?"

"The Montmorenci was spoken about; but lads and lasses change their minds. I couldna be saying for certain."

"And when will they be back?"

"Not before nightfall."

"Then I shall call again."

But that very evening His Excellency gave me orders to start to Machiche in the early morning to

consult with Captain Conrad Gugy regarding the disposition of a large party of loyalists that had just arrived there. The idea of placing the arrest of Miss Simpson in other hands than my own did not occur to me. I had too much sympathy for that mother of hers to send the ordinary serjeant-at-arms, and should I despatch one of our younger officers on the distasteful task, the belle of Quebec would be entirely competent to turn him aside from his duty. Now that she had had ample time to make away with the cane and its contents, the matter might just as well be left until my return.

Had I had any doubts of the justice of my suspicions, they would have been dispelled by remarks let fall among the newly-come loyalists regarding a certain female correspondent of the young man Robinson, who was well known among them. He had stayed long enough at Machiche to get well acquainted with the disposition both of troops and colonists. He had even had the effrontery to affirm that I myself had made out a permit for him to return by way of Lake Champlain. But he was gone now, and I need not distress myself further about him. If I carried round with me a sack of chagrin for every impostor I had failed to bring to justice I should never be able to hold up my head. Sufficient unto the day was the traitor thereof. I had Miss Simpson to attend to now.

I laid down the law at Machiche, as His Excellency's deputy, that none of the "old subjects,"

as they called themselves, should be granted land east of Montreal, though that was where they mostly wanted it, thinking perhaps that there might be no boundary lines after the war, and that they would be so much nearer to their former friends. On my return I found that the General also had got wind of some female being engaged in treasonable correspondence.

"A Quebecker, I am told," he said, "though I should not have thought there was a *demoiselle* in the town who could write such good English as the letter Doctor Vallière has shown me, written in a fine feminine hand."

"What was in it?"

"Naught of importance, so far as I could judge; but my knowledge of your tongue is too slight to enable me to discover *doubles entendus*."

"Where is it?"

"The doctor took it away with him, promising to bring me a good translation of it in a few days."

Was it possible that he had succeeded where I had failed? Had he secured the paper-holding cane? How stupid it was of me not to have at least told the General of my discovery before I left town. The doctor seemed to have been making his way into His Excellency's good graces during my absence, and though that was what I had long desired, I was not flattered that it should have been accomplished without my aid.

So soon as I was at liberty, I strode quickly down

from the Château past the Chien d'Or—to find the house next door vacant.

“Mrs. Simpson and her daughter have moved away,” replied a neighbour in answer to my inquiry.

“Where have they gone?”

“They have left town.”

“Impossible!”

The Canadienne shrugged her shoulders.

“You know best, monsieur. That is what they told me last week, when they went away with all their goods.”

I could hardly believe that in a small place like Quebec, so sudden a move should have come to pass unheralded, unrecorded. I must question every carter in town till I discovered the one that had done the moving; but, first of all, I would interrogate Captain Miles Prentice, who was certain to know what had become of his connections. His house, too, was vacant! The same French woman who had told me about the Simpson removal opened her door again. Probably she had been watching me through her shutters.

“The Prentice family have also gone away,” she said. “The inn has fallen into other hands.”

How could conspicuous folk, such as these, have removed themselves without warning—whence, nobody knew? Could it be possible that they had quickly and quietly made their way into the rebel colonies? Was her Uncle Miles a party to Miss Simpson's schemes? It seemed absurd, and yet

I remembered that he had been driven out of Quebec at one time by the enmity of a Highland regiment, for alleged cruelty to a soldier's wife. He had taken refuge in the States, and there was no saying what connections he had formed there. I spent the forenoon in fruitless inquiries, even as to the person that had removed the effects; but at dinner that afternoon—a special affair tendered by the military of the town to our distinguished guests of the navy, Sir Samuel Hood and Prince William Henry—I had speech with Captain Nelson. After casual discussion of the war news, I remarked—

“ You will regret to learn that Miss Mary Simpson is no longer living in Quebec.”

“ Why should I regret her removal to a better home ? ”

He spake so solemnly that for an instant I feared the lass was dead. My heart lost a beat—so anxious was I about the recovery of those papers. I tried to speak calmly.

“ Opinions might vary as to the betterment.”

“ I had not numbered you among those who would so sincerely deplore Miss Simpson's removal from our midst, Mathews; but keep up your heart, she is not far away.”

“ How far ? ”

Again I tried to clear the anxiety from my voice.

“ Is it possible that the omnipresent Eye has not been cognizant of the fact that the Prentices and the Simpsons have all left town ? ”

"I learned it only to-day, having been up at Machiche."

"Alackaday! They might have delayed their going had they known how seriously their departure in your absence would affect your Spyness—forgive me, Mathews. I did but jest. I know that the necessary espionage is as hateful to you as it would be to me."

"Where have they gone?"

"To their new house, of course, just ready for occupation."

"I was not aware they were building one."

"It is Prentice who has built it, but the Simpsons are to share it with his family."

"But where—where?"

"Bandon Lodge, just without the St. Lewis Gate. A lonely location, I grant you, but safer, to my thinking, than the neighbourhood of Mountain Hill, whereon cut-throats have so many lurking-places."

Miss Simpson had probably instructed her Canadian neighbour what answer to make to military inquirers—"moved out of town." Yes, a stone's throw from the walls, as I discovered when I called at Bandon Lodge next morning. Her mother received me with great cordiality.

"Come awa' ben and see our braw new house, Captain Mathews. Polly will grudge missing ye again."

I doubted if Polly would.

“ Where is she ? ”

“ Oh, awa' gallivantin' wi' yon naval officer, as usual. She can tak' care o' hersel', but I am wishin' he was at the back o' beyonts again ! ”

“ Captain Nelson is a man of honour, madam—susceptible, of course, like all sailors ashore ; but I could without fear entrust my younger sister to his safe keeping, if I had one.”

I might have added that I considered the Captain in much the more danger of the two. For the credit of His Majesty's service I ought to remove Miss Mary from his proximity, but first of all I must secure the crowning evidence against her. Probably she thought me still at Machiche. If the stick were intact I might get it from her mother.

“ Did Miss Simpson leave her cane behind her this time ? ”

“ That's what ye speired at me afore. Polly laughed when I tell her.”

“ It may be no laughing matter for all concerned when that stick is recovered.”

The old lady took alarm.

“ I kenna what ye mean, but gin ye wad insinuate that my lass is keepin' aught that doesna belang till her—— ”

“ No ! no ! Mrs. Simpson—not that. I have been looking about this room and I do not see here the thing that has been lost. Would it more likely be where your daughter sleeps ? ”

“ You will not be laying your hand on a thing

that is hers, but I can tak' ye up the stair to let ye see for yoursel' that there is naething contraband near my Polly."

She spake with dignity, but I could see that she was trembling with apprehension—of what she knew not—as I followed her up the steep, narrow stairway that led to the upper story of the house. Like most of the town dwellings, the ceiling was high enough only in the centre of each room to permit a grown man to stand upright. Miss Mary must bend her regal head to creep into that small white cot under the sloping roof. I was aware that she was no great lady to repose nightly in a four-poster, but considering the fine appearance she presented at the assemblies, I was slightly surprised at the Spartan-like simplicity of her chamber. If mine was a monk's cell, hers was a nun's.

This sort of spying was particularly distasteful to me, and I took but a hasty glance about ere I turned to go down the stairs. I hated the profanation of Diana's bower as heartily as I hated frightening the old lady. The cane was not in sight—I hardly expected it would be—and I hastened to make my escape, but at the stairhead I was met by Miss Simpson herself, coming up.

Her face crimsoned with anger, for she knew what I sought, and she threw a protecting arm about the shoulders of her small mother, while she gave me a glance that might have hammered nails in my coffin.

"This is a queer place for you to be entertaining

company, mother. You were not thinking of taking lodgers?"

"Na, na, my lamb. Captain Mathews called about a stick, and he came up the stair wi' me to see if we couldna find it."

Her voice trembled, but the daughter's arm tightened around her, while the look she gave me might have cut in two—a slimmer man.

"What is it a' about, Polly?"

"Nothing but havers, mother dear. I picked up a cane in the woods at the Chaudière picnic, and one would think it had belonged to one of Captain Mathews's forbears, so keen is he on its recovery."

"Then gie it till him."

"That I will, mither, to please you, and because I know he will not leave the house without it."

She judged aright that I was man enough not to arrest her before the old lady, so she drew the stick—just as I had last seen it—from the valance at the top of the curtained dormer window, where it had been cunningly concealed, and handed it to me with a low courtesy. I made a bow that matched her own, and took my leave, though I wished that the cane, now I had it, was at the bottom of the St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ALBEMARLE LIFTS ANCHOR.

FOR the sake of Mrs. Simpson, I hoped I might be mistaken as to the contents of the hollow stick her daughter had given me, but I was not. I took it directly to His Excellency, and he remarked, as we opened it together and scanned the papers within, that here was evidence sufficient to hang the person for whom they were intended. But was that person Mary Simpson? The General doubted that to a young and charming *demoiselle* a rebel captain would send this account of how many men could be spared for the invasion of Canada by way of the Chaudière, how many must meet them, how much provision would be required, and where it should be stored. I had to give him the sum total of the evidence against Miss Simpson, beginning with her defence of the two notorious rebel sympathizers, Tremblay and Michaud, that July day on Mountain Hill, before he could be convinced that she ought to be arrested.

"I am sorry," he said at length. "Mabane rates her very highly."

"The Judge can see no evil in a Scot."

"How is it that you can, Mathews?"

"I trust, sir, that I allow no personal considerations nor national prejudices to interfere with the performance of my duty."

Nevertheless, a pang shot through me when I thought of Mrs. Simpson—from Bridgnorth.

"*Eh bien!* I suppose there is naught to do but to have the *demoiselle* arrested and cast into prison. She will find few of her kind there, and she will be greatly missed at the assemblies this winter; but we must waive that consideration. Attend to the business, Mathews."

"If you please, sir, I would rather that you assigned the duty to another."

"Afraid of Diana's darts, Captain? I thought you the most invulnerable of my staff."

"'Tis not that, sir; but I have already incurred her ill-will through pressing the inquiry as far as I have done."

"And wish not to incur more?"

The General looked at me so strangely, I felt the unwonted red rise in my cheek.

"'Tis of her poor old mother I think. She comes from the same parish as my own father. I would rather face a cavalry charge than go to the house again."

His Excellency seemed relieved.

"I should not like to hear of your getting into

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the toils of any siren. It would mean an end of your usefulness to me, I fear."

"At my age, sir——"

"Pouf! Shout not till you have left the wood—left the world, I might say. Men are never safe from the ravages of women. Since you are reluctant to mix yourself further in the Simpson affair, I will send a summons to the girl privately, commanding her presence here. Then we can place the evidence frankly before her and see what she has to say. I can get hold of Vallière also, and discover if the mysterious lady letter-writer is also Miss Simpson. If there be sufficient to convict her, we can let her disappear quietly into gaol, whilst you shall have the gentle task of telling her old mother she has gone upon an unexpected visit to friends. Now here is another matter requiring your attention."

He handed me the following letter* :—

"Albemarle,
"Quebec,
"Oct. 12th, 1782.

"SIR,

"Upon my application to the Captain of the Port for a Pilot for the Gulph of St. Lawrence (John White) he informed me that the only Pilot for the Gulph was kept by your order. Therefore if the

* Original in the Haldimand Collection of Documents, British Museum.

service you keep him for is not of greater consequence than the service he is wanted for at present, I must request that the Captain of the port may be ordered to send him with me.

“ I am, sir,

“ Your Hum'le Serv't,

“ HORATIO NELSON.

“ To His Excellency General Haldimand.”

So he was going, and I was glad of it. One difficulty would thus be removed to putting Miss Simpson in her proper place, wherever it might be decided that should be. The society of Post-Captains of His Majesty's navy was far above what she ought to aspire unto, though I had to be honest with myself and allow that she had not sought the same. Nevertheless, the friendship between her and Nelson had always seemed a mistake to me. She was as old for her years in her handling of men, as he was young in his ignorance of women. I was relieved that he would not need to have his eyes opened with regard to Miss Simpson, but could sail away in the comfortable assurance that she was all his fancy had painted her. He was ordered to the West Indies, far enough to prevent communication with the belle of Quebec, even were he so minded—farther than if he had been going back to England, for the General was even then arranging for the sailing of a monthly packet to the Mother Country, in the summer time. Once the winter settled down upon the Province, we were dead

to the outside world till the spring opened our sea gate again.

I attended to the business of the pilot for the *Albemarle*, and then sought repose, which did not come at my call. What a bombshell was about to burst in that peaceful home without the Gate of St. Lewis! Could I in any way have averted it? Should I have sooner sounded the alarm, and given the girl fair warning that her practices were discovered, instead of waiting till a mountain of guilt was piled on her head too great to be removed by her simple denial? Sleeplessness drove me to my accustomed solace—the telescope. The millions of stars in the Milky Way winked at me sympathetically.

The earth was spinning round on its axis towards another day. I watched for the coming of Venus, then the morning star, and afterwards studied the Zodiacal Light, which was clearly visible, the ecliptic being nearly perpendicular to the horizon.

After the day had dawned, I turned my telescope to the harbour, thinking perchance to see the last of the *Albemarle*; but she must have already lifted anchor, for she was nowhere visible. Then, as I watched, I saw a man-o'-war's boat crossing from the direction of the Isle of Orleans. It pleased me to test the strength of my instrument by noting how clearly I could see the dip of the men's oars, the curving water at the bow of the boat as it shot forward. But—it could not be possible that was Captain Nelson, seated in the stern? I glued my

eye to the telescope. Yes, it was he, undoubtedly ! What had happened that he was coming back after his frigate was already out of sight ? Was he ill ? Did he require medical or other aid for any of his crew ? He was the last man I wished to see in Quebec on that day of all days. I must go to meet him, and learn the cause of his return.

I dressed hurriedly, and walked down Palace Hill in time to see Nelson spring ashore from the boat, which he ordered off again. When he saw me, he came forward with outstretched hand.

“ You are early astir, Mathews.”

“ You likewise, Captain.”

“ Yes ; I have an errand of importance in the Upper Town this morning.”

“ It must needs be of importance if it means the loss of this tide to the *Albemarle*.”

I was most unwilling that he should come within reach of the news of Miss Simpson's arrest, which was likely to take place that very day. The General was not one who let the grass grow under his feet when resolved upon a course of action.

“ I take no orders from landsmen.”

The asperity in his tone made me lay my hand in friendly fashion upon Nelson's arm as we walked slowly along the *canoterie* together.

“ Far be it from me to hasten your departure, Captain Nelson ; but since we cannot have you with us always, I am loath to see you lose this fine morning's sail down the river. The wind may turn

hard-hearted at any moment. This is October, remember. Such weather cannot last."

"Thank you kindly, Captain, for your anxiety on my behalf, but it is quite uncalled for."

"And unwelcome? Pardon my surprise at meeting you ashore. Looking for the *Albemarle* from my window, I thought she was away, but I see now you have cast anchor down at St. Patrick's Hole—a long row back! The business must have been urgent that brought you to town."

"It is; but it doth not concern the military, nor the Governor, nor his Secretary, nor any damned busybody that chooses to spy upon me."

He was walking at a quick rate up the hill, but with my habitual long stride I had no difficulty in keeping abreast of him.

"You should not have made us all so deeply attached to you whilst you was here, Nelson," said I, mildly, "if you wished not that we should take an interest in your comings and goings, in everything that bears upon your success in life."

"Confound you, Captain, am I not master of my own ship, of my own movements?"

"I understand that you and Captain Squires of the *Astrea* are ordered by Captain Worth of the *Assistance* to join him immediately at Bic, to act as convoy for transports assembling there preparatory to setting sail for New York."

"Your information is exact, as usual, Captain Mathews; but, unfortunately, it rests not with you

to see that these instructions are carried out. I wish you good morning."

But I was not to be discharged after that fashion; my suspicions were too strong with regard to his errand. So I replied amiably, as I shortened my step to suit his—

"You are ever one to set rules and regulations at defiance, if they accord not with your own instincts. I would sometimes that I had had a less stringent upbringing. I simply cannot enjoy breaking loose from authority."

Nelson's ever-ready laugh came in response.

"That is true, Mathews. You will never know the delight of going contrary to the orders of your superior officer. As a matter of fact, you are responsible for my being here this morning, instead of past the end of Orleans."

"What do you mean?" "What has he heard?" I said to myself.

"Did John White not go on board, as directed?"

"Oh, yes! We took him on last night. You are not to blame in that way, but in another."

Had the pilot by some strange mischance heard of the latest arrest about to be made? Had he told the Captain of the *Albemarle*? Was this to be an attempt at another "gallant rescue"?

"Pray explain yourself," I said, in some trepidation.

"Even to be an accessory in law-breaking sets you shaking, my good Mathews, though in this

case your intentions were doubtless innocent enough."

"Please put my mind at rest. What have I done?"

"Yesterday afternoon, I was walking in from Woodfield along the St. Lewis Road with a friend of mine, and we saw you going in at her mother's door, so she left me with scant ceremony. I had not time to take a proper farewell."

"And so you have come back to take one?"

"For nothing else."

"In other words, you did not exchange parting salutes, but considering the previous opportunities you have had——"

"Think you the Diana of Quebec would allow me to take advantage of them? You know little about her, Mathews, if you imagine she has ever permitted the slightest familiarity when we were by ourselves."

When I recalled how she had clasped her arms about me as she sat behind me on Cromwell, and had not been afraid to press her head against my shoulder, I was not so flattered as I might have been. No man likes to be considered *too* safe. Evidently she had not dared to go so far with such inflammable material as this young sea Captain.

"Oh, you dried-up old stick of an army man!" he said, petulantly. "You have never been in love, else you would know what it meant to be hurried away from the object of your affections, without a sigh, a tear, a kiss, a promise of future meeting."

"When the 'object' is a Scot, there will be no bussing before the banns."

"Ruffian that you are! What am I here for, if it is not to make a proposal of marriage?"

"And you mean to inform me that you are keeping His Majesty's frigate waiting, six miles down the river, while you make it?"

"You have guessed right—after you are told—you sage old Mathews! I did not say to her half the things I meant to say on our last walk together. I have passed a sleepless night. Never, never can I leave Quebec without laying my heart and my fortune at Miss Simpson's feet."

"Foolish boy! You are no credit to your profession."

Truly I said this to the one who rose to the top of it!

"Let my profession go to Hades. The *Albemarle* can sail without me—what care I, so that I see Mary again?"

I looked at my watch.

"It is barely eight of the clock. She will not be up."

"Will she not? At what hour, think you, have she and I gone to fish? Will she have slept like a sentry the night of my departure? Are you the only one to watch the last of my sails?"

"You imagine she cares for you?"

"I hope so—perhaps. Ah, I must discover for a certainty."

"She is an arch coquette."

"So others have said. She is honest with me."

"So others have thought. Tush! Nelson. She is no mate for you."

"In the opinion of the world, you mean? What care I for that?"

"You ought to care, when you consider how advancement goes by preferment these days. You must not wreck your chances by a *mésalliance*."

"A *mésalliance*! Mathews, were you not a bigger man than I you should take that back or be felled like the ox you are. She's an angel! I am not half good enough for her—that is the only difficulty. Never, never have I seen combined in one person so many graces of mind and manner. I feared to put my fate to the touch until my very last day ashore, and then you baulked me, as I have said. You shall not do it again. Goodbye here, Mathews. I shall tell you the result when I see you again—if ever we do meet, which we shall not, if she rejects me."

I held him fast by the arm, and made him hearken to me.

"All this time the *Albemarle* is dragging at her anchor, like a horse pawing the ground to be off. You are he who once prided himself on his devotion to duty. What has become of your guiding star, your radiant orb?"

He slackened his pace.

"Mary sees it too, before her, though she has chosen a strange way for a woman to win renown."

"Strange indeed!"

"What mean you by that sarcastic inflection? Would you and your General not honour any instrument, however humble, by which Vermont was held loyal to the Crown?"

"Vermont?" I was amazed at the suggestion.

"I am forgetting she told me you had taken it into your stupid head that she was intriguing with the rebels. Mary and I have had many a laugh at your expense. What a merry laugh she has, too! Did you ever hear one, Mathews, that was so like unto the sound of a brook?"

"I saw myself the letter she sent my nephew, though I have now mislaid it; else would I show it to you."

"Careless Mathews! Had I so much as a scrap of her handwriting I should carry it ever next my heart."

"That is where this was——"

Then I remembered. I had thrust it into the pocket of the ranger coat, borrowed from Dr. Vallière, and had forgotten to remove it when I changed into my own clothes. It was, indeed, careless of me to have forgotten to ask him for the letter when I saw him. Could it be that one he had shown to His Excellency? My nephew was in Vermont when he received it? Had I been guilty of misinterpretation?

"Vermont! Vermont!" I kept on muttering to myself, as sentences of the letter came back to me and matters began to clear themselves in my brain. It was a mad dream, but not unlike the lass.

"Yes, Vermont," echoed Nelson. "She is consumed with the ambition of doing her share towards keeping that colony within the realm of King George. Ah, this insatiate craving for honour! It leads us all into queer escapades. You are of those who will give no credit for any great historical movement to the influence of females—as if that were not the rudder that guides the world. Ever since my Mary read that letter last summer——"

"What letter?"

"The one brought in by a man called Robinson. You took it out to Woodfield to consult with Mabane."

"She did not read it,"—again I remembered—"but yes, she heard me read it aloud to the Judge."

"That is the one. She told me afterwards that you and the doctor were a pair of old fogies, not fit to be entrusted with the affairs of a nation in the making; that you were suspicious unbelievers, afraid to move in the game lest the other player might perchance be fooling you. Just as if it were possible to discover whether he was or not until you did make a move."

"We made all the moves in that game necessary to that discovery."

"But you did not inform her of them."

"You seem deep in the lady's confidence."

"My own Polly! As she talked to me of the great plans she had laid, the very heart of me went out in sympathy. Have I not wandered with her along the cliff top of the Plains of Abraham, and stood or sat for a rest, facing the blue hills of Vermont that seemed to her part of her native lands. 'They ought to be ours—they shall be!' she would say. 'We have the plain picture—we shall not be deprived of that purple frame on the horizon.'"

"Just like a woman," I growled, "wanting everything in sight."

"Because she is a woman is no reason why she should not be a notable one. I, too, sigh for honour—to lay at her feet."

"But you must wait till it is won. Why tarry now? Is it the part of a generous man to bind to yourself a maid whom many men desire, and then to sail away, leaving her bound, yourself free—to seek a sweetheart in the very next port you visit?"

"You insult me, Mathews. I will not take such talk from you."

"Stay a bit, Nelson," for his impetuosity was carrying him past me up the Palace Hill. "Excuse my inquiry into your personal affairs, but are you in a position to marry at the present time?"

"I am not. What is that to you?"

"This much. I have a feeling of friendliness for the mother of this girl. She is ailing and not

well-to-do. Why try to take her ewe lamb from her at this juncture ? ”

“ I tell you I am not able to do so—nor can I hope to for some years.”

“ Then why enter into an engagement you see no immediate means of keeping ? ”

“ She told me about her mother at the picnic—afterwards I saw her.”

“ Speaking of that picnic—had Miss Simpson a short cane with her when we started ? You may remember one belonging to her was left in the boat when you went ashore. She seemed heart-broken about it.”

“ To be sure ! The dear Diana ! Saw you not that I had cut her initials on it ? ”

“ I did observe them ; but there was no evidence of the cutting having been recently done.”

“ That very afternoon. You are no woodsman, Mathews, or you could have told so much. I had cut H. N. on a tree, and meant to carve M. S. below, when she saw that stick lying on the ground, and we agreed it was the best place for initials, since it could be carried home, as the tree could not. Her letters were done, and mine were to be done next day. That is why she was so greatly concerned over the loss of the cane.”

“ Did you not think it strange to see such a thing lying in the woods ? ”

“ She thought so, when I called her attention to it in the underbrush. As for myself, I thought nothing

about it, save that it was a likely smooth piece of wood for the carving of letters—much easier cutting than the bark of a tree. I must bring her a better bamboo from the Indies, since that is cracked.”

“The cracking revealed papers within the hollow.”

“Never! You astonish me, Mathews! That explains your interest in the matter.”

“Yes; we have found more of the treasonable correspondence of which I have shown you samples.”

“And was you really blockhead enough to fancy the letters in that stick were meant for Miss Simpson?”

“Most assuredly, until now that you have enlightened me as to the nature of her correspondence with the English colonies.”

“For a clever man, I must say you show little judgment. Once you take an idea into your head, all the evidence seems to point that way. There is every likelihood that the correspondence you have found is from Vermont.”

“There was no need for secreting it in a hollow cane, if it had been. No, this is of the truly false variety.”

“Miss Simpson knew naught of it. I can take my oath on that.”

Since this conviction was coming forcibly home to myself, I was more than ever anxious to get Nelson away before he discovered to what lengths I had gone. Should he learn that the girl he adored had

actually been arrested on my warrant, there was no telling where his quick temper might lead him, and I loved the lad too well to wish to quarrel with him on the eve of his departure for an indefinite period. His interest in the subject of the cane had rendered him unobservant of the fact that instead of taking him round by Fabrique Street and through the Place d'Armes into St. Lewis Street, which led out of St. Lewis Gate to Bandon Lodge, I had turned into Couillard from St. John Street, and we had gone some distance before it came to him that he was proceeding downhill instead of upwards. He berated me in the strongest of seaman's language when he found himself once more on *La Canoterie*.

But there! The *Albemarle's* boat was dancing in the morning sunlight.

"What's all this?" cried Nelson, hurrying to the strand and making a speaking trumpet of his hands. "Are you on pleasure bent?"

"No, sir," shouted the junior officer, seated in the stern. "We have waited for you. Is not your business ashore finished? We can get you back to the ship before the tide turns."

I was sorry for Nelson, as he faced me, grey and wan, so quickly did his expression change with every passing emotion.

"How can I go, Mathews? You have led me back here by a stratagem. I have not seen her."

"Better that you should not. The pang of parting is over—for her. She fancies you gone.

Why let her go through the agony again? And it would be all the greater should you declare yourself."

"In but a few minutes I could say so much——"

"Better left unsaid, believe me, Nelson. I am your friend."

"But you are not hers. You have been cherishing unmanly suspicions——"

"I cherish them no more. Your coming back has accomplished so much."

"'Tis Fate," he muttered, for by this time the boat was at the landing-stage. He grasped my hand, saying in a tense whisper—

"When I have won honour in full measure I will return to claim her. Will you tell her that? And you will be her friend, Mathews—her adviser when she needs one? Polly has neither father nor brother, remember."

I clasped his hand firmly to signify assent, and, so quick was he to act upon a resolution once formed, he leaped into the waiting boat the instant it bumped against the wharf, seated himself, and gave the order for return to the *Albemarle*, his face more sternly set than I had ever seen it.

But he must have turned to watch my progress up the hill, for at every wave of my hat he responded till the shoulder of the Hôtel Dieu shut the bobbing boat from my sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

VALLIÈRE AS WITNESS FOR THE CROWN.

I TOOK no such roundabout road as I had led Nelson, but made haste by the Esplanade to the St. Lewis Gate, hoping to reach Bandon Lodge before the summons from His Excellency should arrive ; but Mrs. Simpson told me, with modest pride, that her daughter had been sent for ten minutes since, to proceed to the Château immediately—about the teaching of the Riedesel children, she imagined, and I was pleased to learn that so harmless a construction had been put upon the summons—at least by the old lady. I tramped my hardest through St. Lewis Street and up to the Château. I might reach it before Miss Simpson was admitted to audience with His Excellency. In this respect fortune favoured me. She was seated in the ante-chamber, more perturbed than I had ever seen her. Even my presence she welcomed like that of an old friend. As the General was occupied for the moment, I sat down beside her, glad of this fitting opportunity to calm her fears, also to make my own apologies.

"What is the trouble, Captain Mathews?" she asked, looking me frankly in the face. Had I not been blinded those past months by the stupid notions I had absorbed, I might have seen, as Nelson had done, that it was impossible for such a countenance to conceal aught which dishonoured it.

"I did not wish to alarm my mother, but I was assured there was mischief brewing somewhere, else I should not have been sent for at this early hour."

"It is all a mistake—my mistake—and I shall make the requisite explanations so soon as I can see His Excellency. He will permit you to go home immediately."

"But why have I been sent for—tell me that?"

I would rather have refrained, but some explanation was her due for the bad quarter of an hour I had given her, though it by no means balanced the many uncomfortable hours she had given me.

"Those papers in the stick that you found—"

"You believe now that I did find it, quite by accident?"

"Yes, I understand that it was Captain Nelson who picked it up."

"Who told you that?"

"Himself."

"When?"

"This morning. I have just parted from him."

"What nonsense! The *Albemarle* lifted anchor last night."

"She went only so far as St. Patrick's Hole, off the Isle of Orleans, and the Captain came ashore again this morning."

"What for?"

"To make his adieux to Miss Simpson, as he had failed to do so last evening."

"And he would find me from home. So much have I to thank you for, Captain Mathews, bringing me away here on account of your unjust suspicions. Is Captain Nelson still at Bandon Lodge? Have you come to fetch me?"

She rose in her impatience, but I motioned her to be seated.

"The *Albemarle* could not lose the tide. A junior officer came for her Captain." Unwilling to face her disappointment, I gazed across the room as I continued hurriedly: "Nelson corroborated your statement about the cane being found in the woods, and he took his oath that you were ignorant as himself of there being aught within. You would not be likely to have your initials carved upon a treasonable receptacle."

"Strange that it did not occur to Captain Mathews sooner. Spies are not famed for marking their effects, are they?"

"I am well aware that I have made a grievous error, Miss Simpson, and I crave your pardon; but kindly consider how unlikely it was that I should surmise the idea of keeping hold of Vermont to be at the bottom of your manœuvres."

"You are unwilling to credit women with any influence, save of an unworthy kind."

"History testifies the same."

"There was Joan of Arc——"

"Who was insane."

"Mary, Queen of Scots——"

"She murdered her husband."

"Queen Elizabeth——"

"Who made a mess of matters a man would have managed better. But why instance these ladies of high degree? I spake of the commonality of your sex."

"You are infinitely flattering!"

Her cheek dimpled adorably. I was looking at her now as if I had never seen her before. As a matter of fact, I never had—the mist of error being before my eyes. She had a colouring that Hebe herself might have envied. Watching the curves of her lips, I paid slight heed to what she said.

"A mouse may help a lion."

"If the lion is in a trap, and requires help," I replied. "In the case of the British Lion *versus* Vermont, none is demanded. That colony is simply facing both ways in order that she may go in whatever direction her interest points at the close of the war. Had you paid attention to Judge Mabane's criticism of the letter, which seems to have so grievously affected your better judgment, you had not been led so far astray."

"I am sorry I did not hear the discussion of the

letter, only the letter itself ; but even had I done so, I might have regarded what was said only as one man's opinion—or two. Even the best of you make mistakes, Captain."

" Am I to infer that you are still minded to keep up your intrigues with Vermont ? "

" I shall answer such letters as I may receive. To do less were discourteous."

" Doubtless there are plenty of young sparks among the Green Mountain Boys who will be delighted to keep up a correspondence with a Quebec belle, and may even pose as a loyalist for the pleasure of meeting her face to face."

" You are insulting."

" I had no intent to be so." I bent earnestly towards her averted face. " But I have just parted from a young man who has sailed away with a sore heart at the leaving of you."

" You mean Captain Nelson ? "

" Who else ? "

She turned eagerly towards me.

" When is he coming back ? "

" He could not say. We are not our own masters, we in the King's service, but he bade me tell you that as soon as fame and fortune were his he would return to lay both at your feet."

I placed my hand upon hers that lay in her lap, to emphasize the delivery of a message whose importance I appreciated to the full ; and at that particular moment the door leading to the General's

sanctum was quietly opened, and he stood himself on the threshold. I was annoyed at being caught sitting so close to the fair accused, of whose innocency His Excellency had not yet been made aware, and the jeering voice of Vallière at his back increased my discomfiture.

"You see for yourself, sir, how intimate they are!"

His Excellency, with a stern motion of his hand, waved us into the inner room, and, like a pair of school children in expectation of punishment, Miss Simpson and I stepped forward. The Governor seated himself in his accustomed chair, after Vallière had courteously placed one for the female. The doctor would then have left us, but he was commanded to remain.

I stood more ill at ease than I had ever expected to find myself in those familiar surroundings. What had come between the General and me? I felt chilled, as if in the presence of an entire stranger. There was that in his manner that suggested our years of friendly intercourse had come to an end.

"I was not aware," he began, in the cold, impersonal tone he used with all his but intimates, "till Dr. Vallière told me, that you, Captain Mathews, and this female suspect were very close friends. I had not looked for her appearance here at all, having been assured that you would see to it the arrest did not take place."

I made an attempt to blurt into speech, but the

General raised a hand to silence me, as he went on—

“ It seems that you have been for some months concealing the strongest evidence against her, in the hope that all would be forgiven and forgotten at the Peace. I am also informed that the accusation you talked of bringing against Miss Simpson was merely a blind to hide your own dealings with the rebels.”

“ Great Heavens ! ” I exclaimed. “ On what does Dr. Vallière base his information ? ”

I turned to him fiercely, but he made no reply, save a gesture expressive of regret that it had been his painful duty to turn informer. The General continued—

“ He saw the two of you returning to town, riding one horse, the very night the spy, Robinson, first made his escape—on the lady’s horse. That was why she had to be brought home on yours.”

I was struck dumb, but as Miss Simpson rose and stood beside me, she broke into a merry laugh. Knowing that her innocence was proven—to my satisfaction—she refused to be seriously affected by what His Excellency had to say.

“ I never had a horse in my life, sir, and I have never ridden one—alone. Judge Mabane can tell you that he is responsible for the foisting of me upon Captain Mathews, who gave me horse-room much against his inclination, I assure you.”

“ Yes, indeed,” I added, and though I should have been warned by the pouting of the lass, I went

still further—"I have never had the slightest fancy for her company."

"Nor I for his," she retorted, quick as a flash.

"Is this your handwriting, mademoiselle?"

I recognized the cursed sheet, and stood by, fervently blaming myself for having left it in Vallière's pocket.

"Yes, I wrote that," said Miss Mary, apparently proud of her penmanship.

"I am sorry you cannot deny it. I had fancied 'Robin' to be a contraction of Robinson, but Dr. Vallière informs me it is the affectionate diminutive of Robert, and that 'My dear Robin' is in reality Captain Mathews here."

"He would never tolerate such familiarity of address from me, sir," protested the lass, her cheeks aflame.

My own glowed scarcely less, and I grew hotter and hotter as the investigation continued. 'Twas enough to silence the readiest tongue, which was not mine, to have the tables turned upon one, to be placed thus without warning in the criminal's dock instead of on the witness stand.

"To whom did you write this letter, then, Mademoiselle?"

"To Robert Fraser, the nephew of Captain Mathews, when he was a prisoner in Vermont."

"So he, too, was in the plot?" said the General, with a sigh.

"My nephew was never in any plot, sir."

"He was sent home by his wise uncle for something of that nature."

"If you will permit me to translate his letter into French, you will see that it relates entirely to the reclamation of Vermont."

"It has already been translated for me, and it bears quite another construction."

"According to Dr. Vallière," said I, facing the Frenchman, who seemed to control the whole situation. Miss Simpson and I were but puppets in his hands.

"Very thoughtless of you not to take better care of a lady's letters, Mathews," said he; "but since you had asked me to bring treasonable matter of every description immediately to His Excellency, I knew that your keen sense of honour would allow no exception to be made in this case."

"Provided I was satisfied that it was treasonable matter. Now I know that it is not."

"Sudden conversion to a pair of bright eyes, eh, Captain? Unfortunately, you had made me aware of their owner's duplicity before you succumbed to their spell. *Regardez!* She is bewitching even our fire-proof Governor!"

I, too, detected some slight relaxation in the thin lips of His Excellency, as he hearkened to the peroration of her impassioned appeal.

"And think you 'twas not worth doing, sir, to spur the lad on to find out the actual disposition of the Green Mountain Boys towards us? To tell them

also of our friendliness towards them? Have they not more in common with Canada than with New York, that is trying to take their country from them? We are not all French over here. A British Canada has already been founded by these loyalists who have left their all through their devotion to our Sovereign. If the men of Vermont share in this sentiment, shall we not hold out to them the hands of brothers? Shall we not honour them as they deserve?"

"Mademoiselle," replied the General, "they are a profligate banditti."

She stepped back, as if struck, and he continued more mildly.

"But you have satisfied me that you are guilty of ambiguity only—a feminine trait—in this letter. Now, will you tell me from whom you received the cane containing papers undoubtedly of a treasonable character?"

"I can tell you that, sir," said I.

"The *demoiselle* can speak for herself."

He seemed to have more faith in her honesty than in mine. It cut me to the quick that my idolized commander, in whose anxieties on this very matter of rebel spies I had participated sincerely and devotedly throughout the war, should turn against me at a whisper from one whom he had heretofore so strongly distrusted.

"I received the stick from Captain Nelson, sir," replied Miss Simpson, colouring again in a manner that called forth the doctor's admiring glances.

"He picked it up in the woods at his birthday picnic, and he carved my initials on it. Neither of us suspected that there were papers within."

"Captain Mathews was also at the fête, was he not?"

"Yes, sir; but he was not with us when we found the stick."

"Which may, nevertheless, have been intended for him. He had it in his possession, broken open, overnight, with full opportunity to remove any evidence against himself that it might contain, before he brought it to me. He has yet to explain how it chances that he always fails to overtake any rebel spy he is sent to arrest—be it Tremblay, Michaud, Robinson, or even yourself, mademoiselle."

She looked at me with a dimpling cheek. Feeling herself to be out of danger, she appeared to rejoice in my humiliation, though it may have been that her knowledge of French was not so extensive as she pretended, and therefore she failed to catch the full significance of the accusations Vallière proceeded to pile up against me in that tongue—after a hypocritical apology for being obliged to unfold such damning evidence to the conviction of one whom he had always looked upon as a friend.

What had I been doing on the road of Hazen, where I had no orders to go? My object had been the release of my traitorous young nephew, whom I had hurried off to Europe before Joseph Brant had opportunity to bear witness against him as the

carrier of treasonable documents. Whilst I was rescuing my kinsman, the spy I was supposed to be chasing was securing more land at Machiche, on the other side of the river. What had I meant by granting this same Robinson leave to return to the rebel colonies with the price of the land which he had sold, undoubtedly with my connivance, when I knew he had done the same thing before ?

"There is some mistake here," said I, as I gathered a few shreds of wits about me. "Captain Guky can testify that I did not go near Machiche on that occasion."

"He cannot, as he was absent from the settlement at the time—otherwise land had not been granted to such scamps as Robinson, even on your recommendation," said His Excellency. "There were plenty of other witnesses to your visit. Nobody else rides a tall grey horse and wears the uniform of a Captain of the 53rd."

"No ; nobody else."

I lifted my head as I said it.

"My previous record goes for naught with you, sir ? You give ear to the first breath of suspicion ?"

"'Twas yourself who commended Dr. Vallière to me as a useful aid in the detection of traitors. Such I have found him to be."

"Your Excellency must give me time to refute these monstrous accusations."

"Granted. But you shall consider yourself under

arrest; a prisoner on parole, not permitted to leave the town."

"'Tis marvellous that you trust me even so far," I replied in bitterness of spirit, as I bowed myself out.

Before the door closed behind me, I heard a laugh—Dr. Vallière's—and I doubted not that Miss Simpson was joining him. I swung round to Nelson's opinion that the French language was incapable of truth-telling—and it was Haldimand's native tongue. He was nearer of kin to Vallière than to me. Why should he not take his word before mine? Condemned be all foreigners! There could be no harmonious blending of Latin and Anglo-Saxon. Let us stick to our own kin and kind. But, meanwhile, how was I to get out of this snare the wily doctor had set for me?

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE VERMONT AFFAIR.

As I marched down the brae from the Château, mortified beyond measure at my reception there, and alarmed too at the difficulty I foresaw of disproving the scandalous charges against me, I heard a patter of feet behind, and a breathless voice at my back—

“For pity’s sake, Captain, walk not so fast! I cannot possibly keep up to you.”

“Miss Simpson! I noticed not that you left when I did.”

“No? You were too much overwhelmed to notice anything; but here I am, and since you are to blame for my early summons, the least you can do is to escort me home.”

“I should be highly pleased—but—ah—I—I have some little matters to collect this morning. And you? Are you not bound for the Battery to see the last of the *Albemarle’s* sails? She will be tacking out into midstream now, where they will be in full view.”

"The sea Captain has no further need of me; the land Captain has."

"What mean you?"

We were walking side by side out St. Lewis Street by this time, though that was not the direction I had intended to take. However, I could cross down to my own quarters off St. John Street by way of the Esplanade, after this erratic female had relieved her mind.

"You believe not in mice helping men," she said.

I retorted impatiently—

"I am no more the one than you are the other, unless you choose to call us both mice that the cat, Vallière, has been playing with."

"Tell me—how did he contrive to get hold of that letter of mine?"

"I took it from Robert Fraser that day in the woods, and put it in the pocket of the doctor's coat I was then wearing."

"You had changed clothes with him?"

"No. He had lent me a ranger suit, as better adapted to the woods."

"And what was there to hinder his taking the loan of yours in return, and doing a bit of mischief in your name at Machiche? He is a good actor."

"*Certes!* You've hit it! Oliver Cromwell looked as if he had been hard ridden all the time I was away. What a clever lass you are!"

"Nothing out of the ordinary, thank you."

Women's wits are sometimes sharper than men's, you will allow."

"Than some men's—yes. I must hasten back to His Excellency and see that he places the blame on the right shoulders."

"He would not believe you. Vallière had his facts all marshalled in order before he presented them. You have no proof but your own word against his. When one man has treated another as shamefully as the Governor has treated you—after all your years of service—and such miserable, mean work too—so unsuited to your tastes and disposition—shut up in that musty library, writing his stupid old letters—making a donkey of yourself hunting spies all over the countryside—I would I could have another chance to tell him just what I think about him!"

I was touched, and also amazed at her sympathy—for the under dog, as usual. The passion in her voice changed to a winning lightness as she continued—

"I doubt if you have yet broken your fast. You look 'sair forfoughten,' as my mother would say. She will be truly pleased to have you seat yourself at our table. I too am as hungry as if I had been fishing since dawn."

I pulled myself up with a start, for we were actually under the archway of the St. Lewis Gate.

"Your kindness has beguiled me into

forgetfulness, Miss Simpson. I am a prisoner on parole, and cannot go beyond the walls."

"Bandon Lodge is but a step."

"It is out of town, nevertheless, and until the General releases me— Take care, we shall be run over!"

A rider had clattered up to the Gate, and as I had taken the lassie's hand to shake it in parting, I drew her close to the wall. Then we laughed together when we saw that the horseman was Judge Mabane.

"This is something like," he cried at sight of us, "though ye hae chosen a weird spot for your whispering."

I seized the horse's bridle.

"Get down at once, doctor. You are wanted immediately in consultation. I trust your business in town will brook delay."

"It will, indeed. I took the excuse of a fine morning just to ride in to enquire for the General's health."

"Then you shall be our emissary to him," said Miss Simpson, as he dismounted.

"Eh? Want his consent? Is that it?"

The lass drew back, blushing, but I made haste to say—

"Nothing of the sort, sir. No such notion has ever entered the head of either of us. 'Tis a political snarl we wish you to disentangle."

"Any more suspects taken?"

"Myself am suspected. I am a prisoner on parole at this very moment, so please Your Honour."

"Hoots, Robin, that's no' possible. The General maun be fair doited."

"Come up on the wall and we shall tell you about it. Yon laddie will hold your horse."

I offered a hand to Miss Simpson to assist her in climbing the ramparts close by, but she shook her head with a smile.

"I have told you how hungry I am, Captain Mathews, and besides you have now a better counsellor; you no longer need me."

"Have a care," I replied with unusual jocularly. "You mind the outcome of your not hearing all that the doctor had to say about the Vermont letter."

As she laughed and left us, Mabane said he had no fancy for airing himself on the ramparts, or sitting on cold stones in the month of October, but he would walk with me to my lodgings. So with the bridle of his horse over his arm, we went together down the Esplanade and I told him the whole story—or thought I did; but he said—

"There is one point you have overlooked, Robin. When I met you alone in the woods the day of the picnic, you told me you had just parted from Vallière. He was not a guest; how chanced he to be there? Undoubtedly he was looking for this very cane, that Captain Nelson had picked up before he could find it."

"To be sure. It is all very simple, when one sees through it, but I was so completely dumb-founded——"

"As any one would be, lad."

"Why should Dr. Vallière turn on me? I have always acted towards him in the tenderest manner possible."

"He has made you the scapegoat for his own sins. Captain Gogy was growing suspicious of him and wrote us to that effect. The General calls him to account and to save his own reputation he blackens yours; but I shall doctor that."

"I doubt if you can; His Excellency was so very severe. I know not what's wrong with him."

"Gravel!" said Mabane, and with that he rode away.

The sympathy I had received was balm to my wounded spirit, but still I felt disgraced, and liked not to show myself on the street till the stigma was removed. How soon that might be I could not judge. If His Excellency were suffering, Doctor Mabane would not be the one to trouble him with affairs of State. So I stayed, worrying, walking, moping, in my rooms all day, wishing only for nightfall, when the star-lit heavens would yield their never-failing consolation. But before that curtain rose, an orderly from the Château came stamping into our quiet street—a letter for me! I waited till he had gone before I opened it, with trembling fingers, it must be confessed.

His Excellency desired Captain Mathews to go to Sorel to stand sponsor in his place, at the christening of Louise Augusta Elizabeth Canada, fifth daughter born to the Baron and Baroness de Riedesel.

The relief was so great that I laughed till the tears came that almost caused me to overlook the postscript. I was further "commanded" to report at Woodfield that evening for a game at cards.

The joy in the advent of "Canada" was short-lived, for she died at the age of five months in the spring of the following year. Her eldest sister, Augusta, turned sick with grieving, as one can imagine how the first sight of death—and the death of one so dear to her—would affect a sensitive child. Madame de Riedesel was very ill herself also, being subjected to an operation that it was painful even to think upon—how much more then to endure! So soon as she was convalescent, His Excellency sent for her and the children to come down to Quebec, hoping that the change to a place not at all associated with the little lost one might wean mother and children alike away from their sorrow. I was despatched again to Sorel to escort them, and it pleased me mightily to have the four little girls welcome me like a favourite uncle and clamber over me as if Dignity and I might be wedded, so unrelated were we. The sail down the wide river in that beautiful month of July, in such company, is one of my Canadian experiences I shall never forget.

I was able to appreciate it the more since the end of my anxieties seemed in sight.

The preliminaries of Peace had now been signed, and all our suspects were released from gaol—better treatment than many of them had deserved at our hands. We had hanged none of them, and were only too thankful that the necessity for confining them was over. Vermont was still playing her double game, but as we were fully cognizant of the fact that she was merely keeping up a correspondence with us to secure better terms from Congress, we paid little attention to her messages and letters. The Green Mountain Boys would not amalgamate peaceably with our Catholic French Canadians; let them go their own way and unite with their own kin—which they ultimately did.

I had had a long talk with Judge Mabane upon these and other matters the night I delivered the Riedesel family into his keeping at Woodfield, and it was growing dark before I left the long avenue behind and stepped out on the St. Lewis Road. On the homeward way, I kept my head in the air, idly wondering whether it would be Vega or Arcturus that should first make itself visible in the clear evening sky. As it turned out it was another "radiant orb" that appeared before me, though I can honestly affirm that my thoughts were far enough away from Miss Simpson at the time. At our next meeting after my arraignment I had thanked her suitably for her happily timed sympathy and

suggestions, assuring her that for the future she could look upon me as a friend. I had attained to the years of sense and sobriety, and was not likely to endanger my peace of mind by seeking female society that might possibly prove too attractive to me, as it had to others. On more than one occasion Miss Simpson had made me feel that I too was human, and since I, if none other, was aware of the quarter in which her affections were permanently bestowed, it behoved me to keep out of her way.

But there she was now, walking in front of me, and alone—at that hour of the evening—in that unfrequented outskirt of the town. The removal of her home without the gates seemed to have added to the independence with which she walked the countryside, as one who would say—

“Wha daur meddle wi’ me?”

That somebody had accepted the challenge of this fair Diana was evident when I caught sight of her again as I rounded a slight bend in the road. A man was walking with her, or at least trying to keep up with the rapid gait she was going at, in her endeavour to get out of his way. He gained on her and had presumptuously thrown an arm about her waist when the sound of my running footsteps startled him into taking to his heels across the Cove Fields. Had I been armed I should have fired a shot after him, but I was not, and it was impossible for me even to give chase, with a strong young female clasping my arm in a frenzy of fear. Never

did I think to see the self-reliant Mary Simpson in such a state of perturbation.

"Let him go," she said, "I alone am to blame. Oh, but you are a solid rock to lean upon, Captain Mathews."

"A Vermont acquaintance?" I asked in jest, but my shot in the air seemed to hit the mark, for she replied with becoming humility—

"He says so, and that I must know his name, which is Robinson."

"The brother-in-law of your friend, Madame Michaud, of course."

"He may be, but I have never met him at her house, and have no wish to see him anywhere."

Safety being assured, she tried to withdraw her hand from my arm, but I placed mine over hers to keep it there—that she might have complete confidence in my guardianship, as she was still trembling.

"Mr. Robinson shall be sent out of the Province straightway," said I. "He will be wishing he had never left Vermont before I have paid back a few of the scores I owe him."

"'Tis strange that he should continually endeavour to force his acquaintance upon me—this is not the first time." Her voice was shaking. "The result of my correspondence with Vermont, you will be saying."

"I do."

"'Tis generous of you not to add, 'I told you so.'"

"Your sex is always prone to forget how large

a part is played by that sex in every one of your dealings with men. That is why I am opposed to women having any share in public affairs. It is impossible for us to render impartial verdicts where females are concerned. You say to us, 'Do thus and so, not because it is right, but because we ask it, and we are women.' Your sex positively unfits you for taking an impersonal view of matters of moment. You will always be governed by how this or that policy will affect son or brother, husband or father."

"Are there not selfish, narrow-minded men also?"

I was pleased to note that her voice was recovering its tone.

"Some; but the type is not universal."

"As it is with us?"

"I have yet to meet the woman capable of taking an unbiased outlook over public affairs."

"If one should so far presume, she is bound to be misunderstood by stupid men. How I wish my sailor laddie were here to take my part. He always did, let me be right or wrong."

"Just what I have been saying. You expect every man to bend to your wishes. Captain Nelson is among those unduly subject to feminine influence."

We had come to the part of the road on which there was a side path, for which we forsook the middle of the highway, thus giving me an excuse for withdrawing my hand from hers, and she dropped

my arm at the same time. Bandon Lodge was already in sight, and we might be seen from its windows, as it was still light enough. Such an affectionate attitude was scarcely in keeping with the tone of our conversation, forbye.

"He would say anything to please you," I continued. "Nelson is not the one to tell you unpleasant truths to your face, as I am doing."

"I wonder where he is now?"

"You have not heard from him?"

"No."

The low word sounded like a sob to me, but I may have been mistaken.

"He spent the winter in the West Indies, I understand. Perchance he will be back here in the autumn."

"Do you think so?" she asked, with restrained eagerness.

"What should I know of the Admiral's plans? I am merely guessing. The naval officer, like the military, must go where he is sent, not where his heart lies. Left to himself, I doubt if Nelson would have departed from Quebec."

That is as near as I ever came to telling her of the hand I had had in his leaving. She answered me with a touch of the remorse that sits so becomingly upon one usually given over to songs and laughter—

"I was not always kind to him while he was here." One might fancy she spake of the dead. "Should

he return I will make amends. Will you not come in to see my mother, Captain Mathews?"

"Not to-night; at a later day, if she will permit me."

"You have a very high place in her esteem."

"I should have forfeited the same had you told her of my unjust suspicions with regard to yourself."

"Can you think I would have told her?"

We were on the doorstep by this time, but with those soft brown eyes looking straight into my own I recked not that others of the same calibre—the Misses Prentice, her cousins, had brown eyes too—might be peeping at us from behind the blinds. I bent my head and kissed her hand ere I tramped off to the St. Lewis Gate of the city. I paid for my indiscretion with a sleepless night which I endured with the help of my telescope. Cassiopeia, Andromeda, and Virgo were safer company for me than a handsome female who loved and was beloved by a man superior in station to myself. The Pleiades must withdraw my attention from Bandon Lodge.

Their attempt was not entirely successful, as the following day found me departing from my usual habits so far as to issue from the St. Lewis Gate in the early afternoon. Mrs. Simpson stood at her door, looking along the road, her eyes shaded with her hand.

"Hae ye seen my Polly the day, Captain Mathews?"

"That I have not." My heart began to quicken its pace in a most unwarrantable fashion. That cursed Robinson! Why had I not gone after him at dawn? Was he about to give more trouble?

"She went to Samos to see Miss Mabane this morning, but she should hae been back langsyne. I am gey anxious about her."

So was I. Having once seen the lovely Mary, I doubted if Robinson would disappear without making another, perhaps a more violent attack upon her.

"I will walk out the road; perhaps I shall meet her," said I.

"She would be just as like to come back by the path along the cliff side."

"Then I shall return that way."

"Thank you kindly, Captain."

The old lady went composedly into the house, for she had evidently more confidence in me than her wayward daughter had ever shown. I had not much in myself at the moment. It was like the foolhardiness of the lass to traverse the very track on which she had been molested before; and to return by the side of the wooded bluff, so easily accessible from the Lower Town, was even more venturesome. I did not put it past her to have a desire to meet the scoundrel once more, since I had assured her he was really a Green Mountain Boy. I could not flatter myself that I had convinced her of the

futility of meddling in Vermont affairs. She would argue the case with Robinson, face to face, in broad daylight, and trust to her fleetness of foot to get away from him if he again proved obnoxious. Should he pretend agreement with her theories, she might send him home laden with epistles to prominent men in the colony, calculated to reverse the course of events, to counterbalance the defeat at Yorktown by bringing back Vermont safely into the British fold.

Oh that Radiant Orb! The following of it is excusable in a man—in a woman absurd! 'Tis her place to share in that which is meted out to him; and yet to make him feel that the plaudits of the crowd are light in the balance compared with the sweetness of the home life she has made for him. 'Twas a touching sentiment for an old bachelor, was it not? Yet that and its like occupied my mind on the rapid walk to Samos. I kept a sharp look-out along the roadside, but saw not a thing nor a person that could be called suspicious. The voices of the timber-swingers floated over the hill from the coves, and the meadow larks and white-throated sparrows were singing cheerily all along the way. Peace was everywhere surely at last! Only those who have dwelt for years in the midst of alarms can realize what that meant.

Not being accustomed to stand on ceremony at Woodfield, I marched unannounced into the Judge's study, and there, to my amazement, was Mary

Simpson, her arm bared to the shoulder, holding it out as if it were to be amputated.

"For the love of Heaven, doctor," I cried, "what's the matter? Has she been hurt?"

"No, but she is going to be. What is wrong with yourself, Mathews, that you thrust yourself into my surgery in this fashion?"

"This girl's mother, Mrs. Simpson, she is very uneasy about her long stay out here."

"And she would be still more so did she know what was keeping her. You must not tell on us, Robin."

"How can I when I know not myself? Have you received an injury at the hands of that Vermont rascal, Miss Simpson?"

She smiled at me saucily.

"See how concerned he is about me, doctor—quite white with anxiety!"

Mabane looked at me quizzically from beneath his shaggy brows.

"Not Robert Mathews—don't fancy it, my lass. He's too faithful a disciple of His Bachelorency. Here, my soldier-laddie, butchery is your trade. Hold Miss Simpson's arm steady for me."

"What will I be doing that for?" My suspicions were aroused at the sight of his instruments.

"You're making 'Much ado about Nothing.' I am only going to inoculate the lass for the small-pox."

"Great Heaven! You will infect her with that loathsome disease?"

"Miss Simpson has volunteered, in the interest of science, to be inoculated with some matter I have had sent from Europe, which the Canadians have stubbornly refused to have tested on their children."

"So you mean to try the quality of it on Miss Simpson? You shall not, sir, so long as I am here to prevent you. Her mother has made me her guardian, *pro tem.*, though she little dreamt the kind of danger from which it should be my lot to rescue her."

"Hoot, hoot, Robin, you're daft, man! The lass has offered to let the stuff be tried on her, and from her good, clean blood we hope to get matter to which no sane family can raise objections."

"And you permit this sacrifice? You run the risk of this lady being marked for life to benefit some Canadians that, left to themselves, had handed the whole country over to the rebels?"

"He is terribly feared for your beauty being marred, Polly. He ought to remember that 'carved work's aye the dearest.'"

The girl laughed, as she modestly drew down her sleeve, but it was no laughing matter with me. I was willing to acknowledge that the practice of inoculation had been eminently successful in Europe, where the small-pox prevailed naturally. Few folk arrived at maturity without having it, but care was always taken that a favourable sort should be received, at a time when the body of the patient was in a favourable state for its reception. In

America, on the contrary, the disease was not universal. There were, in fact, many thousands of grown persons who had never had the infection. This matter in Doctor Mabane's possession had been brought across the sea, 3000 miles, and had been taken from what kind of a subject? Had he considered whether or not Miss Simpson's present state of health favoured its reception? He might inoculate her with a virulent form of the disease; but his interest in science was such he would not consider the risk—nor would she, such was her infatuation for the Glory of Self-Sacrifice. That was why I mentioned her mother. She at least was entitled to consideration, whatever my opinion might be worth.

"You have this much sense in your noddle, Robin," said the Judge, shaking back his iron-grey mane to glower at me ferociously. "'Tis true that Mrs. Simpson might raise as much objection to this matter being tested on her offspring, as Madame Michaud does to it for hers."

"If it is the Michaud weans you are thinking about you can spare your pains. They were all inoculated by Dr. Vallière last autumn."

"So you told me at the picnic, but you lied—or rather he did. Madame came to me to-day wanting the deed done, but not with foreign matter, and I had no other, so Miss Simpson chanced along and volunteered."

"If it had been for the Riedesel children——"

"They were all inoculated four years ago at

General Clinton's country house, out of New York, before ever they came to Canada. We are behind the times in this Province. Jacques Michaud is hot against the practice, so his wife seized the opportunity when he was from home."

"In the States, whence he will not venture to return till the Peace."

"Probably not; so we can wait till Mathews and your mother and others of the old school become converted, Miss Mary. Shall we tell him what else Madame had to say?"

The lass gave a laughing consent, and he continued—

"She said that she had indeed broached the subject of inoculation to Dr. Vallière when he called at her house one day last autumn; but he told her he had no matter, as he no longer practised, which is true. He had simply called for a walking-stick her husband had brought from Albany for him. He took it and left at once."

"Ah, fool that I am!"

"Polly and I quite agree with you, but to what special instance of your folly refer you at present?"

"The day I saw Vallière in the Chaudière woods, he was coming out of the Michaud cottage with a stick in his hand, which I took to be a riding whip."

"Well, well! He was sufficiently alive to the probability of your being there in search of traitors, to toss the cane into the underbrush, hoping no doubt to come back for it at his leisure. He reckoned

without Diana, the Huntress. Since you have deprived me of her arm for experimentation, Robin, you shall sacrifice your own stalwart one to the interests of science."

"I have had the small-pox, so am ineligible."

"No marks to be seen."

"Too long ago. 'Twas when I was a boy in Scotland."

"An eternity since," smiled Miss Mary.

"The lass has been telling me of the 'Comedy of Errors' you staged with her for leading lady. I might be thinking ye had a special pick at her were I no' aware that 'bitin' an' scartin's Scots folks' 'ooin'."

"She has stayed here overlong with your gossiping and your inoculating. Her mother is in a state about her. I must take her home."

"No more double riding on Cromwell!"

"I walked out," I replied shortly. The doctor was always a bore when he turned facetious.

"Then you shall walk back—in the cool of the evening—or you may drive, if you choose, with the Baroness when she goes in to dine at the Château. My groom shall ride at once to Bandon Lodge to relieve Mrs. Simpson's anxiety, but you shall not depart, Robin, without a word to four little girls that spied you, I doubt not, coming through the garden."

They had indeed, and so soon as the door was opened they flew to my arms, helter-skelter, and drew me out on the gallery to hearken to the

wonderful tales of what they had seen and done since their arrival at Samos. The gentle Baroness joined us, then Mistress Mabane and Miss Simpson, lastly the Judge himself, who read to us, as we sat out there, overlooking river, plain, and mountains, some lines by a new poet that had been sent to him from Scotland. This Robert Burns was of lowly origin, but undoubted genius. His appearance on the horizon might result in Mabane having some one besides Shakespeare to quote.

“ Oh, Mary, at thy window be,
 It is the wish'd, the trusty hour !
 Those smiles and glances let me see,
 That make the miser's treasure poor
 How blithely wad I bide the stoure,
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,
 Could I the rich reward secure,
 The lovely Mary Morison.

“ Yestreen, when to the trembling string,
 The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
 To thee my fancy took its wing,
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw.
 Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
 And yon the toast of a' the town,
 I sighed, and said amang them a',
 ' Ye arena Mary Morison.'

“ Oh, Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee ?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only faut is loving thee ?
 If love for love thou wilt na gie,
 At least be pity to me shown ;
 A thought ungentle canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.”

"Had your namesake, Robin, been acquainted with the lass here," said the Judge, "he would have altered the spelling of his sweetheart's name a little. Instead of Morison it would have been Simpson."

I started at my own quickened pulses; I had been thinking the very same! It came over me with the suddenness of a visitation of Providence, as I sat there in sight of that uplifting scenery, watching Miss Simpson fondle America, who sat upon her knee, that such a wife and child were worth millions more than glory to any man. The lass had stolen into my citadel and made me captive unawares. But I was no puling boy to cry for the moon. I scouted at the doctor's compliment as if it were undeserved, and I let Miss Simpson drive home in the carriage with the Baroness, instead of walking the cliff edge with her, as I had looked forward to doing.

I waited at Woodfield till I had the stars for company on the lonely road, typical of that which I must travel henceforth. One does not realize one's lonesomeness until one has experienced the difference that certain company can make. To Orion I confided my belief that an honest love for a woman out of his reach hurt no man, but I also cursed the unhappy fate that had ever brought the *Albemarle* into port. So far as her Quebec admirers were concerned, I believed I could have won Mary away from them all; it was the absent, of whom I could not take advantage, who stood in my way. She was of so

faithful, so generous a disposition, she would trust Nelson even as she believed he trusted her.

Well! As the General had said, I had spoken too soon when I fancied myself immune, not having in my youth received the inoculation to serve as preventive to this disease. In matters of the heart, I had had the chicken-pox; never the small-pox, and taking it so late I feared I was marked for life. But "carved work's aye the dearest!" How the Judge would laugh if he knew; the General would frown; the Baroness would sympathize, and the girl herself?

"A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary"—Simpson.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWS OF NELSON.

It was in August of that year, 1783, that the whole Riedesel family sailed for home, peace by that time being declared, and the Baron having military duties in Europe. General Haldimand was a sorrowful man to see them go, leaving him behind, but his term of office had still another year to run before he could look for release.

I well remember one afternoon, as he walked in his garden hand in hand with the small Augusta, his "little wife," she pointed out a ship in the harbour which she thought would do for the transportation across the Atlantic, of her father and mother, her sisters and herself, not to speak of their considerable *entourage* of servants, governesses, and such-like. His Excellency told the child he would see what could be done, and sure enough it was that very ship, the *Quebec*, which was chartered for the purpose. Then ensued a busy time for me, since the cabin had to be enlarged and made more comfortable for the distinguished voyagers. A cow was procured

to provide milk for the children during their month on board ; chickens to lay eggs for them, to be killed for the table, or kept alive for their entertainment ; and seeds of salad planted whose sprouting in boxes might interest the little maids, once they had found their sea legs. These matters and many more the General would have attended to in person, had I not been there to do it for him. The Baron gave him his favourite mare and a fine foal, as a parting gift, and in return His Excellency gave the Baroness a sable muff and tippet, while the children he loaded up with dolls and playthings innumerable.

The dinner at the Château their last night ashore, was a melancholy meal for us all. The Baroness we might hope to meet again, comparatively unchanged, but those four little daughters of hers would never be the same again. They would grow out of all recollection in a very few years, and a new set of faces surrounding them would make them soon forget those to which they had become attached in Canada. The parting with children, even for a year or two, is always sorrowful, for one knows, of a surety, he will never see *that child* again. It may be a bigger and a better one ; never the same.

So I was saying to myself, as I reluctantly let Frederika go out of my arms on board the *Quebec* next day. She was destined to become a famous woman in Europe, but I never saw her again. Her mother thanked me with great cordiality for the

preparations I had made for their comfort in crossing, as the children ran around the ship, keen on the discovery of each new delight.

"I have merely carried out the orders of His Excellency, Madame," I replied.

"He would never have thought of all the little things for the children which you have provided, Captain. Ah, you were meant to be the father of a family. I wish so much that I could have seen again the beautiful Miss Simpson that I hoped by this time would have been Mrs. Robert Mathews."

"What?"

I fear I fairly shouted in my surprise. Had I carried my heart on my sleeve? I thought I had been a better dissembler.

"You will forgive me, Captain, if I seem to intrude upon your private affairs, but it seems to me so eminently fitting—you are so well-matched a pair."

"Judge Mabane has given your ladyship that notion."

"No, no! Think you I have not eyes? I saw that you had none, save for her, a year ago, at the Falls of Montmorenci, and as for that little naval officer, you could have eaten him alive because he presumed to worship at her shrine. Take the word of an old married woman, Captain Mathews. A maid has many adorers—it is her right—but there is only one man that she will marry."

"Miss Simpson has never hinted to me that I am

that one, nor have I thought of entering into the competition for her hand."

"Foolish man, if you do not," said Madame, and then the General claimed her for the final leave-taking. She gave me a significant look as well as a wave of the hand, when our small boat left the side of the *Quebec*, and it left me disturbed in my mind.

Was my love for Mary, as I now called her to myself, really of such long standing? Had I been influenced by it, ever so little, when I turned Nelson back to the strand? Was it something more than my anxiety about her supposed dealings with the rebels that had made me watch her so closely the past year? I had excused myself to myself for the revulsion of feeling that had come upon me, since I was assured of her innocence, that it was a natural reaction on account of the injustice with which I had treated her; now the Baroness led me to suspect that the injustice was due to the strength of my attachment! I had not been able to bear the thought of one I loved being less than perfect. But another—I will not say a better—man had won her affection. Let her have the one she wanted—I still had my telescope.

Despite that hitherto infallible source of consolation, stray lines of those verses the Judge had read to us that night at Woodfield would sing themselves into my brain as I sat at my desk during the hot summer days, and I found myself scribbling them amidst my astronomical problems—

" How blithely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure—
The lovely Mary Morison ! "

Still, blessed be work, routine work of the driest, dullest character, for that alone lends itself to forgetfulness. There was a mass of it to be done that autumn, and I had in some measure to console the General for the loss of the Riedesel family, whom he missed even more than he had imagined possible. He and the Baron had thought alike on most topics, and their views on the retention of Canada coincided with those of Admiral Jervis, who, when questioned by Lord Shelburne, replied—

" It is a great omission—to leave Canada as a British province. How can we hope to keep it? With an English republic just established on the south, and with a handful of English settled among a body of hereditary Frenchmen—it is impossible; and rely on it you will only retain a running sore, and a source of endless disquiet and expense."

" Would the country bear our giving it up? " asked Shelburne. " Have you forgotten Wolfe and Quebec? "

" No," Jervis answered. " It is because I served with Wolfe at Quebec, and have outlived him long enough to have full time for reflection, that my opinion is: if this fair occasion for giving up Canada be neglected, nothing but difficulty in either keeping or resigning it will ever after be known."

The Admiral's advice was not taken, as we all know, and generations to come will be better able to judge than we can, whether or not Canada is worth what Great Britain has already spent, and is still spending, in her development and defence. By the time there is an Anglo-Saxon population large enough to counterbalance the French, they may raise parricidal hands against the Mother Country, even as did the English colonies to the southward.

For my part I would rather live in Europe, but I had to bide my time, as the General was doing, though I had a consolation of which he had neither knowledge nor experience—the presence of Mary Simpson in Quebec. Self-respect forbade my seeking her society, but I could not shun it when chance brought it my way. I remember the keen pleasure I had in seeing her in her ballroom finery on the night of the Annual Assembly given by His Excellency, December 31st, to commemorate the unsuccessful attack of the Congress troops in 1775. By another year General Haldimand would be removed to a different sphere of action, and probably I also.

After I had run the gauntlet of the grooms stationed at the entrance to prevent gentlemen spoiling His Excellency's fine floor by dancing in the "creepers" attached to their boots as safeguards on icy roads, I indulged myself by watching the dancers ushering in 1784. Judge of my surprise when I saw Dr. Vallière among them! Innocent as

a serpent, he addressed me in the Parisian French I have always found so charming, and his had received a recent polishing, for he was just home from Paris—by way of New York, he informed me, though that was a route none of our going or returning officers dared take for fear of insult. The doctor, standing so high in the rebel esteem, need have no fear on that score. But the war was over. Since I was condemned to remain longer among these Canadians, I might as well keep on friendly as on unfriendly terms with them. If one had to discriminate between the loyal and the disloyal one's social life in Quebec would be rather restricted.

"Congratulations, *Major*," said Vallière, taking it for granted that I had lost my memory with the purchase of my majority. I allowed him to think so, and questioned him politely about his adventures in Europe. He made the most of them, I promise you, and I found him as entertaining as ever.

"Imagine my astonishment," said he, "to meet Captain Nelson at St. Omer."

"Horatio?"

"None other."

"You amaze me!"

"I was astonished myself, but I had speech with him, and he told me he had been paid off at the end of the war, and had come to France last autumn with a brother officer to study French; also to economize, I fancy."

"Likely on half pay."

" 'Tis to be hoped that a knowledge of our language will modify Nelson's sentiments with regard to ourselves."

" He spake not of returning to Canada ? "

" Not at all, though the meeting with me seemed to recall the pleasant shore leave he had had here. He said he had never been so healthy nor so happy since."

" Did he not enquire for any of his friends ? "

" Not from me. You must remember that our acquaintance here was of the slightest, and moreover he could hardly spare a minute to talk to old friends or new, so much was he taken up with a Miss Andrews, daughter of an English clergyman. Rumour had it they were engaged, but I was told, on good authority, that the young lady had higher aspirations than a Post-Captain with no more than £230 a year, £100 of which was allowed him by his uncle."

" Perhaps Miss Andrews is rich."

" In accomplishments only. She may have £1000 of her own. Certainly no more."

" You seem well posted."

" I am merely retailing the gossip of a small place, Major."

" For which I thank you." I bowed and left him.

This tidings from a quarter so unexpected had upset me greatly. I must be alone to think out my duty in the matter. Ought I to tell Miss Simpson what I had heard? She was not likely to learn it from the doctor, as I had noticed her giving him a

royal snub when he asked her to dance. She was not of my forgiving disposition, apparently, and I could imagine her resenting what Vallière had said of me, more than his evidence against herself. Supposing I should tell her this story about her absent lover, she would at once question the source, and disbelieve it entirely when she knew who was my informant. Personally, I did not doubt the transference of Horatio's affections, because I had never deemed him the man to indulge in one *grande passion*. He was likely to have a series of affairs, sudden and violent, while they lasted, unless the other party to one of these should prove strong enough to chain him to herself permanently. Miss Simpson was too proud to do that, even should opportunity be offered, and, like most susceptible men, propinquity counted for everything with Nelson.

I suffered for her so much in spirit that I went to ask her to dance—to inflict bodily suffering upon her you may be thinking, but in that you are mistaken. I could dance as well as any subaltern in my regiment, and that I did not often indulge made the female more honoured who was my chosen partner. But I should not do it again, I said to myself, not till Nelson was certainly and eternally out of the running. If this Miss Andrews refused him, as seemed likely, and if he should be ordered back to Quebec, or should take it into his head to revisit the spot where he had been so happy and

healthy—perchance for the study of French—what would Miss Simpson think of the one who had spread calumnies about him? This fair sweetheart of his was too entrancing for a sober man like me to meet unmoved. She looked at me strangely when, at the close of our dance, I declined an invitation to go with a sliding party to Montmorenci, where the ice-cone below the Falls was already large enough—so severe had the winter been.

“It is not possible that you are afraid, Major Mathews?” she said.

“Yes, I am horribly afraid”—of her I meant, but I let her think it was of the dangerous coasting.

I well knew how tightly lad and lass had to clasp one another for safety during that mad descent on a narrow sled; his arm about her waist, hers around his neck, as he stretched himself alongside, with a foot out to steer behind. My blood tingled with the temptation, for I was an old hand at the sport—but it was no more for me!

“It is reckless, Major. I am glad you have the strength of mind to refrain.” Her voice had a wistfulness that caused me to exclaim—

“I trust you will not go down with any fool-hardy Highlandman, Miss Mary. Your mother will be anxious about you till you are safe home again.”

“Why then can you not come to guard me?”

I felt like throwing myself at her feet then and there, like telling her with my arms about her that

Nelson would never come back, that, sailor-like, he had a lass in every port, and that I loved her with every beat of my famished heart ; but I shrugged my shoulder and turned away, as if she were jesting—as perhaps she was.

I have my sense of honour, as keen as any man's, though it may not lead me into the dare-devil exploits that bring fame or death or both ; and it bade me refrain from taking advantage of an absent rival. If I had kept Nelson from coming to her that morning, at least I should seek no benefit to myself therefrom. Mary was passionately attached to him—of that I was convinced—and I hoped the day would not soon dawn when she would suffer, as I was suffering, the pangs of unrequited affection. Let her cherish her illusion so long as there was any comfort to be found in it. Should it turn to dust and ashes in her mouth, that would be the time for me to step forward, not before. Moreover—and here was the Scotch of it—I was not in a position to marry, any more than Nelson was, and he had the advantage of being a dozen years younger than I. His rank also was higher than mine, a Post-Captain in the navy being equivalent to a Colonel in the army, and I was not one yet—might never be. Therefore pride, as well as poverty and principle, bade me forbear.

On the 10th of November, 1784, I sailed for home with General Haldimand, who was knighted by the King soon after his arrival. Only the

expatriated Scot can understand my joy at seeing the heather once more.

"Now that the war is over, you will be making a home for yourself in Bridgnorth," said my father, but he became perplexed at my indifference to the charms of my Scottish cousins, once or twice removed, who seemed tame and artificial compared with Diana of Quebec.

He hoped that the influence of my late commander was not to have a blighting effect upon my whole life.

"Nothing of the sort," I assured him, though I told him not that it had helped to narrow my choice down to one.

Not to my old father could I describe the strength of the magnet that was drawing me back to Canada, but to Sir Frederick in London I expressed a desire to return, even though I should be reduced to cutting staves for a living. Mary might never be mine, but at least I should see her occasionally, and rid myself of the dreadful sensation of blankness that possessed me when the Atlantic rolled between us. Glad as I had been to come home, I rejoiced still more when ordered to rejoin my regiment—at Niagara, alas!

I crossed the ocean again in '86, and again Sir Frederick did his best to advance my fortunes, without distinguished success. It is most difficult for any one in the service to obtain promotion in time

of peace. Therefore I did not gain the colonelcy to which I so ardently aspired—for reasons into which I need not enter again. Consequently, their Majesties did not speak to me when Sir Frederick presented me at Court. It is contrary to etiquette that they should converse with any one so low in rank as Major. That hindered me not from criticizing the bad upbringing of the unruly children of the royal family. Scottish parents keep a firmer hand. I saw the famous Mrs. Fitzherbert, to whom it was reported the Prince of Wales was secretly married. *Une bonne pièce*, Sir Frederick called her, but I knew a lass before whom her beauty would fade as the moon's at sunrise.

“ Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed through the lighted ha'
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw.
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sighed, and said amang them a'
' Ye arena Mary Morison.' ”

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BREAKING-UP OF THE ICE.

"FOR lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come."

That is what I quoted to myself, ironically, as I picked my way through the slush and rivulets of Quebec streets that day in the latter part of April, 1787. Householders were just beginning to use pick and shovel to get down through successive layers of ice to the paths next their doorways, lost sight of since the middle of November ; but the sun was strong overhead, and crows were flying about in search of a patch of bare ground upon some sunny hillside, though the snow was still packed many feet deep in the shade and hollows. The ice-bridge from the town to Point Lévis opposite was firm yet, though driving was no longer considered safe upon it. The evergreens were still there that marked the levelled track between the huge blocks and hummocks of ice on either side, frozen together in the uncouth forms they chanced to have taken when the New

Year's frost finally mastered the movements of the tide.

I had been away from Quebec all winter—out in the west, where the spring comes earlier—and though I might have known what to expect, I felt a touch of impatient surprise to find the capital still ice-bound. This did not look like a speedy meeting with my nephew, for whom I had purchased an ensigncy in the 60th, and he was coming out to join his regiment by the first ship of the season. I had taken the long journey solely to welcome him, for I believed myself to be freed, even as he was, from the influence that had spelt disaster to us both. I might meet Miss Simpson or not on this occasion ; I could view either contingency with indifference. Her orbit was now as far removed from mine as Mercury's from Jupiter's, and I despised myself for the variations in mine her attraction had at one time created.

So I leaned idly over the Battery wall, in the hope of being the first to glimpse a white sail beyond the nearest headland of the island. They say that a man whose leg has been amputated often has pains in the missing member. In no other way can I account for the spasm of mingled joy and woe that struck me with dismay, as I saw through my telescope, which I had brought to watch for ships, a tall figure in a well-remembered scarlet cloak, leaving the Lower Town and striking out upon the ice to cross to Point Lévis. Miss Simpson must have

known, as well as I did, that the *pont* was likely to give way at any minute. Apparently she had not gained in discretion since last we met. Crackings and rumblings were becoming every moment more ominous. The sight of any female in danger sufficed to quicken my pulses and to set me speeding down Mountain Hill. My western life had loosened my dignity somewhat, and I cast the last remnant thereof to the winds as I raced to the spot where the ice-highway touched land. It touched no longer!

There were already several yards of open water at my side of the river—what about the other? Miss Simpson turned back. The road must be cut off also from the further shore. There was a canoe beached near me on the strand. It had been there all winter, and would leak to a certainty, but I did not stop to consider that. I wrenched it loose from the ground to which it was still frozen, turned it right side up and shoved myself afloat in it. The frail paddle snapped at the first contact with the rough masses of moving ice, but Mary saw me coming. She ran towards me along the still remaining portion of the roadway.

“Take care! Take care!” I shouted. “The ice is rotten all about here,” but she sprang like an acrobat from one floe to the next of those that divided us.

“Come this way,” she called out. “Here is an open channel.”

“I cannot. I have no paddle.”

Then she understood that it rested with herself to reach me, and she managed it, climbing over slippery ice-blocks and springing from floe to floe with agility for which I thanked Heaven, though I had once considered it unladylike.

"'Twas kind of you to have come out for me, Major Mathews," she said in her most formal manner, as she seated herself in the boat. One might fancy we were in a drawing-room, and she had seen me but yesterday. It was I who was flustered, being sure she would at least get her feet wet, the boat leaked so distressfully.

"Why did you not bring an oar or two?" she asked. "Then I could have helped you row to land."

"There were none about, and I had got the boat into the water, half-way across to you, before I discovered that the paddle I had picked up was of no use."

She actually laughed. "And you the canny Lowlander!"

But I had no time for dalliance. The water was rising fast in the bottom of the boat, and the broken ice was carrying us quickly with tide and current out of the narrow part of the channel in which alone there was a chance of our being seen, or our cries for assistance heard. We must try to keep opposite the town, and not allow ourselves to be carried past it to the wide harbour, where the ice would break into smaller floes—and sink.

"If the worst comes to the worst," said Miss Simpson, when our alternate shouting had failed to elicit response from the shore, "we are sure to float back again with the turn of the tide."

"If the boat hold up so long. You see how it leaks."

"We ought to be baling it out."

"With what?"

"Your hat, for example."

It showed what little respect she had for my regimentals when she made such a proposition, but we had to come to it, finally, for life is dearer than uniforms. We took turns at the task, as we drifted past the "city set on a hill," which seemed uninhabited. Miss Simpson waved her red cloak in the air; I shouted myself hoarse—all without effect. What had become of the group of folk assembled on the Battery when I left it, to watch the breaking up of the ice? Had they all gone home to dinner? I had had none, and neither had my companion, she acknowledged with a smile.

"I was going across to dine with friends at Point Lévis, when the *pont* gave way; but a fast is good for one, Major."

"Yes, if it be not too prolonged."

It was no time to remind her of the tales we had both heard of men being carried down the river on the ice, and found frozen to death, if found at all. Quebec's tinned roofs glittered with calm insensibility in the rays of the afternoon sun. Soon it would set,

and the night would be colder by far than the day had been.

"We shall be stopped by the point of St. Joseph de Lévis," said Mary cheerfully, but I soon saw we should not.

The current was keeping us far out from shore. I baled away fiercely. No doubt my shipmate was bewailing the fact that she had a landlubber with her. No sailor would have been so foolish as to set himself adrift in a boat without proper oars; and any *voyageur* with experience of these tides and currents and ice floes could have got us out of our strait in an hour at most. But the time was passing, the boat still leaking, my back breaking with the stooping to bale, my voice hoarse with shouting, and Mary was helping me in all of these efforts at rescue; but we might as well have been chips on the sea for any attention we could gain from God or man.

"Do you not think, Major," she said at length, in a tone from which the confidence had faded ever so slightly, "that we might get out on this big piece of the roadway that is coming near us, and pull the boat up on it? It looks wide enough to bear our weight, and we can tip the water out. I have seen the men do that."

"Men—yes," I replied, gloomily.

"I am as strong as any of you."

Her spirit rose as mine fell. Before I could stop her she had sprung from the boat to the broad

piece of the drive-way that had floated near us and was helping to jam us in. I could do naught but follow. She tugged with a will, and we really did succeed in hauling the canoe up on that comparatively flat surface, where we tipped the water out of it. Had men with pikes or poles been at hand, they would have shoved the craft across from one floe to another, until clear water to launch it into was reached, but our only implement was a small pine branch that had been used to mark the track on the now dismembered highway.

Our helplessness came forcibly home to both of us when we found that the nearest open water was swirling about in eddies, wherein huge blocks of ice bobbed about on edge, but all taking the general direction—downstream. It would mean immediate shipwreck for our crazy craft should we risk embarkation; so we must content ourselves with our table-land meanwhile, and trust to its keeping afloat till we saw some chance of bettering ourselves.

“Let us sit in the boat,” said Mary. “Our feet will be warmer off the ice.”

Lurched over on its gunwale, it also provided some shelter from the wind which was rising, and we sat there side by side conversing more calmly than we had ever done on terra firma, while our island of ice drifted slowly, but surely, out into the wide harbour. Miss Simpson did not appear seriously alarmed at our predicament, and my only concern was for her. She accused me of negligence.

"Once upon a time you agreed that we were to be friends, Major Mathews, yet you go away for months at a time, and never so much as a message do you send me, still less a letter. Is that the treatment of a friend?"

"Had I dreamt that you cared to hear aught that concerned me I should have been proud to write. The penning of letters is a pleasant task now that I no longer have to occupy myself with it entirely."

"I should not have been bored at the receipt of one had you seen fit to favour me."

Such silly old fools are we men of forty, I was gratified beyond measure at her expression of interest, and I hastened to prime her with details of the construction of canals on the upper river, by which Haldimand had decreed that the rapids of the St. Lawrence should be overcome, the dreary portages avoided. Her face lightened when I told her of the Falls of Niagara, the greatest in the world I understood, for volume of water. Beside them our Montmorenci yonder that stood out a white pillar of foam against the trees, was but a bucket-full. It could not be otherwise, seeing that Niagara drained the whole of the Great Lakes but one. Upon the shores of that one—Ontario—Joseph Brant was settling his kinsmen of the Mohawk tribe, and I should have entered into the whole scheme for the settlement of other loyalists in that part of the country, had she not interrupted me—

"It is of yourself I wish to hear, Major. Have you been well? How have you occupied your time?"

"I have been doing my share towards holding the Upper Posts for the British. Niagara, Detroit, Michillimakinak are not yet ceded to Congress. We have a control of the North-West Indians which it would take that body years to gain—if it ever does—and moreover we wish to keep hold of the fur trade we have built up."

"That is not what I had in mind. Have you friends? Home? Family? Are you happy?"

"If you mean am I married?—I am not. But I still have my telescope—no, I haven't! Good Heavens! I left it on the Battery when I ran down the hill after you."

I jumped up as if about to leap into the swirling water. Mary came after me, half-laughing, half-crying.

"Do not be childish, Major. Some one will surely find it and take care of it for you. There is not such another in Canada. I am flattered more than I can say that your anxiety for my safety was so great you forgot even your idol."

"I trust I am not a worshipper of false gods."

I seated myself beside her in the boat again, perhaps somewhat nearer than before. This isolation with her so far removed from the rest of our species was playing mad havoc with my stoicism. I longed to become questioner in turn—to ask if she had heard of Captain Nelson's courtship of Miss

Andrews, and its outcome, of which I was ignorant. He had not returned to Quebec, else I should have heard of it, through my irregular correspondence with Judge Mabane, but nevertheless he might have returned to his allegiance to Miss Simpson. There was not a ring on either of the hands that had helped me drag the boat out of the water, but then she had never been given to the wearing of gauds, such as other females affect, except upon State occasions.

She might be betrothed to Nelson, and be lamenting with him the length of an engagement necessary before he should be in a position to marry a dowerless maid. There was a pensiveness in her voice that had not always been there, but it was perchance due to our perilous position. Unaccountably, my mind swung round to the verses Mabane had read to us—

“ Oh, Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee ?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only faut is loving thee ?
 If love for love thou wilt na gie,
 At least be pity to me shown ;
 A thought ungentle canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.”

The memory was maddening, and I roused myself to action. We must make another attempt to float our boat.

“ What is the use ? ” said Mary. “ It was leaking faster than we could bale it out before we drew it from the water. Are you not happy as you are ? ”

I was only too happy. That was the difficulty. When this experience was over, when we were safe back on land again, I knew I should prize every minute of this trying time that had brought us closer together than years of ordinary intercourse could have done.

"The current may strand us on the Isle of Orleans—in time."

"It may," she agreed, "or we may drift back within reach of the Lévis shore, when the tide turns."

"That will not be till long after dark."

"Well, are you afraid?"

I moved nearer to her. "If I but had my telescope I might show you a few things."

Undoubtedly she slid a shade closer to me. The cloak she was wearing did not seem so warm in texture as in colouring.

"You are shivering," I said suddenly. "Here! You shall have my coat." I began to unbutton it.

"No, Major, no. I will not take it. Let us swing our arms. That will warm us."

She took off her cloak and swung it high in the air, in a last appeal to some one in the unfeeling town to notice us ere we should be enveloped in the gloom of night. But from the General Hospital on the right, to the Castle of St. Lewis on the left, there was not a sign of human life, though it must have been human hands that pulled down the flag at sunset. A window or two reflected the last rays, and once they had gone the night marched quickly upon

us. I tried my best to shield my companion by keeping my broad shoulder between her and the wind. Had we been in much more imminent peril I should still have been in the seventh heaven, with her so near me, the rest of the world so far away.

We had cut loose entirely from our accustomed environment, and were alone together under the stars. They came out gradually, as the twilight deepened into dusk, and the mountains round about faded into indistinctness. I reeled off some of my astronomical lore, to direct the attention of my companion skywards, lest she should detect the maddening effect her proximity was having upon me. I wanted nothing so much as to take her in my arms, to wrap my coat about her, and to tell her that I would have her for my own, against Nelson, against all the world. But solar systems have a soothing effect on the most ardent temperament.

"Every one of those fixed stars, as we call them," said I, "is a sun in itself, possibly far larger than our sun, and each is likely to be the centre of a system many million times greater than our own."

"When we die we may investigate them, Major."

It was not an unpleasant thought to fancy myself flying through the air—with her in my arms. Alone, it would be a cheerless flight. Not even a transit of Venus had moved my sensibilities to such ecstasy as that expressive face within the hood, upturned to the stars. The sound of her voice, the slight pressure of her shoulder against mine, made

my heart action far from normal, and I envied the boldness of Nelson who had put his arm about her, but I could not risk a rebuff. Neither of us could withdraw from the other if offended. The thought that she appeared to feel some slight comfort in my nearness was like food to a starving man. I continued my rigmarole about perihelions and eclipses, comets and asteroids, meteors, nebulae, and perieci, till I verily believe the lass would have yawned in my face had we been in Menut's Assembly Room. But from that chilly islet there seemed no escape—alive. The stars that at times seemed cold and distant, were near and friendly by comparison with the appalling masses of jagged ice and cold black water that surrounded us. Up aloft I was in my element; down below, quite out of it.

"Major Mathews," said Mary, suddenly, "while you have been star-gazing I have been watching this floe we are on. It is sinking, inch by inch."

"Are you sure?"

"There was no doubt of it a moment since, but now it is so dark I can see no longer."

"And you are cold too." I courageously touched her hand in the gloom. "Let us set fire to the boat. That will warm us, and it will also serve as a beacon. If our raft is sinking anyway, we need not consider the melting of it, for the light will help us to find another."

"But how can we make a fire? What is there to burn?"

"That pine branch yonder that marked the road will flare up briskly, never fear, and kindle the canoe, once I get it alight."

"If you can."

It did not surprise me that she should doubt my ability in aught that savoured of woodcraft, but I had learned somewhat in the west, as she had to acknowledge when I had a cheery bit of fire burning under the lee of the boat, at which she warmed her numbed feet and hands. She had not known before how cold she was.

"This boat is big enough to burn half the night," she said, and I would not disturb her confidence. The flames which rose high as it blazed up heightened the blackness of the water all about. The ice rumbled and creaked like giants in agony.

"Some one will surely see us," I said with assumed cheerfulness, as I noted that my companion's spirits were flagging again.

Her face, on which every passing emotion was revealed, like the passing of clouds on the sky, was brightened into unearthly vividness by the firelight, and there were tears in her beautiful brown eyes.

"It is I who have brought you to this," she murmured. "Had it not been for my foolhardy attempt to cross the river at a time when I had been warned the ice was about to give way, you would now be out at Woodfield, perchance, enjoying a smoke and a game of cribbage with the Judge."

"I would rather be here."

"Gallantry leads you to say so, Major, but 'tis hard to believe. You have not sought my society with that earnestness in safety that would lead me to fancy you prefer it to all others in time of danger."

I had nothing to say in reply, for I had not learned quickness of retort—in the west.

"If I were to tell you, Robert Mathews, that I would rather be here, drowning or freezing with you, than living on any longer without you, I should not be believed."

"No," I replied, stupidly, not knowing what answer to make to her jest. She would be a coquette to the bitter end; however ill it might accord with her Dianaship.

"There is one thing I can do though," she said, rising to her feet with sudden passion, "to show my gratitude for the effort you have made to save a person you dislike so heartily—I can leave this block for another."

"What do you mean?" I cried, catching her by the arm, and with my change of position I noticed that the water swished up over one side of our floe.

"Let me go, Major Mathews! This ice is badly honey-combed. Look where the fire has been. That hollow will soon split the roadway in two. My weight is less than yours. I shall try it on another piece, the first that comes near us."

"*You shall not,*" I cried, tightening my hold upon her. "When it becomes necessary for one of us to leave our present raft, I will be that one. I

can paddle ashore with this piece of wood we have left and send out help to you."

"What piece of wood?"

"A bit of the boat I put aside, thinking it might be of use."

We were alike ignorant of the solution of the problem before us, but I spake confidently to reassure my companion, and my words had more effect than they merited.

"You are not much of a talker, Major. That must be the reason that the little you say carries such weight. I know not any one with whom I would sooner meet death."

"No occasion for you to meet it whatever," I said curtly, to hide the real panic that had laid hold of me at the sight of the water rising so fast over our floe.

"Yes," continued Mary, "you have often been at a loss to know what to do in this world, but I fancy you will know your way about in the next—you have studied the heavens so diligently."

I scarcely heard her flattering remarks, so keenly was I watching our ice-raft. It was about to split, not to sink! I must seek another refuge.

Our hope of finding such was well-nigh gone, when the Great Father, whose children we are, sent a floe within our reach that promised safety. I caught it with my bit of wood and held it as steadily as I could till Miss Simpson, stiffer than was her wont, climbed thereupon, for it was much higher than the

spot she was leaving. I tried my own weight beside her for a second, but sprang back—it would not hold us both! Floating gallantly with her alone, with me on it too it would go under.

From the honey-combed mass to which I returned I had given her islet a strong push away from mine before she realized what I was about.

“Major, Major!” she cried from out of the darkness that enveloped us both. “Where are you? You are not leaving me alone, Robert Mathews?”

My reply held more cheer than I felt—

“I am off to the shore for help. The block you are on would not hold us both.”

“Have you found another?”

“Mine is the larger piece.”

May I be forgiven the prevarication, since it was meant to ease her mind. I knew right well that the remaining half of the water-logged floe on which I was left would not hold me up for half an hour.

“Sing, Mary, sing as loud as you can,” I shouted, “and keep on singing, so that I may know where to find you when I come back.”

She lifted up her voice and sang—no dirge, I promise you, nor any “Waly, waly, up the bank,” but the first thing that came into her head, and fear lent surprising energy to the air, “Wha’ll be King but Charlie?”

I consigned my Whig ancestry—and hers—to as cold a dip as I was facing, for their opposing sentiments. It seemed to me that even the dark icy

river would be warmed if I went under with that voice carolling so triumphantly in my ears :—

“ I had ten sons, I now hae nane,
I bred them toiling sairly ;
But I wad raise them a' again
And lose them a'—for Charlie.”

The water was gaining on me rapidly now. It rose to my ankles, then to my knees, but it was surely better to be ushered into the other world with Mary's loved voice still in my ears than to slip out into the silence and darkness—alone. I was numbed to the knees, my teeth were chattering, my whole body stiffening into a statue of ice, but—was I losing my senses too? Had the very winds of heaven taken to whistling Jacobite airs? Distinctly, out of the surrounding blackness came the refrain—

“ Wha'll be King but Charlie ? ”

On nearer approach it swelled into a chorus of men's voices, followed by a shout.

We were saved.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DESIRED HAVEN.

THE boat that rescued us was from the *Astrea*, the first ship of the season, welcome as that which relieved the beleaguered Quebec garrison in the spring-time of '60 and again in '76. The sailors had seen our fire and been guided by Mary's singing after it went out. She told them to search for me, else had I not been found, so far had I drifted from her, so numbed with cold that I could not speak above a whisper when drawn from my icy bath. Mary would not go aboard the vessel, anchored at St. Patrick's Hole, till I was brought there also, and she persisted in proclaiming me a hero, before the whole ship's company. Embarrassed beyond measure, I had to take refuge in the cabin of my nephew for a change of clothes. Heavens! He was tall as myself, and looked very spruce in his new uniform.

Such a scene of commotion was the deck next morning—sails being hoisted, seamen shouting, soldiers brushing their habiliments preparatory to going ashore, for the harbour was now clear. An

open sheet of water, rippling brightly in the morning sunlight, but muddy on account of the ice it had lately swallowed, lay between us and our desired haven, Quebec. Robin was as full of affairs as the rest, but he took time to hand me a letter from Sir Frederick Haldimand, and I took time to read it. One passage burned itself into my brain :—

“ Prince William Henry has been acting as groomsman at the marriage of our late acquaintance, Captain Horatio Nelson, to Mrs. Nesbit, a widow with a child of three.”

How was I to break this news to Mary ? We had come so close together the previous night that I felt the keenest heart-thrust at the thought of what this must mean to her. Was she gifted with the national second-sight that she had sung so mournfully that lovely evening on the St. Lawrence—

“O, wherefore should I busk my head ?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair ?
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he'll never lo'e me mair.”

There she was though, busked and braided, and fair as the morning itself as she leaned over the bulwarks, talking gaily with Robert Fraser, her recent peril quite forgotten. Sure who could associate death from cold or starvation with that smiling scene in the balmy air of springtime ? The blow must fall at once, whilst the spirits were still high that had carried Mary through so much. She must not be allowed to persevere in her maidenly dreams

of Nelson one minute after they had proven without a basis in reality. Should she get these tidings from some unsympathetic gossip after we landed, she might be startled into a loss of her presence of mind, and that would be disastrous to its peace. She ought to be told immediately, and by my nephew, for he would not suspect her supreme interest in the matter.

"Robin," I said, approaching the pair, "we shall be at Quebec within an hour. You told me you had much to do before we landed."

"True, Uncle Robert, but the packing of my portmanteau will not occupy me an hour."

The lad had gotten out of the way of taking orders from me, and apparently he would not easily fall into it again.

"Why send him off?" said Miss Simpson. "I have just been recounting how you had me arrested for correspondence with the rebels, on the strength of the letter I wrote him."

"I wish to have speech with him below for a few minutes; he will return directly."

When he went back to her he had with him the sheet of Sir Frederick's letter on which were the momentous tidings. But he must have mismanaged their delivery, for she credited me instantly with the desire to impart the intelligence. I knew it by the way she glanced at me as I stood looking across the point of Orleans to the Falls where we had all foregathered so long ago. I could not bear to look over

at her to see how the news of Nelson's marriage affected her. Would she ever again be as heart-whole as she had been that day at Montmorenci? I doubted it, but I knew she would gather courage to face this stunning blow. My confidence in her pride was justified, for her voice had not a quaver in it, as she returned the letter to myself, with polite thanks for its perusal.

"That is very interesting, Major Mathews, but why of special moment to me?"

"Because—because——" It was I as usual who was overcome with embarrassment, though her laugh sounded forced in my ears.

"Have you been fancying all these years that I treasured the image of Horatio in my heart?"

"Yes." Was she not putting up a gallant fight to hide her pain?

"Then you give me credit for more persistence than I possess. Love must have somewhat to feed upon, else it dies a natural death."

"I do not agree with you," I said slowly, my eyes still on the foaming Falls. The *Astrea* had now tacked so near them that we could see the motion of the water. "My love for you has had no food whatsoever; yet it is a sturdy plant."

Now she trembled.

"It is not a subject for jesting," she said in a low voice.

"Nor am I a jester. You have often told me that."

"I have often been very rude to you, I fear."

"No more so than I have been to you. Let us cry 'Quits' on that score since we have faced death together and each approves the other's spirit."

She looked me fairly in the face for a second, and then her eyes fell before mine. Even though I loved her to distraction, I knew her for a consummate flirt, accustomed to men's proposals, and able to estimate to a nicety when to droop an eyelid or to heave a sigh.

"I am not expecting any response on your part," I continued, "being aware of the difference in our ages, as in our views of life, and I had no intention of making this declaration at this untimely season."

"Why untimely? In sight of our beautiful city, with the glorious mountains round about? The stage setting seems to me superb."

"You treat everything lightly, but when I have left again for the far west, it may console you in the lonesome hours that come to the gayest among us, that may come yourself, whether you think it now or not, in mourning the faithlessness of one who has been very dear to you, whether you will acknowledge it or not, that there is another man, who has never loved any woman but yourself, and who never will."

"It is truly kind of you to step into the breach in this manner, Major Mathews, but believe me the sacrifice on your part is entirely uncalled for. The hole in my defences is by no means so large as you

imagine. You seek safety in flight? Is that why you are going away?"

"I have been ordered to join my regiment at Detroit, where I am to act as Lieutenant-Governor." It was annoying to me that she should take my long-delayed declaration in such bad part. "I am tired of the artificiality of the town, and long to get back to the wilderness."

"How I should like to go too!"

"That is impossible. We cannot be hampered with females on so arduous a journey."

"Not even those you profess to love?"

"By those least of all."

The reappearance of my nephew put an end to our *tête-à-tête*, and I was not sorry. It seemed impossible that I should ever surmount the contrariness of the woman I loved. In the hurry-skurry of the disembarkation she slipped away from me in the crowd.

By younger men I may be considered a slack wooer, but let them remember how hopeless a one I was. I did not endeavour to see Mary again for two or three weeks. It shamed me to think of meeting her mirthful brown eyes, after the useless display I had made of my emotions aboard the *Astrea*. Declarations of affection were doubtless an everyday occurrence with her; I had made my first and my last—so help me! Though bashful about it as a boy of twenty-one, I intended to pay my respects to Mrs. and Miss Simpson before my departure, which could not take place till the ice from the

Upper Lakes had come down the St. Lawrence, and that would not happen before the first week of May. In the settling up of my affairs, preparatory to leaving Quebec for an indefinite period, I let the time slip past, till the evening of the 11th, on which I went out for a farewell call at Woodfield. The Judge and I sat late on his gallery, overlooking the river and the stars. It must have been almost midnight when he remarked—

“ I thought you would have gone a-wooing at Bandon Lodge, langsyne, Robin.”

The friendly darkness hid the flush that rose to my cheek.

“ I have done all that a man of honour can do in that quarter.”

“ You have asked Polly Simpson to marry you ? ”

“ Knowing the uselessness of the question I have not gone so far.”

“ Stuff and nonsense ! You are much too modest for a soldier. The bravest is he who leads a forlorn hope and storms a battery. Have you ever chanced to inform the lass that you are—ah—gey fond o’ her ? ”

“ I have stated the fact in so many words.”

“ And what did she say ? ”

“ My nephew came up at the moment—but no favourable response was trembling on the tip of her tongue, believe me.”

“ How do you know ? Has she no pride ? Did

you expect her to fall into your mouth, like an over-ripe plum, at the first gentle shake you gave the tree? Ye dinna ken Sandy Simpson's daughter. Robin, I'm ashamed o' ye. To plaster your affection upon a lass like that, and then to give her no chance to say whether or no' she wants it, or returns it!"

"I have good reason to know she has long loved another man."

"How long? Is it Captain Nelson ye're meaning? I told her myself of his courtship of Miss Andrews, the year after he was here, and it gave her never a qualm."

"Are you a judge of that? She is very clever at hiding her feelings."

"Not half so clever as you are, Robin. How could the lass imagine that you cared aught about her when you go away for months at a time and never send her so much as a line or a message?"

"How do you know I did not?"

"Had she been hearing from you directly, think you she would have come to us for news?"

"Was she telling you she came for that purpose?"

"Hoots! She has a when self-respect, but 'Lisbeth and I are no sae blin's we're bleer-ee'd. Why, you doddering idiot, Polly told me, when I twitted her with wearing the willow, just how much, or rather how little, there was in that affair between her and the Captain of the *Albemarle*. She owned that she had been flattered by his addresses,

since he was of higher rank than the majority of her admirers, but as for dreaming that he would ever come back to seek her in marriage—she knew him too well! She assured me earnestly that she had never given him more than a passing thought six months after he had sailed away."

"That signifies not that she cares for me."

"Oh, no! It signifies naught either when a lass tramps out a snowy road on a winter day, with the thermometer far below zero, or through the dust and heat of a summer afternoon, to spair for the health of *Mistrèss Mabane*, who is never ill. Bye-and-bye, she enquires, incidentally, if we have had any news from the west, or from *Sir Frederick Haldimand*, as the case may be. The centre of her interest changes with the location of a certain Major of the 53rd. Take the word of one whose observations of humanity extend from clinic to court room—a dissecting table of another sort—*Mary* had a notion o' you, *Robin*, long before she had a notion o' *Nelson*."

"You have soaked in *Shakespeare* so long, doctor, that you think to goad me into playing the part of *Benedict*. Has your sister been pouring the same sort of stuff into *Miss Simpson's* ears?"

"Not a word. She thought you had been schooled into bachelordom by *Haldimand*, and so she could not answer for your mind on the matter. Neither of us have had any doubt about *Mary's*."

"I am fifteen years older than she is."

" Let the woman take an elder than herself—— " began my friend, but I stopped him.

" I bid you goodnight."

" Not so fast ! Not so fast ! Look at the hour ! Elizabeth gave orders for a bed to be prepared for you when she retired herself, seeing that we were like to make a night of it. The Simpsons, decent folk, will be asleep hours ago."

There remained but one day before I was due to start. I rose at dawn, having neither undressed nor closed an eye, and wandered restlessly about the Samos grounds, till I could in decency leave the house. There was the garden where she had played hide-and-seek with the Riedesel children. There was the chair on which she had sat, looking across at the pale hills of Vermont, whilst I read aloud the—to her—momentous letter. We had walked that long avenue together, and once we had ridden it with her arms clasped tightly around my waist. I had loved her from that very night, and therein was the secret of my jealous watch over her. I had hoped to find her unworthy—but she was not ! I had steeled myself by thinking she was in love with Nelson—but she was not ! She was mine—if I could but win her !

I hated the long hours that must drag themselves away before I might put my fortune to the touch—I who had dallied so long ! Breakfast was over at last, and Mistress Mabane excused my immediate departure on the plea of business. The Judge walked

down the Avenue with me, and wished me good luck at the gate. After Wolfe's ravine was passed I took the path through the fields to the edge of the cliff, as I wanted to approach Mary's home by her favourite walk. The shrubs were all abloom, as I went through them, up and down, sometimes nearing the hill-top, sometimes sloping towards the lower road, according as the long succession of passing feet had found the going easy. There is an individuality about a rambling path that no highway can ever equal. Meadow larks were tuning up joyfully on the Plains of Abraham, white-throated sparrows singing their little throats out in the willows, and from Champlain Street came up the sound of a child's voice in the melody—

*"C'est le mois de Marie,
C'est le mois le plus beau."*

Truly it was the month of Mary—my Mary.

She was out of doors, when I came to Bandon Lodge, and I called to her over the wall—

"Mary, Mary, quite contrary. How does your garden grow?"

She looked astounded at the familiarity of the address, and still more at the command that she come with me immediately for a walk round the ramparts.

"I will be putting on my bonnet, and my cape." She spoke in a dazed fashion.

"No, no, come as you are! It will be warm up there in the sun. Nobody is about so early." I

could not let her out of my sight lest I should lose her.

Once she was beside me, I was struck dumb—so lovely and gracious a woman I had been ordering about like a lass in her 'teens! It was not until we had crossed broken bits of the wall, scrambled along gateways and over guns, far from the sight of houses and people, with only the sail-flecked harbour spread out before us, like an entry into Paradise, that I found speech to ask if I might pass within.

"Let us rest against this old cannon," I began. "'Tis too damp to sit upon the grass. See; there is snow yet in that cranny, but the ice has come down from the lakes, and I must start west to-morrow. The very heart dies within me when I think of saying goodbye to you, Mary."

"I was afraid you had gone away without saying it."

"That I could not do; but I have put off, and put off the farewell, because I feared I might ask you for something you were not ready to give. To take my refusal and ride away quickly seemed the better plan."

"If you were sure it was to be a refusal."

"Mary, Mary, have you even so much as a crumb of affection for me?"

"A whole loaf." She looked at me with swimming eyes.

"I can hardly credit it," but I was bold enough to

put my arm around her and draw her near to my side. She put both her arms about me also, and we held each other thus in silence for a second till she said—

“ There ! I have done it again ! ”

“ What ? ”

“ Given you a good hug. You mind that night on the horse ? When I clasped you then I said to myself, “ This is my shield and buckler, my fortress, my defence, my own lad ! No other lass shall have him. ”

There was naught for me to do but to press her closely to my heart, and if I kissed her also, the broken-down old cannon would never be telling.

In the end she came to England to marry me, as it was impossible for me to leave my regiment there at the time it suited us to be married ; or in other words at the time my income justified me in taking a wife. I have never attained to more than a modest competence, though there is no reason for concealment of the fact that in the last war my name was mentioned in the despatches for bravery at Belgium battles whilst in command of my regiment. I was made Lieut.-Colonel of the 53rd Foot in '94, but for the last twelve years I have been retired from active service, and hold the post of Major at Chelsea Hospital.

Mary and I have a half-grown son, Frederick, named from my late commander who left this life

from the starting-point of his native Switzerland in '91. His friend, Judge Mabane, survived him only one year. Mary and I sincerely lamented the doctor's untimely death, and yet we have a tender smile when we think of him—the Scot who believed we were all selfish seekers after happiness—wrapping his plaid about him and walking into Quebec to minister to a soldier of the garrison down with the small-pox. On the way back he was overtaken by one of the bitter blizzards we both knew so well, and he fell by the roadside, where he was found and taken home. But he had contracted inflammation of the lungs, from which he did not recover. Was it not the death he would have chosen? He had a horror of losing his faculties and being left to the care of strangers, for his sister was much older than he. Mary and I have no such fear—with the strong arm of our son to lean upon. He is bent on following my profession, though his mother is loath to see him enter it.

“What about the song you used to sing?”
I ask.

“ ‘ I had ten sons, I now hae nane,
I bred them toiling sairly.
But I wad raise them a' again,
And lose them a' for Charlie.”

“It may be easy to let ten sons go,” she replies,
“but when there is only one——”

For England is again at war—with France and the United States. Our best ships have to be kept in

Europe, so that the Americans are beating us on the water, but not on land. Congress again is trying to take Canada from us, but has received no support from the French Canadians, and naturally none from the loyalists and their sons. At every point along the frontier of a sparsely settled, ill-defended Province the invaders have been repulsed with loss. Through the mercy of Providence, I have lived long enough to see the French Canadians, who were hostile neutrals, could they be called such at all, twenty-five or thirty years ago, now taking up arms for the maintenance of the British connection, as the best thing for themselves. At Châteauguay last year three hundred of their volunteers defeated ten times that number of Americans!

I would Sir Frederick were yet alive to be told how amicably French and English can live together in a land where there is room for all and toleration for all. With a grand young country to develop, what scope is there for recrimination with regard to creeds? When one sees one's neighbour a good citizen, why question the faith which supports him in that goodness, be it Catholic or Protestant? Royalist and religious to the core, the horrors of the Revolution in France did much to weaken the Canadians' attachment to that country; and the name that has stricken terror into every heart throughout Europe means naught to them. I refer of course to NAPOLEON.

It is NELSON who has freed Great Britain from

that omnipresent terror; that same insignificant Horatio, once the sport of the Quebec girls on the Battery. He has fulfilled his promise of making England mistress of the seas. His Radiant Orb has guided him aright, and in full measure has his thirst for renown been gratified, but at what a cost! He lost his right eye at the Siege of Calvi, his right arm in the assault on Santa Cruz; his life at Trafalgar. He was never one to say to his sailors, "Go into the carnage," but "Follow me!" and he was there with them in the thick of it, all the time, inspiring them by his dauntless spirit into doing their duty for England, even as he did himself.

Mary and I had not the heart to witness the sad spectacle of his mighty, though melancholy funeral, at which the tears of a whole nation flowed freely for their hero. When shall we see his like again? He had done his work, and so at the age of forty-seven, he was permitted to pass into the only well-charted haven. If Honour be indeed that which is best worth seeking in life, he gained more than any man our country has yet seen, but was he happy? Not with the wife he won that springtime of '87—never as I have been with my Mary. We in our lowlier station would not have chosen to change places with him at any moment since we parted. His battered body has been placed in a magnificent tomb in St. Paul's, and the gratitude of a delivered nation will hand down his name in loving remembrance

from generation to generation—but I have won Mary Simpson. She is still at my side, and hand in hand we shall walk together till the end of our allotted time, when we will sleep as well in a humbler tomb; and we shall be together.

THE END

on
in
our
ler