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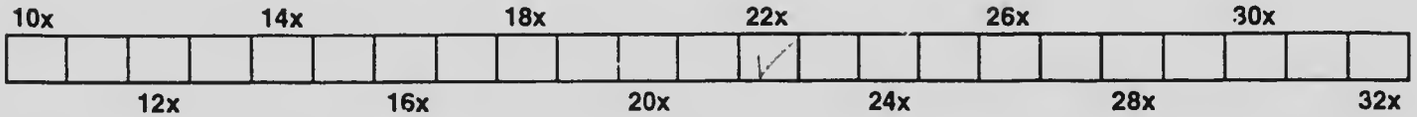
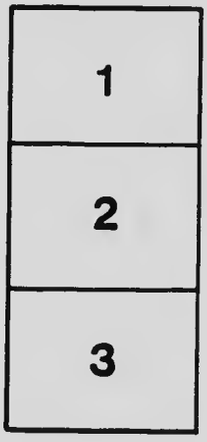
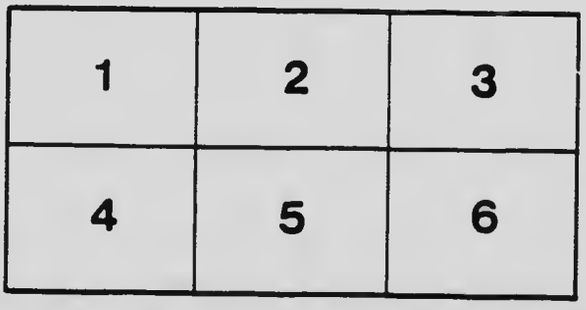
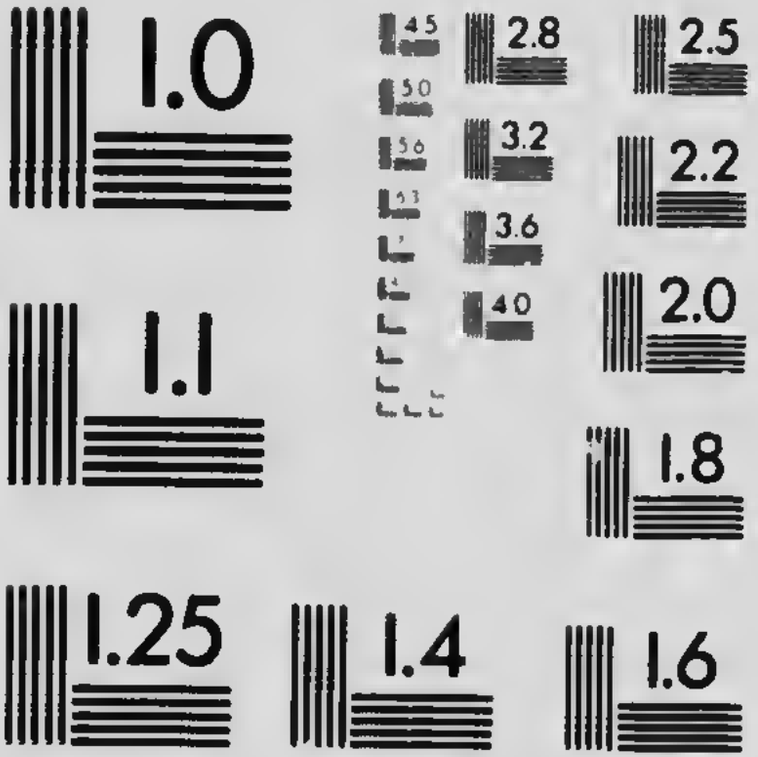








CHETIGNE ISLAND

A NOVEL

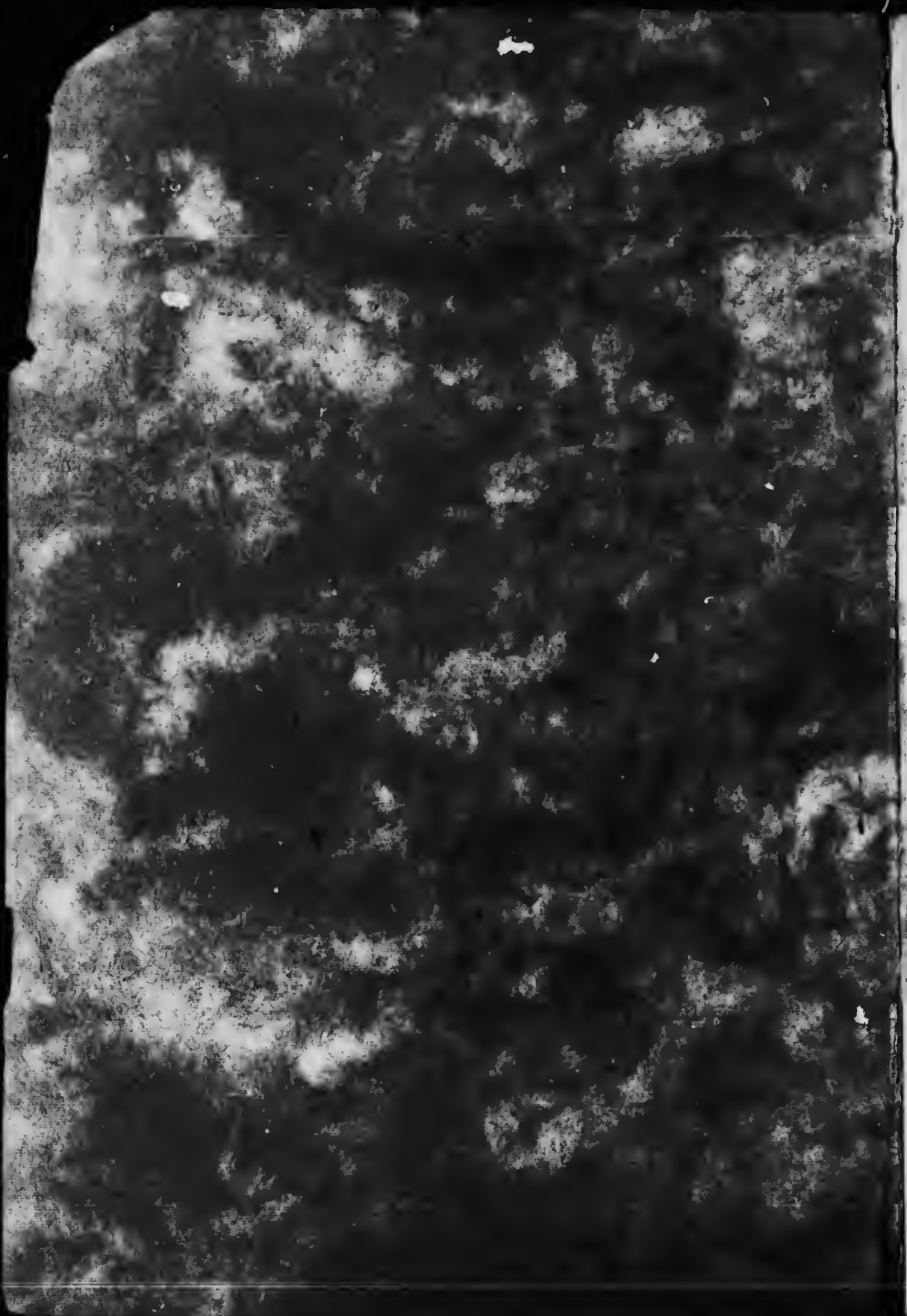
BY

MARGARET McLAREN

WEST CHEZZETCOOK

HALIFAX COUNTY

NOVA SCOTIA



CHETIGNE ISLAND

A NOVEL

BY

MARGARET McLAREN

WEST CHEZZETCOOK
HALIFAX COUNTY
Nova Scotia

PREFACE.

CHETIGNE ISLAND is an island off the present harbor of Chezzetcooke. This harbor is unnavigable, save by those acquainted with the tortuous windings of its channel.

The island, at present, can not be waded out to at ebb-tide, as the children of the story waded, to play about the wreck, but in the days of which this story tells, the island was almost connected to the mainland by a neck or point.

The sea, in its ever ceaseless, flowing tides, washed this point of land away, 'eaving the island surrounded by fairly deep water, even at ebb-tide.

In the days of which the story speaks, this settlement embraced more of the country than at present.

Other people, of different nationality, came and settled along the shores, and among the hills. Thus we have Grande Desert, Seaforth, Three Fathom Harbor, where once all was Chezzetcooke.

The French Acadians are divided into three classes: Those who, after the expulsion of Grande Pre, wandered about in the dear Acadian land, until they came to dwell here. These are the Bellefontaines, whose name Longfellow has immortalized in the beautiful poem "Evangeline." During the stormy days of the first revolution the Breaus and Mayettes came. When the second revolution once more held fair France in its throe of terror, the Juliens came, for refuge.

And now, peacefully, dwell together the descendants of both aristocrat and peasant, whose forefathers fled to escape the ravages of human hate and came here for refuge.

The rolling sea, flowing round the little island, so dreary, and forlorn looking, with now and then a solitary gull swooping over its vast expanses, provides a living for them all. To this village Providence has imparted a charm, all its own.

The poet has fittingly described it—

> "Distant, secluded, still
> The little village of Acadie
> Lay in its peaceful valley."

M. M. McLAREN,
West Chezzetcooke,

March 17, 1916.

CHETIGNE ISLAND

PROLOGUE

HARD by the little rocky island, almost buried in the silt and mud it lay, a thing of mystery, the old oaken hull of a ship. It had always been there, said the oldest villager, and at high tide but a fragment of it appeared above the gray-green water. When the tide ebbed, leaving the flats bare and salty sweet in the summer sunshine, the children of the village often waded and clambered over the mysterious old derelict.

I was one of those children; and through the mists of bygone days, I can see myself once more from my point of vantage, the highest part of the old hull, holding forth in loud speech to my admiring companions, and I still remember their screams of dismay and my own terror, when I lost my balance and fell forward into the moist and oozy bosom of the plateau which was beneath me.

Scrambling to my feet, wet and dirty, but unhurt, my groping hands came in contact with an object, which, when I at length succeeded in loosening it from its oozy bed beneath the surface of the plateau, proved to be a rusty old cutlass. On reaching home with my prize, grandfather told me it was made of steel and must have lain a long time where I had found it, "but," said he, "it is not worth while keeping, Gervaise, you had better throw it away again. I shook my head. "No," I said. "This is a great treasure and I will put it away safely," and without opposition I carried it to the chimney closet in my own little bed chamber under the eaves, where all of my cherished belongings were kept. and with childish belief in my treasure trove I fell asleep.

CHAPTER I.

"Dreams are bright creatures of poem and fancy
Which sport on earth in the night season, and
Melt away with the first beams of the sun.
Which guide grim care and stern reality on
Their pilgrimage through the world."

—Dickens.

AS my eyelids closed dreamily, I seemed to be drifting upon some unknown sea; and presently came to a portal through which I saw, as through a stethoscope, a series of pictures moving before my vision, and I felt as though nothing else mattered because there *was* nothing but the pictures and the immense void which encompassed me. I saw a dark mass of terraced buildings. The moon had risen, and men were pacing to and fro upon the terraces.

Presently I noticed a white gate, and just beyond it, in the shadow of the trees, a horse was standing. Gazing, fascinated, I saw a man come through the gateway, mount the horse quickly and disappear among the trees.

Suddenly lights flashed hither and thither throughout the great building, and a band of horsemen emerged. They rode sharply away upon the broad white highway which stretched and curved like a ribbon through the beautiful country beneath the soft light of the summer moon.

Then the scene changed. I was looking at a city. There was wild disorder, doors were flying open, soldiers were running through the streets, half-clad people rushing out of their houses, and being mown down, like grain, by armed men. Only those who wore a white cross upon their hats, or a white ribbon upon their sleeves were unscathed.

It was, beyond description, a scene of fearful carnage. Gradually the picture melted, leaving me in deepest melancholy.

But once again my senses became aware of a new scene. Again it was moonlight. Two men were descending a steep and rocky hillside to the sea shore where the long even swells were coming toward the beach; it seemed to me like friendly arms reaching out to them, offering them haven upon the deep

bosom of the ocean. Behind them, on the crest of the hill, was a large house, its turrets rising among the surrounding trees. Anchored in the track of light made by the moonlight upon the water was a ship. A boat was lowered, and came so quickly and yet so rythmically toward the shore that I seemed to hear the sound of the oars in the rowlocks.

The two men awaiting the aproach of the boat embarked eagerly. One wore a cloak, and I got a glimpse of a child's face and golden curls beneath its folds as he seated himself. They reached the ship. Her sails were set, they filled in the breeze, and I saw the foam of the water in her wake as she sailed away into the unknown.

Then, suddenly, I was looking in at the great door of the house on the hilltop. It was wide open, but all was still. The interior came into view, and I saw a beautiful lady and a little child lying upon a couch. As I gazed, I could sense the horror that pervaded that lonely and ancient hall, and I realized that the lady and her child were dead. It seemed to me as if my heart were breaking; and then I knew no more until the bright morning sunlight came streaming into my little chamber and I awoke, sick and faint (for I was young) from my dream.

When I told my mother about it she laughed and said in her soft French, "Little boys should not study history in vacation, last night was St. Bartholomew's eve."

When father came home from fishing, and heard the story, he laughed and said, teasingly, "You were 'Gourmand' at supper last night, Gervaise, n'est ce pas?"

But grandfather and I went down to the shore. I told him my dream and how terrified and sorrowful I felt about it.

He told me me to try and forget it, and taking his book from its worn leather case, he began my daily lesson in plain chant, so dear to the Acadian people.

We sat there until the twilight began to fade and jeweled stars came peeping and scintillating in the clear sky above us. We sang together, as was our custom, until my mother called to us to come home.

During the week, a breakwater was begun near the mouth of our harbor, and in the excitement of seeing the strange men arrive and the pile-driver at work, my dream was forgotten.

One day an obstruction sometwenty feet below the harbor was found. The pile driver ceased its panting and groaning, while the engineer, in the expedient way peculiar to his occupation, ordered the workmen to find out what the obstacle was. They found it to be a ship, one hundred and twenty feet in length which had been sunk, perhaps purposely, at the mouth of the harbor.

It was built of oak, for fragments of that wood clung to the great augur, when it was brought up from its voyage of discovery beneath the water.

This caused great interest in the village, because even the oldest inhabitant could not remember any ship having been sunk there.

In boyish wonder, I pondered much over this. Could it have been my dream ship? The mysterious ship which sailed away over an unknown sea? I could not guess, ponder as I might, nor could anybody imagine how the ship had come to be where it was found beneath the drifting sand and swirling water.

Not far from the mouth of the harbor was the little rocky island where the old hull was lying. It was known as Chetigne Island. As if events were just beginning, there came a letter of inquiry from a person living in New York, asking the village postmaster whether there was a small island in our harbor, what it once was called, and if the owner wished to dispose of it.

Chetigne Island belonged to my father. There was a small stone house on it, in which a man, who could not speak—a mute—had lived for many years. This man, who was older, as I have been told, than my grandfather, died when my father was but a boy. Being fond of my father, he gave him the rocky little island. We used it as pasture for our sheep, the old stone house, which had but one room, and being little more than a hut, even in its best days, serving as a fold.

There was a legend among the old folk that the man of the island might have possessed the faculty of speech had he wished to exercise it, also that he possessed the means of existence without labor. He had, they said, a very gentle disposition. He had obtained the little island from the Government and, beyond his affliction, did not seem to have been any more remarkable than his neighbors.

The postmaster showed my father the letter of enquiry, and, laughingly, he said, "Tell them if they have the price the island will be theirs 'tout suite.'" Accordingly, full information was forwarded to the enquirer, but there was no reply.

However, about a month later, a trim and dainty white yacht came nosing in and out of our harbor and sailed away again. When we went on the island blackberrying on the following Saturday, we found four great, deep holes in its mossy, fibrous earth.

All the village was agog with excitement. "Ciel," said they, "treasure hunters have been here. Perhaps they have found it and made off with it, 'en bas le nez,' as it were. While we who should have had it, slept peacefully."

For a time, all the wise men and women gossiped, as villagers are wont to do, so 'tis said, the world over, but nothing was known for certain. And the autumn days came, while myriad "fairies" of the forest tinted the "maples of Acadie" with crimson and gold, and the apple harvest was begun.

CHAPTER II.

"Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom, that through the pines of her father's lodge whispered love to the maiden.
'Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest, and never more returned, or was heard of again by her people."

—Longfellow.

NOW, on the wings of the north wind, came our cold Canadian winter, bringing with it the strange men who came each year to fell the big timber of the forests, which stretched for miles on each side of the village. Before us rolled the deep green surging billows of the broad Atlantic. Many and wild were the storms which swept bleakly across its vast waters, and came roaring up to our very doors. But we, who gain our livelihood from the ocean, do not fear it, for it is our friend in all its moods, and even when taking toll from us at times of those we love best, can we Acadians do otherwise than love it; for see, across its vast expanse is France, our Motherland, and England, our Protectress: it bridges the gulf between the old land and the new. The same waters caress our shores and murmur an eternal lullaby to our children.

It was Christmas Eve. Our Church, decorated by willing hands, in honor of the Christ-child, with wreaths and festoons of evergreen, amid the delicate tracery of which shone hundreds of twinkling, gleaming tapers, was a most beautiful sight.

We always attended the solemn service at midnight, all the strangers within reasonable distance on that night came also. It was a novelty for them, both to see the beautifully decorated Church, a[illegible] hear my grandfather's rich, mellow old voice, when as leader of the quaint sextette, which formed the village choir, he sang the mass in the Gregorian, or plain chant. It was, indeed, a treat to hear this choir of solemn and fervent voices, sweet with the strength of their religious belief, and solemn and reverend, because each singer knew that he was standing very near that portal beyond which all creeds are one.

After the service the village folk would carry the strangers off to a feast, where a huge "pate" or rabbit pie, the recipe for which had been carefully preserved since the old days, when, to while away the tedious winter, the lonely colonists formed with the chief Donacona and his friendly Indians the "Order of the Good Time, filled the cosy kitchen with its appetizing odor, and no stranger was found who would refuse his portion on that night, or the good French brandy which came after it, and which was brought by "Pere Mouquette" from St. Pierre, without consulting H. M. Customs.

As I was wending my way up the hillside toward the Church, a man, driving a pair of the heavy horses used in the woods, with a sleigh full of laughing young men, stopped. "Say, mon garcon," he said, "where can I put up the team? The boys want to see Santa Claus or 'Pere Mouquette,' so I brought them out of the woods." Yells of delight came from the boys at this.

I told them they could use our stable for the horses, and when the team had been safely sheltered there, being, like all country lads, fond of company, I brought the "boys" all in to our kitchen, where the fireplace, full of logs brightly burning, roared a welcome to the strangers.

They were all young, those sturdy lumber jacks, and ready for all the fun there was, so after Mass they all returned to our house, and many of our neighbors coming also, we had a Christmas revel together.

The man in the shaggy fur coat, with his shrewd, twinkling blue eyes, caught my fancy, and I got as close to him as I could.

The boys called him "Doctor." He seemed, while as jolly as they were, to be different somehow from all of them. He and my father became friends on that night, and he was a frequent visitor at our house. One evening, as he sat smoking at our fireside, he asked my father why the little island where the old hull lay was called "Chetigne Island."

My father, who sat mending his nets told him of the silent man who had lived there. "It was because his name was Chetigne, and he lived so long on the island, the folks had

given it that name," he said. "But before that it was called "Pirates Island," because, in old times, it was said pirates infested this coast and had their rendez vous there. "I have been told," he continued, "that the old hull you see there, was once a fine schooner, and flew the "Jolly Roger," but, being caught at her tricks, she was pursued by a British man-o'-war and, running in here, went aground, her crew falling easy prey to the pursuers."

"Perhaps the ship which is lying beneath the water at the mouth of our harbor was a companion of hers," said my grandfather.

Doctor was silent for a few moments. Presently he arose, saying, "I think it is time for me to be on my way, Ben." But when he opened the door, a bitter gust of northeast wind brought the snow swirling in over the kitchen floor, and a puff of blinding smoke from the fireplace. "Whew!" he whistled, as he closed the door, and stood buttoning his warm coat within. "It is a rough night. I wish I was at the end of my journey."

As he turned to go, my mother said in her gentle hesitating way, "You had better remain here tonight Monsieur. "It is very stormy and the walk through the woods to the camp is both long and lonely.' "Of course," seconded my father, "you had better stay, it is not a fit night for a stranger to be abroad in the woods, you can go over to the camp tomorrow. We have a comfortable spare room, and you know you are welcome."

"Doctor," I exclaimed, "please stay, for if the loup-garou should meet you alone in the woods tonight maybe you will never be heard of again!" "Why, Gervaise," said Doctor, gaily, "I do not fear either man or beast. If the loup-garou should ever venture to chase me I would swear at him in Gaelic, and I'm sure that would cause him to return whence he came.

"But you'll stay, sir," said my mother.

"With pleasure, madam," said Doctor, once more seating himself at the fireside..

"Ben," began he, "let's have a chat about those old-time pirates?"

"Well," said my father, "as far as I know, although people nowadays like to read and talk about pirates until they fairly feel cold shivers when the particular pirate they are reading or talking of seems to have brought his ferocious deeds to a climax, it seems to me that the most cunning and wicked, as well as successful ones, have never been caught, therefore most of the tales we have heard or read are pure invention."

"Ah!" said Doctor. "Really I think for my part, that they in their day represented as a class some of our modern financiers. While, by all accounts, the pirate was a swashbuckling rogue, who spent his time prancing about on a gory deck and singing 'ye ho! heave ho! my gentlemen free' while he relieved people of their valuables, becoming the terror of the seas by his line of conduct, his modern prototype sits snugly ensconced in a cosy office, serenely waiting for the unwary to sail, as it were, within hailing distance, when he will quickly overhaul them at his leisure. Once let him be sure of his prize, then he will prove himself as much a pirate at heart as any old-timer."

Before my father had time to reply the door opened to admit another gust of wind and a tall figure, which entered as though blown into the room. It was Joe Glasgow, the half-breed. He surveyed us all with a broad smile, that showed his gleaming white teeth.

"Hello, Joe," said Doctor, "have you been courting tonight?"

"No, Monsieur, not tonight," said Joe. "This is Friday night; girls not see the boys tonight."

"Why, Joseph, surely you did not quarrel with your girl last night?" questioned Doctor gravely.

"Non, Monsieur," said Joe, in his half French, half English patois. "I not fight nevaire with the girls, but everyone savez dis Friday night, ghost night. No girl come out. She pray for the soul tonight. Ici, tonight we see de light."

"You didn't see any lights tonight, old boy, unless you've visited Pere Mouquette. There is never a ghost that would venture out on a night like this, surely," said Doctor.

"Mais oui, Monsieur, he dare comme il faut, first Friday de month same as ever."

Doctor laughed quietly, as though he was very much amused. "Nonsense, Joe," he said; but, noticing my father's serious expression, he said whimsically, "Why, Ben! did you see a light also this evening?"

"It is no joke about the light we see here on the first Friday of every month. We see it regularly, as our fathers saw it, and as no doubt our children will see it when we are gone," said my father.

Doctor looked at him incredulously. My father put aside the net on which he was working, arose and walked across the kitchen, and Doctor, as if he had been called, followed him; together they stood and gazed through the window, fair upon the little island, and there, gleaming faintly through the falling flakes of whirling snow, glimmered a light.

"There it is," said my father, "as it has always been. It is a light in the window of the stone house."

Doctor looked for a long time at this phenomenon, about which nothing was known, save that it had been seen for so many years. Then, turning to my father, he asked, "Did this light appear when the mute lived there?"

"Yes," answered my father. "The stone house was there when he came, nobody knows who built it, and the light shone there on the first Friday of the month, as it does now, but I must tell you that it cannot be seen by a person who is inside of the house, because I often stayed with the silent man when I was a boy and I did not then notice the light at all, nor as far as I know, did he. At least he made no sign."

"How could he tell you what he thought about that or anything else if he could not speak?" said Doctor curiously.

"He could make me understand what he meant quite well," said my father. "He always wanted me to stay with him in winter and I often did stay for weeks at a time. I would cut wood and go to Halifax through the woods to get him books and other things, that could not be obtained in the village store. He was lonely and I tried my best to cheer him, for I loved him, but never once did he speak to me." He brushed a rough

hand across his eyes. "Oh, well," he said gruffly, "he died many years ago."

"Ben," said Doctor, "you must have been a strange boy, to have taken pleasure in the company of such a man."

"Mais Monsieur, wait, you find out bien-tot what Ben do on dat little island on de wintaire time, you not know, eh!" said Joe, the half-breed, slyly.

"I'm sure I cannot imagine Joe," said Doctor.

"C'est Bien!" smiled Joe. "Now, Ben, go get your fiddle, de one he geev you, and you will show Doctaire what de old dummy learn you when you was young. Go get de fiddle, quick, and when he hear dem fine tune—"

But Doctor sprang excitedly to his feet. Why should he have grown so pale?

"Ben," he said, sharply, "did that man who could not speak teach you to play the violin?"

"Yes," replied my father, wonderingly.

"At last!" murmured Doctor, sinking quickly into a chair. "Thank God."

It was Joe who broke the amazed silence which followed.

"Ben," he said, "if you don't get de fiddle Doctaire call me Tom Pepper the two!"

"Who was Tom Pepper the first, Joe?" asked Doctor, amusedly.

"He was one beeg darn liar, Monsieur," replied Joe, gravely; and thus the atmosphere was cleared of that indefinable, mysterious something which had enveloped us as the mist of a dark night, and my father, who had brought forth his violin, at Joe's request, began to play. He was a born musician, and as he drew the bow across the strings the instrument, responding to his touch, sent forth a chord so sweet and delicate that it seemed like fairy bells chiming.

Soon the room was flooded with melody and kilted warriors seemed to be marching before us, while their leader shouted his battle cry and brandished his claymore; and the marching warriors gave place to rosy-cheeked lads and lasses dancing the Virginia reel and "Sir Roger de Coverly," while

these were followed by gallants gay and stately ladies treading the measures of the minuet.

Then softly, graciously the violin spoke, dreamily ,tenderly, as though a beautiful voice was reading a romance. It was twilinght in an old and beautifully fragrant garden, where a young man was parting from his sweetheart. There were tender kisses, words of love and faith. Their sighs of fareweli mingled with the gentle rustle of the leaves of the forest, while the waters of the bayou shimmered and rippled beneath the golden Southern moon.

Now the nightingale, in the woodland grove, poured out his life in song, and all about there seemed the rare fragrance of growing, blooming plants—the fragrance of a pure and happy life. Pleasantly the music spoke of happy days, then came storms; then it told plaintively of another lover and a faithless love, and finally, in a last sobbing chord, of a breaking heart, and the desire to escape from all the world—the desire for death. Then, the somber chords were still, and silvery, now was the lingering music that promised a better home beyond this world, where there would be none to break faith.

The music ceased and the spell was broken. Doctor arose, and held out his hand for the violin. Now the sound of a gay and lilting ditty filled the room.

My father smiled, and Doctor, when he had finished playing walked over to the table and began looking over the violin.

"Ben," he said, "this is surely a great fiddle. I suppose you know what it is worth?"

My father did not answer, and Doctor resumed.

"Over two hundred years ago in Cremone, which was a part of Cesalpine, Gaul, lived a man called Antonio Stradivari. He made this fiddle of yours, for here is his label inside of it, in Latin:

Antonius Stradivarius Cremoneusis
Faciebat, Anno 17—"

I will give you five hundred dollars for it, which will about break me, but I suppose you wouldn't sell it for that?"

My heart leaped. Five hundred dollars! What a sum it seemed to me, poor as we were. My mother let her knitting

fall and grew quite pale, but father took the violin tenderly, and said: "No amount of money could ever tempt me to part with this; you see, *he* gave it to me, just making me promise to keep it always, and I would think it sacrilege to break that promise, for I loved him, and God knows he was a gentleman."

He walked over to the window and stood quietly looking out.

Joe Glasgow, smiling at my mother and me, showed all his white, even teeth.

Doctor went over to my father. He placed an arm about his shoulders and said, so gently, in a queer kind of choking voice, as though he were trying hard to speak bravely, "Ben, if only I might have known him, I think I would have loved him as you did!"

And there they stood, those two men, who had known each other for such a little while, looking at the island where that strange light gleamed and flickered in the window of the old stone house, where he who had caused music and love to be born in the heart of a country lad had spent the weary years.

Was it true that the dead knew all; I wondered, could it be true that this strange man bore his awful affliction from choice only? When I had gone to bed that night, in my little chamber under the eaves, I could not sleep, and I pondered, while the candle fluttered and burned away, over all the strange things in our harbor. The old hull in its resting place near the island, the sunken ship, the silent man, who lived so long in the stone house and the old cutlass which I myself had found. The old cutlass—I got out of bed and brought it from its resting place in the chimney closet, and lying there in my bed, wondered where it came from, and thus wondering fell asleep.

As once before, I seemed to be drifting again on that same strange sea and to be looking once more at a series of pictures. I saw a great ship sailing over the sea. She encountered another and then another ship, and it was as though I heard the roar of her guns, the shouts of the victors and the cries and groans of the vanquished. I saw, too, the looting of the ships and their treasures being transferred to the pirates' ship. What a beauty she was. With the eye of a sailor I looked her over.

From the tapering bowsprit to the tip of the mainmast she
as graceful as a swan, but her portholes disclosed the omi
gleams of her guns, like the tusks of some fierce wild beasts

As when I dreamed before, the scene changed, and I
the pirate ship, flying her horrid flag, sailing into our har
I saw her crew swarm in the rigging and the great anc
being heaved overboard. And then I noticed her motley cr
staggering under the weight of the rocks with which they w
constructing the stone house.

Gently the picture melted, but again I saw the pirate s
riding quietly at anchor. Her crew were carousing in a
about the stone house. Chained to a ring in the wall was
man; so pale and emaciated was he that he seemed but
spectre. While the hideous band of ruffians surrounding hi
continued in their horrid mirth he seemed to pray. There w
a morsel of candle upon the rude ledge of the tiny windo
Suddenly a horrid looking ruffian seized the candle an
trampled upon it; drawing a murderous looking knife h
attacked the chained man. I cried aloud in terror, and awok
to find Doctor sitting beside my bedside, holding the ol
cutlass.

"Well! what ails mother's boy?" he said, banteringly.

"Why does he arm himself with a rusty old cutlass whe
he retires?"

"Oh!" I sobbed, "I'm so frightened. "May I go with
you in your room?"

"You may, sonny," said he.

He gathered me into his strong arms and carried me to his
room, where I fell asleep, holding fast to his hand, after telling
him of my dream.

CHAPTER III.

"Cowards die many times before their death;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have seen,
It is most strange to me that men should fear
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come."

—Julius Cæsar.

THE next day was Saturday, and the storm had not abated. Doctor had not returned to the camp, but remained quietly conversing with my father until late in the afternoon. When the early winter twilight had fallen, and my mother had gone upstairs to spin, he said abruptly:

"Ben, I am going to trust you with a secret. The silent man of your island was my grandfather. His name was James Clairmont, as mine is. He was silent, because he wished to be so, not from necessity."

My father looked the surprise he felt. "But," said he, "his name was Chetigne because he wrote it so always."

"No," replied Doctor gravely." "His name was Clairmont. Look at this." He held out a faded and yellow envelope. "Read this letter," he said.

My father took the letter from its time-yellowed case, and read slowly and aloud, (for he was not much of a scholar), the letter which had been penned so long ago in the stone house on the little island, by the hand of the man whom he had loved.

STONE HOUSE, Chetigne Island,
Halifax Co., N. S., Sept. 1st, 1795.

My Dear Pamela:—

During the long years which have passed since our last meeting, I have never ceased to remember you. Even when in that awful prison, which to me was a living tomb, and from which my faithful friends assisted me to escape, I always thought of you and loved you. I have dwelt here for so many weary years that it seems an eternity, and in all that dreary time I have spoken no word to any human being.

Oh! Pamela, could I but live my life over again, how happy we would be together. I thought that my rash deed

was justifiable when, by a fatal impulse, I rid the world of
scoundrel. But, oh! how mistaken I was. By that one ra
act, I ruined our lives, and sent the soul of a libertine a
reprobate trembling and unprepared to meet his Maker. I a
sorry that, blinded by passionate anger, I disowned the chil
but only God knows how torn my mind was by all the agoni
a man can feel. After my escape, I knew that life, as I ha
known it, was ended. From my hiding place in the Canadia
forest, I learned of your return to the old life of light an
laughter, extravagance and fleeting pleasure, the life which
too, knew and loved, before I earned the brand of Cain.
could not rturn to you, and my heart died within me, for
knew by your return to the old life that you would not com
—to me. Aided by my friends and my knowledge of French,
I became an exile here on this little island in the wilds.

Had I known you held one memory of me, I would have
risked detection. I would have gone to you, even if doing so
would have caused me to be captured and thrust again into that
gloomy prison where I spent so many weary years; but I
knew that your love, which was the jewel of my existence, was
lost, never to be regained.

But justice must be done to the baby I once denied, who
must be now a grown man, the man who is my son; whom I
shall never see. Tell him I am his unfortunate father. I
implore you both in the name of Him who is all merciful, to
forgive all the blind passion and pain which one rash act caused
us all to suffer, but particularly the denial of his birthright.
Tell him to claim his inheritance. The curé of this village
will forward this letter to you. My one thought is that God
may bless you, and that we may meet to part no more in a bet-
ter world. I think of you now with delight, not the old time
delight in your beauty, but I delight in the glowing thought
that once you loved me, in the long ago, so dim and distant.
Good bye, Pamela, my wife.

JAMES CLAIRMONT,
Known to dwellers of this hamlet
as Chetigne of the Island.

My father dropped the letter. Tears, which he was not ashamed of were falling like rain from his eyes. My childish heart was sore. The twilight deepened into darkness, as we sat in silence, and at length my father spoke.

"Doctor," he said simply and quietly, "the man we were waiting for since Chetigne's death has come at last."

Grandfather, who had left the room, re-entered. He walked over to Doctor and said eagerly: "Tell me your grandmother's maiden name, sir?"

"Pamela Wentworth," answered Doctor gravely.

"Then," said grandfather, "there is a packet which Chetigne left when he died. The curé told us our family must keep it in our possession unopened until the arrival of his kinsman.

Doctor's brown and sinewy hand trembled as he grasped that message from the dead. Mother lit the candles, for we never used any other lights. Seating himself at the table Doctor opened the packet and began to read its contents.

The room was very silent. The great clock in the corner ticked solemnly as its pendulum swung to and fro. The flickering firelight danced in shadowy figures upon the walls and all was redolent of innocence, peace and love. Doctor read on; the tears coursing down his cheeks. Suddenly he raised his head.

"Ben," said he, "I must read this to you all. You loved him so and were so kind to him in his exile, that he mentions you. You must hear what is contained in this packet of which you have taken such faithful care.

"No," said my father. "The contents of that packet are not our affair. Never mind, as long as you have it safely."

"His wish was that this must be read to you or to your son, and as I have had the good fortune to arrive here while you are still alive I will obey his instructions. I will read it for your son, your good father and yourself," said Doctor. Without further speech from any of us he began tremulously at first to read. As he read, his voice grew stronger and presently our excitement had reached boiling point, as we listened to the unexpected news which the contents of the packet revealed.

CHAPTER IV.

"No land locked bay, sweet islet, secluded cove,
Or wild lone beach but hath its legend, no
Cave but hath its treasures buried deep."

—Old Poem.

CHETIGNE ISLAND,

My Dear Son:— June 21st, 1815.

I, your father, after many years, am writing this for your reading, because I know intuitively, that you will come here some day, to this dreary stone hut, to this little island in the wilds where I first came as a fugitive and remained—an exile.

When the weary years of sorrow, remorse and loneliness had burned the passions of youth away, I was glad to at least be free to breathe the pure air of heaven. When first I came here, hourly and daily I watched and listened, awaiting the touch of a hand upon my shoulder, and a voice saying, "Come! back to the gloomy prison, back to that noisome cell, where night after night you watched the creeping shadows form nameless shapes of unknown terror, and hideous jibing faces of the man whom you caused to die."

The passing years moved onward, bringing no pursuer, and I lost the furtive fear and the wish to hide like an animal from all my kind, and at length became accustomed to my bare and lonely life.

I owe nothing but love and heartfelt thanks to the Acadian people for the many kind favors which they bestowed upon me. As atonement for my crime I took a vow of silence, promising no speech with a human being until death is near me. I have kept that vow. Perhaps He who sees even the sparrow fall, will accept it in His mercy as reparation. I could do no more.

Among all these people is one lad I especially love; Benjamin Breau. Many nights has he slept by my side in this old stone house in his boyish innocence. I have taught him to play the violin. To play as once I played in the old home, in the dear dead days when your mother sat beside me and listened to its soft and tender music. Alas! the dear old home. Even here, in the dreary solitude I can scent the fragrance of the flowers. I hear, as in a dream, the echoes of the darkies singing. I hear once more Uncle Zeb's voice saying softly, "We all wish you joy Massa Jimmy" on my wedding day.

I see again a vision of the faithful, sorrowful faces of my lifelong friends and servants on the day I died to them. The day the prison doors clanged, and closed as with a crash of thunder behind me as I entered. I was not Master James to them any longer. The Southern gentleman who had been bred and born in the dear old home among all those faithful creatures was No. 27 now and—a felon!

Boy, when you read these words, will you then think that I, your father, was not a felon from choice. I need not repeat that old-time horrible story. Asking your pardon for depriving you of a father's love I will pass to other things.

It is my wish that you find the boy, Benjamin. Share with him the wealth of this island, of which I will now reveal the hiding place to you. Years ago, I discovered a great treasure of gold and jewels which had been buried here, doubtless by pirates in the long ago. The circumstance of my life made the treasure useless to me; and I merely removed it from its original hiding place to what I thought was a safer spot.

There is also a box of ancient documents which have nothing to do with the treasure, but will cause the restoration of both name and estate to an ancient and noble family of France. Give Christian burial to the skeleton which you will find interred in the first spot which the enclosed plan will show. I feared to have this done myself, because I did not wish to have the attention of the curious drawn to this little island, where I wished to die, in peace. The enclosed plans will show you the location of what lies hidden.

Should the boy Benjamin be grown to manhood before your arrival or, perhaps, be dead, take his son, should there be such a person, into your company instead. I have no more instructions to give you. The violin which my mother's father, Maestro Brindisi, gave to me, I have thought to give to Benjamin. He loves its music so. Again craving your pardon, my son, for what I have caused you to suffer, your unfortunate father,

JAMES CLAIRMONT.

CHAPTER V.

"With but one man of her crew alive,
She put to sea with seventy-five,
Yo ho, my lads, ho and a bottle of rum!
Fifteen men in the dead man's chest,
Rum and the devil have done for the rest,
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum."

"Treasure Island," Stevenson.

IN a sailor's lodging house in Halifax, four men sat in a stuffy room, round a table on which were cigars, liquors and glasses ,together with a soiled and dog-eared pack of playing cards. Three of the men were sailors, but the fourth was a different man entirely. His speech proved both education and refinement; and his countenance lacked the weather-beaten appearance of the others.

One of the sailors was speaking. He was a burly, thick-set person, with an enormous wen in the centre of his forehead and a strange habit of cocking his unwieldy head birdlike when about to begin conversation. He was as ruffianly a specimen of humanity as would be met with anywhere. He lolled in an armchair, with a cigar between his teeth. "Yes!" he said, in a hoarse voice, "you got me, mister, you have. I were skipper of the yacht Golden Dawn, when some fellers lured us to take a cruise down to a place called Chezzetcooke to an island there, wot they called Chetigne Island. They had a paper with hyerglyphics onto it, and they said it was a map their grandad gave them to show where he had hid away all the booty he got by piruting. It showed a course out of Halifax Harbor, clean to this island called Chetigne or whatever it was, but mister them hyerglyphics couldn't locate old pirate grandad's treasure. No siree! not by a jugful. We poked round there for near a week. We used to go ashore nights and dig, for them 'Johnny Crapauds' down there are a nosy lot. I never saw but one person down there tho' and that was at a distance. He was sitting on the shore, a-singing a kind of a chant he had. I couldn't understand it, for I never was good at foreign lingo, but just the way he sung it made me feel like saying my prayers. Say, mister, I got as lonesome as a dog

lying there back of some bushes listening to him. Well, sir we made four holes that we left open and about fourty-four we filled up again, but we never got anything but sore backs. The fellers paid us well for the trouble, and I never saw them since. I guess their grandad must have mislaid his bag of ducats somewhere else. He only thought he put it on that island. Har! har!" With this laugh, which sounded like a growl, he concluded his speech.

Mr. John Desmond looked over the three sailormen ruminatively. "I think," he said, "that you've told me a straight story. I have information which leads me to believe that there is really a treasure hidden on that island. I want a skipper and a couple of husky lads to go after it with me, and if you will agree to come, we will start tomorrow. If your boat is not fast enough, and that sort of thing, we will get another for the trip."

Captain Peter Marks swelled with pride. "I ain't never had a sweetheart mister," he said, "but I got one now. My dandy little clipper Ichthus can overhaul anything on the shore, and she can accommodate five easy. Why even the revenue cutters don't get a lap on her when she wants to get away from them. Now in case we find old Captain Kidd's wallet, how do we divvy?"

"Fifty-fifty," smiled Desmond.

"Handsome," growled the skipper. "Well, it's a go; and if we don't find anything we all get nothing apiece."

"No," said Desmond, "if we don't find what we are going after I will pay you for your trouble."

"I guess that's settled, then," said the skipper.

"Yes," said Desmond, "tomorrow morning at ten o'clock we'll be on our way."

"Let's drink to our success," growled the cross-eyed skipper in his hoarse voice, and the four clinked glasses to their future success in finding the treasure which they hoped awaited them on Chetigne Island.

Leaving them to the enjoyment of the refreshments which his generosity had provided for them, John Desmond left the lodging house. Conscious of the odor of bilge water, which

pervaded the hall and stairway, and making haste to be rid of such an atmosphere, he did not notice the furtive opening of a door or the face which peered at him so eagerly in the dim light of the kerosene lamp which hung suspended by a rusty chain from the ceiling, as he made his way into the street.

John Desmond was a lawyer by profession and a politician by the choice of both friends and enemies, who acknowledged the brilliance of his attainments, even against their will. Irish, as his name would indicate, he possessed the characteristic temperament of the true Celt. His native kindliness and ready sympathy with all classes made him hosts of friends, as well as not a few carping detractors, ever ready to depreciate the golden qualities of a character to whom their parsimonious view of life was impossible.

Among his friends was an old man whom rumor said had been a reprobate in his youth, but whose declining years were brightened by the glow of kindly deeds. He lived a few miles from Dartmouth in a rambling old house, every room of which held some relic of his past life, or of foreign travel.

John Desmond, because of the interest he felt in the old man's tales of adventure in many lands, frequently visited there. Sitting behind his raw-boned, quick-stepping horse, John Desmond was a familiar figure to the country people, whom he could call by name even after an absence of months without making a mistake in their identity. He was their chosen advisor in all the affairs of their simple lives and as they understood politics, it was that there were two sides, one for and one against their friend John Desmond. No argument or persuasive conversation could cause them to believe otherwise. Now and again, rumors of their idol's reckless mode of life would float over the country side, but when he appeared among them later, gay, debonair, and kindly or considerately serious, dame rumor was flouted with her stories and their idol again occupied his old-time pedestal, without having as much as lifted a finger toward his reinstatement.

It was while visiting Chezzetcooke that he was summoned to visit his old friend. The old man, propped up in the huge

four-posted bed was dying. His joy at Desmond's coming could be seen in the smile which illumined his wrinkled face.

"Ah!" he said, "you have come in time. The call has sounded for Mark Williams."

Taking the thin old hands, which lay upon the coverlet, in his own, Desmond said gently, "Dear old Mark! Let us hope you may be spared for a little while at least."

Old Mark shook his head sadly. "Ah," he said, "it can't be so, but I sent for you in order that I might be in readiness. I want to give what I possess to my sister Betty. This place and the few pounds I can give her will suffice for her support until she, too, leaves this world. Make it a condition that Jackson remains with her. He was an old shipmate of mine, and both Betty and he are so old they cannot be long behind me. At Betty's death I want you to have this place, for I have no relatives and few friends."

Mark Williams was laid to rest. He was soon followed by Betty and the faithful Jackson, and Desmond came into possession of the old house. Once or twice, in company with friends, he visited there, but the gaunt old rooms so long neglected threw gloom over their conviviality. They seemed to hear the trailing garments and whispering voices of the past in its dusty corridors. The soughing of the wind in the surrounding trees and in the huge and grimy old chimneys had a most depressing effect upon the gayest of spirits.

The old house with its memories and ancient and musty relics of the past, stared from its windows at the country lads who went shiveringly (though whistling bravely) past, beneath the misty light of the moon. On dark nights neither bribes of apples or pennies could get one of them to carry a message further along the road. The solitude of the place was such that the superstituious country people declared it to be haunted.

Looking over his letters one morning, Desmond found among them one which contained a request for his presence at this old house on the following day, to allow a prospective tenant an opportunity to look over the interior, and make terms for its rental, if suitable. He had never imagined that house as being occupied. Therefore, with a feeling of great

curiosity concerning the writer of the letter, which was signed J. Elwood, thus not disclosing whether the applicant was a lady or a gentleman, he decided to obey their request.

The following day, while speeding over the road, he felt his curiosity increasing every moment. The noonday sun was bright and warm. Gleaming like a huge sapphire, the harbor of Chezzetcooke lay in the distance. The clustered white houses among the green of the wooded slopes and wild land, made a beautiful picture.

At length the entrance gate of the old house came into view; and pacing slowly to and fro' upon the highway before it was—a lady.

Desmond felt a strange sort of wonder take possession of him, as he descended from his carriage, and advanced to meet the lady who had turned expectantly toward him. Among his other attributes he had the perfect poise of the man whose nerves are like steel under all circumstances. The beauty of the lady who now confronted him completely overpowered this debonair man of affairs. In spite of himself he felt the warm blood tingling in his face, that Celtic blood, which was his heritage.

Noticing nothing of his embarrassment, the beautiful lady (in a perfect voice) spoke: "I have been waiting for a long while," she said, "I was just about to go away, when you arrived. I presume you are Mr. Desmond."

He bowed: "At your service, Madam," he said, quietly, but he felt exactly as if he would have liked to say, "You beautiful creature I am your slave." However, gentlemen nowadays do not make use of such melodramatic expressions.

Tying the horse to the worn palings, he led the way to the house, over the weed-grown path under the giant chestnut trees which grew closely about it, their huge branches forming an arch from door to gateway. Unlocking the ponderous oaken door, he entered, saying, "As you are not familiar with this house, I will precede you."

His companion smiled assent. They entered the great, low ceilinged parlor first. Here, after examining the glass cases of strange, foreign birds, the shells, coral and other relics of the

dead old mariner who had dwelt there, Desmond opened (without knowing why he did so) the chimney closet. Lying on its highest shelf was a small book, which he picked up mechanically. During the inspection of the house, he carried it from room to room. At last they came out into the bright sunshine.

"The house is quite suitable," said the lady. "I must ask your terms, for I wish to take possession at once."

He hesitated. Even while noting the beauty of face and figure of the lady before him, he could not but be aware of the shabbiness of her costume. In the generosity of his heart he named a sum so small as to be a mere nothing.

She blushed vividly. Suddenly she held out both hands to him and smiled. The smile was worth more to Desmond than anything he had ever owned. He held both her hands for just a moment, and until he dropped them, these two had forgotten for those few seconds all the laws of convention which bar people from being natural. There, on the broad highway, the man and woman who had but just met, felt the indescribable warmth of heart which none but those of the Celtic races ever know, or understand.

"Thank you!" she murmured, and turning walked quickly up a woodland path, which was a short cut to the village of Chezzetcooke.

Desmond had slipped the book which he carried into his pocket when the lady held out her hands to him. Whistling lightly he gathered the reins into his hands, and was soon bowling over the road. He thought of his tenant until the horse drew up before the hotel at Chezzetcooke. The usual crowd at once gathered to welcome him, and he thought no more of his visit to the old house until, when retiring, upon removing his coat, the book, which he had found in the chimney closet, fell to the floor. He picked it up and began looking over it. He could make nothing of it. The ravages of time had made most of it illegible, but some of its leaves held strange entries, for it seemed to have been a sort of account book. On one page he read:

"Mary Jane £1,000.

"Tom Hood £500, his share.

"Ruby ring, for Kate."

The other entries were similar. There were many names and shares specified. He turned over the leaves until he came to the last, and on that was written and just barely decipherable:

"My good companions all. Ye have gone; when ye return, free gentlemen, ye will find I have kept faith with all of ye."

"When the light shines in the stone hut, stand where its shadow falls, in the centre. Mark ten paces north, ten paces thence to the east. Mark this spot X. At full moon stand there. Watch where your shadow falls. Twenty paces nor' by nor'east search."

Desmond felt a choking sensation. Had he fallen upon the hiding place of a treasure? Like a flash he understood the entries over which he had felt puzzled a few moments before. The book had been a pirate's log book without doubt. The names were names of ships which had been looted and of the pirate's crew who had shared his booty. It was plain as day.

Being familiar with Chezzetcooke, he had heard of its strange light, seen on the first Friday of each month. He had heard, too, of the attempt made by the crew of the white yacht to get the supposed treasure of the island. But had they been successful? he wondered.

He sat motionless in the simple white walled chamber of the village inn and thought how much good could be done with such a treasure, if it could but be unearthed. Old people and children could be aided, and happiness would be his. He fell into a reverie, in which the beautiful face and figure of the woman who was going to live in the old house bore a charmed past. But for her he might never have come by this book with its strange record of hidden gold. He thought of Mark Williams, and wondered if the book had been placed in the chimney by his old friend, or if other hands had placed it there, to be forgotten among the cobwebs.

He turned the leaves once more, gazing curiously at the divers items of the pirate's accounting, and was about to place the book upon the mantel, but when closing it, something

written in large and sprawling capitals upon one of the pages caught his eye. It was, "Jerry Elwood." Below it was written, "Erin go Bragh." Surrounding this legend, which was explanatory of the man who had owned the book, that is of his character, could be judged by the rude scrawl, was a wreath of shamrocks, drawn as loosely and rudely as the written words were formed.

Desmond concluded that he had better leave further cogitation concerning the business of the book until morning. After he had retired and was just falling asleep, a belated native passed, his heavy footfall echoing in dull thudding sounds through the silent house. As he walked, he roared out in a hoarse voice an old sea ditty:

"Oh! The captain called the sailormen,
"Up! my lads," said he;
"Man the stay's'l halyards on the high barbary."
Says the mate, "Hold your gaff, sir,
We are bound to mutin—ee—e,"
So they sailed away a piratin—n—
On the high barbaree—e.

The boisterous voice died away in the distance, but Desmond, whose thoughts were awakened by the rude words of the song, slept no more that night.

CHAPTER VI.

"There are more things in Heaven and
Earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of
In your philosophy."

—Shakespeare.

NEXT morning Desmond inquired of the good wife of the inn-keeper if there was not some very old person in the village who had a good memory.

Oh, yes, M'sieur," replied Madam. "There is Meré Blandine. She is the grandmother of Joe Glasgow. They say she is nearly one hundred years of age, and she can talk." The good woman held up her plump hands. "Mais oui, Monsieur, she can talk like the wheel of a moulin."

Desmond laughed softly. "Is it far from here to her house?" he asked.

"Not very," said Madam. "She goes every morning to Mass. You will meet her if you go now as she is coming home."

"Thank you, Madam," said he. "I have always wanted to meet a very old person."

Strolling along the hill-side toward the village church, he saw the bent figure of an old woman approaching. Aged and decrepit as she was, her bead-like eyes sparkled brightly as he held out his hand.

"Why, good morning Meré Blandine," he said, as he grasped the wrinkled claw which she extended. "You are really a wonderful old lady. Come and sit here on the steps of the church, I want to talk to you?"

As courteously as though he were escorting a princess, Desmond seated the old crone upon the broad steps.

"How very lovely it is here on this beautiful morning," he said.

"Yes, indeed," answered the old woman. "Mais, M'sieur, always it is nice here. People never know Chezzetcooke. Artist come, he look he say lovely. Stranger come, they not want to go away. Artist say he feel a charm here. Me, I tell heem charm everywhere, when you want to see it."

She sat quietly watching him.

"How is Joe getting on?" he asked kindly.

"Joe is beau garcon, M'sieu. But for heem I die long tam ago. He work everywhere, all tam. The lady that is goin' to leev in the house M'sieu Williams geev you, hire heem now for work for her. She come get heem last night. Mon Dieu! she is lak picture I see one tam; so nice; jol, jol," muttered the old woman. "Mais M'sieu," she continued, "she say her name Janet Elwood. When I was a yong girl, ole man and his neegar slav ees come here. He breeng frame from some whair on beeg schoonair and he build that old house. When he all unloaded the ship he send her away. He leeve in that house many years. Bime-by he die. After while Mark Williams come, after may-be twenty year."

"Can you remember the old man who built the house?" prompted Desmond softly.

I know heem very well M'sieu," she said! "I often worked for heem. Santa Vierge! Mais he was a real demon."

She ceased, her head dropped upon her breast. She had lapsed into thought as the aged will sometimes do.

"Well?" questioned Desmond.

"Oh, well 'Monsieur," she resumed, "he was a bad man. He drank, he swear, fight and yell horray! board them lads! and he run all over the house like a crazy man. Only hees neegar can make him stop. The neegar, for make him quiet hide somewhair and he hollar, "You are a deesgrace to Ould Ireland, sir! No wonder your country is abused. If you Irishmen cannot control yourselves, how you could gouvarn your countree.' M'sieu should have seen then what would happen. Old Elwood mounted the table always when he hear thees. He make a long speech; I don't know about what. Bime-by he lay down on the table and sleep and 'Pomp', hees neegar, is carry him off to bed. Hees wife come see heem, but she don't stop. One tam he get sick and die. He roar all de tam lak peeg is get kill. Then hees neegar is gone away in de night. Nobody know where he go. People say he was the devil, and he watch old Jerr Elwood." She sighed

Desmond had discovered what he wished to know. In her broken English the old Indian woman had told him that Jerry Elwood had built that house and that he had lived there for a time. He was, without doubt, the owner of the book which Desmond had discovered in the chimney closet. Could it be possible that the beautiful lady who now dwelt there was connected in any way with the horrible old man whom its roof had once sheltered. Bending over the old crone, Desmond asked:

"Meré Blandine, was it wicked old Jerry Elwood that built the stone house there on the island?"

"Non M'sieu," she replied, "my people, Indian people, you know, they here before Frenchman ees come. When they come that house ees there. It always there and light is there, too. Nobody knows who built it."

Desmond smiled. "Oh, well!" he said, "you have a great memory Meré Blandine." As he assisted her to her feet, he pressed something into her hand. When he had passed out of sight she looked to see what it was. She found that he had given her a sovereign. "Good boy," she muttered. "Smart boy, too, God bless heem!"

When Desmond passed by the old house that day on the way to Dartmouth, he saw that the doors and windows were all open. A stout negress was busy with broom and dusters. "O!" he muttered, as the coincidence struck him, "J. Elwood has a black servant this time also." A sudden twist of Celtic humor caused him to smile suddenly as he thought, "Maybe the black one is said to be a devil."

Arrived in town Desmond frequented the haunts of sailormen, until we met him in the lodging house with the three sailors. We will leave him as he was letting himself out into the street, while the person in the room with the door ajar peered at him so furtively.

CHAPTER VII.

"La servante au grand coeur dout vous étiez jalouse, et qui sans sommeil sous un humble pelouse. Nous devrions pourtant lui portes quelques fleurs. Les morts, les pouvres morts out de grandes douleurs."

—Baudelaire.

WHEN he had finished reading, Doctor looked at us. Through the mist, which sympathy for the long dead writer of that letter had brought to our eyes, we saw each other as through a veil of misted tears. As the passing moments brought calmness, our thoughts returned to the present. "Doctor," said my father, "if we should ever find what is buried on the island, do you think it would be right if we should keep it? It cannot be right, for it does not belong to us, neither did any of our forebears have a hand in placing it there. All we know concerning the matter is that your grandfather found it."

Doctor looked fixedly at my father for a few seconds in silence. At last he said. "I see it like this. You own that island; consequently you own all that is therein or on as the lawyers would say. I wouldn't search there without your sanction, no matter what I thought might be found there. Now, however, as I have given you as much information as I have had myself regarding the fact that there is something concealed there, my idea is that we get it without delay and divide it equally, as my grandfather wished us to do. As for looking for its rightful owner, I imagine they would be likely to be found almost anywhere if you mentioned the fact that you were looking for heirs to a treasure. With the ground frozen as hard as now it would be useless to attempt unearthing it. Bye and bye, when the frost is away, we will look for our treasure. As it has been there for so long, doubtless it can 'bide a wee' longer. I don't think anybody in the world knows about it save ourselves."

My grndfather now spoke. He told of the visit of the white yacht, and of the deep holes which her crew had made upon the little island, and which bore gaping witness to the fact that some person knew of the treasure besides ourselves

How could any person say that their quest had not proved to be successful.

"It is not likely," said Doctor, thoughtfully, that the crew of the yacht came across anything. It seems to me that if their search had been successful, they would have left no traces behind them to show why they had visited Chetigne Island."

"It appears to me," said my father, "that they were in such a hurry to make off with what they discovered that leaving those tell-tale holes behind them did not bother them much. When the frost is out of the ground we will prove whether they were successful or not."

"That's so," said Doctor, "but I have made up my mind that the treasure is still there and I am going to locate it, or know the reason why."

"Ah! Poor Chetigue!" said my father softly. The thought of this treasure completely banished him from my mind. And he was your grandfather and could have spoken to me if he had wanted to. Poor Chetigne."

I wondered what had been the circumstance which caused the man of the island to spend his time in solitude and silence. Why was he a fugitive, and what had been the story of his life. I realized, young though I was, that some great tragedy must have occurred during the early years of this man's life of which we knew nothing. I wondered what was written in the little book which had kept the letter company in the packet which my grandfather had faithfully guarded for so many years. Long afterward I learned it was a diary in which the recluse of the island had kept account of the days which had lengthened into years. Years which had passed so drearily for him, separated from all that he had loved. My musing was cut short by Doctor who broke the silence abruptly.

"Ben," he said, "I suppose you don't know that the name of 'Doctor' which was given me by the lumber jacks is really the name of my metier as you would call it?"

My father gazed at him in surprise.

"I am a qualified M. D." resumed Doctor. "I was getting along fairly well at my profession, when I happened to dis-

cover that first letter I showed you. Some hidden force seemed to be urging me to come to the place where my grandfather lived and died in exile. I don't think my father knew anything about the letter; which was found among my grandmother's papers long after her death. My father was dead quite a while then and I had grown to manhood." He smoked a while in silence. "I believe in all those things, Ben," he said, "that seem to connect the living with the dead. There is proof of it everywhere if our eyes were only trained to see it. Take, for instance, that boy of yours. Do you not realize that he has a peculiar way of dreaming? There are people who make a study of such things, who could, if they were here, explain to you much better than I can what dreams and phenomena like the light on Chetigue Island mean. It is only either the ignorant or the calloused who sneer at such things. Your boy has certain forces in such a state of development, that merely by having a rusty old cutlass in his possession, which he found here on the flats, he has had dreams which in the delicate state of his health have affected him strangely and given a clue as to who built the stone house and why the light is seen in its window. The island was doubtless the rendezvous of pirates in the old days, and perhaps more than one innocent person was murdered there by those fiends. I should very much like to know who put that cutlass where Gervaise found it."

"C'est moi m'sieu," said my grandfather.

Doctor stared at him incredulously.

"You!" he ejaculated.

"Yes," replied the old man. "It was this way. When I was a boy, nobody owned that island. It was what we call vacant. We kept our sheep there as we do now. That was before Chetigne came. I found that old cutlass driven into a crevice behind a rafter in the stone house and I brought it home. I had dreams then, constantly. I was troubled all the time, until at last I was afraid of my own shadow. Mother spoke to the curé about me. He came to see me. I showed him the cutlass and he told me I must throw it away. I threw it into the harbor at high tide and I was troubled no

more. But for years I had a feeling that I had left something undone. At last Gervaise found the cutlass and I was afraid." He laid his hand on my head. Presently he resumed. "I was afraid because I knew somehow that he would have those dreams. It was the very same cutlass that I had thrown away with Gervaise written upon its hilt."

"Well," said Doctor, "it appears that Gervaise did dream as you feared he would."

"The same dreams that came to me, monsieur, the very same," said my grandfather shaking his head.

"You must throw away that old cutlass, Gervaise," said my mother nervously. "Why do you keep such a useless thing?"

"I will throw it away if I dream again, mother," I assured her, "but I would like to keep it if I could. They say it is unlucky when you find anything like that to throw it away. Charlie the sailor says so."

Doctor looked at me whimsically. "What would you do," he said, "if the old spook who used to flourish that cutlass in old times came after you?"

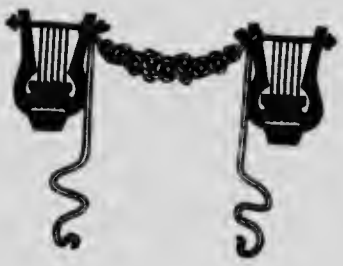
They all smiled. In my heart I was a wee bit afraid, but I answered boldly, "If he comes, I will tell him it is mine, for my name, 'Gervaise,' is written upon its hilt."

* * * * *

The storm abated. One by one the twinkling stars came out, like jewels spangling the purple black sky. They shone and sparkled alike over the pure white snow which covered the lonely country side, and over the dark by-ways of the cities, where perhaps some sad outcast noticing their sparkling brilliancy, was reminded by their beauty of a pleasant country home, and memories of childhood, and the whirring music of the spinning wheel accompanying the melody of a mother's spinning song. Echoing voices of the past! Perhaps the bruised heart was lifted toward the sky in prayer, to that Heavenly Father who is all merciful because all knowing. On such a night the thoughtful, gazing at the mysteries of earth and sky, hears the voice that calls down the ages. He hears

as though from afar an inner voice which says, reverently, "Credo in unum Deum."

Promising to come on Sunday, Doctor returned to the camp. He asked my mother to take care of the book which had been in the pocket. She promised him that she would keep it safely for him.



CHAPTER VIII.

"Hast seen the spy, Good Masters?
Methinks he lurks within the mansion."

THE door of the lodging house having closed upon Desmond, he who had peered so furtively at that gentleman, closed the door of his room. He was a tall, well set up person, and would have been handsome but for the seal which a dissolute life had set upon his countenance. "Chezzetcooke," he thought. "Why the name was familiar surely." Ah! he had it. He caught up a letter which lay on the rickety table. The letter was from his sisters. It informed him that they had discovered an old country house near Chezzetcooke the rent of which was a mere nothing. Even within the bounds of their tiny income they had bought a carriage horse and engaged a man-servant. It was, the letter continued, a beautiful place, and would not their dear brother pay them the long promised visit?

"Yes, indeed," he muttered. "I will certainly visit my saintly and charming sister. Also, unless my luck deserts me, I'll get the treasure off that blooming island, instead of that sweet-tongued guy who was in the next room with those three rough-necks tonight. He thinks he is a swell affair at business, but he will find walls have ears when I beat him to it. I felt bad when lack of 'mezuma' forced me into this 'shellbacks' retreat,' but it only goes to prove the truth of the old saying, 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good,' and I'm off for Chezzetcooke tomorrow."

He began to pack his few belongings, whistling gaily the while. Jerry Elwood, for that was his name, was a gentleman by birth. His father had held a commission in the Inniskillen Dragoons. Although he had been a brave man, and seen much service, he had nothing to bequeath to his young children when he died. It thus happened that the children were brought to Nova Scotia by their maternal grandparents, who reared them. Jerry proved a source of sorrow to them always, for he seemed to never to be so happy as when in dubious company. Grown

to manhood, gambling claimed him as its own. Nearly always his luck was phenomenal. It was thus he obtained his livelihood.

Janet and Kathleen, his sisters, enjoyed a small income from the estate of their grandparents. It was they, who with their faithful negress "Mammy" Lou had rented the old house at the cross-roads which belonged to Desmond, and they had hired Joe Glasgow, the half-breed, as general "factotum."

At dawn next day, Jerry Elwood, gambler and modern buccaneer, was enroute for the old house, a wolf in sheep's clothing about to visit his sisters; and as he would have said, "beat the other fellow" to the treasure of Chetigne Island.

At ten o'clock of the same day, the clipper yacht *Ichthus* stood out of Halifax harbor; her cross-eyed skipper, his two familiars, and John Desmond on board. They were bound for Chezzetcooke and the buried treasure. It was the first of April. Although the wind blew raw and cold, the frost was coming out of the ground, leaving it oozy and damp, but the sun was warm, and the sweet woodlands were awakening to the call of spring.

CHAPTER IX.

"I have caskets at home, that are filled with precious gems,
I have pictures of friends, once dear to me;
Treasures rich and rare, that came many years ago,
From far and distant lands across the sea."

—Old Ballad.

SUNDAY dawned bright and clear. There was no Mass on that day, the curé having gone to the next village. My father, Doctor and I walked across the sodden ice to the little island. We went to the old stone house. There was no door on it now, and the glass was gone from the tiny window frame. The rough oaken planks of the floor still remained, but the crumbling plaster of the interior showed through gaps and crevices the granite and slate of the outside walls.

Entering this rude and barren hut Doctor gazed about him mournfully. This was the dreary abode in which his grandfather had found shelter from the world, which is so often cruel and unjust. Beside him stood the country lad, grown to manhood long ago, and middle-aged with whitening hair was he who had been that grandsire's only comfort in his exile.

Removing his cap, Doctor stood silently for a few moments. Perhaps he was praying. Maybe the gentle spirit of his dead kinsman hovered about him, glad that he had come. It was to all of us a sacred moment. As we turned, still silent, to leave the hut, I noticed something gleaming in a crevice of the stone wall. With my knife I pried this object from its resting place. My father and his companion were walking home over the ice when I overtook them.

Breathlessly I held what I had found out to them.

"Look!" I said triumphantly. "Look at this. I got it in a crack over there in the stone house. Is it not nice?"

Doctor, who had taken it from me and examined it, turned to my father. "Ben," he said, in a queer kind of gasping voice, "this is a diamond set buckle. See the golden fleur de lys." Just then the bits of glass in the buckle caught the sunlight. They scintillated and sparkled brightly. "Ben," said Doctor, "this is our first glimpse of the treasure."

My mother accepted the gift of the buckle in silence.

"What ails you, wife?" asked my father. "Have you burned the soup? You are as solemn as a judge."

"I am trying to think," she answered, "where I have seen a brooch like this one before."

"One like th' , madame?" queried Doctor sharply.

"I think my great-grandmother had one," she replied. "If I have never seen it, I've heard them talk of it often enough. It was lost years ago. But if this is the same brooch, how came it there in the stone hut?"

"Bieu!" smiled Joe Glasgow, who had come strolling over to our home after his work was done for the day. "My grandma, she have one like that. She say injun sell it to her long ago. It got glass beads on just lak that. He want money for whisky she tell me."

"Well, Joe," said my mother, "that Indian must have stolen it.

"Sure, I know he steal it," smiled Joe. "It no good anyway. How you lak I go get it, eh! My grandma, she too old for wear ting lak dat. She geev it to you."

He was out of the house like a shot. In a few moments he returned carrying a tin tobacco box.

"Here," he said. "My grandma say you very good to her, she geev heem all to you."

The box was opened. It held the mate of the buckle which I had found that morning, a curious large gold ring, and a miniature.

"Look," said Joe, taking the ring. He touched a hidden spring, and the golden case fell apart. It was but a cover for another ring, set as I then thought, with morsels of gleaming glass and beads. The miniature was painted on ivory, Doctor said. The same brightly gleaming beads surounded it.

When I looked at this, I screamed aloud in excited wonder. It was the face of the man who had been chained to the wall of the stone hut in my dreams, that gazed with sad eyes from the portrait.

"It is he!" I cried.

"He?" echoed my mother. "You don't know that face, Gervaise, for that is a portrait of a relative of ours who died long ago."

She carried off both the box and its contents into another room.

"Tell your grandma to come and see me, Joe," said she.

"C'est bien madame," smiled Joe, carelessly.

Before evening Doctor took my father aside. "Ben," he asked, "have you any idea of the value of those trinkets which Joe Glasgow gave your wife today?"

"I don't believe they are worth much," said my father. "They've been in the possession of Méri Blaudine for years and nobody ever said they were valuable."

"But," persisted Doctor, "it is not likely that anybody ever laid eyes on them that knew their value. You told me yourself that very few strangers ever came here."

"That's true," replied my father.

"If I were you," continued Doctor, "I would not show those things to anybody."

My father laughed heartily. "Go away, man," he said, "you are joking. Why, I wouldn't give a pipeful of tobacco for the whole caboodle."

"Don't be foolish, Ben," said Doctor quietly. "I tell you those things are really worth enough money to buy this whole village. Don't you realize that pearls and diamonds are precious, and that these things are set with diamonds of the first water?"

"Precious stones!" echoed my father in a puzzled way.

"You make me weary, Ben," said Doctor. "Lock those things up or you may be sorry."

Accordingly my mother locked the tin box and its contents, away in my father's sea chest, which was the only place of safety in the house. So you see, in our village the people were not worldly wise. They were "simple Acadian farmers" who tended their kine and fished for a living.

CHAPTER X.

"A horse, a horse! My kingdom for a horse!"
—Richard III.

SPRING had come. The ice and snow were disappearing beneath the warm, bright sun, and the air was sweet and pleasant.

One evening when, as was my usual custom, I climbed the hill to look seaward for passing ships, I saw a small schooner lying inside of our harbor bar. I told my father. He said nothing but went himself in the gathering dusk to look at the stranger.

When he returned to the house he mentioned that some fishermen must have come in to shelter in our harbor over night. Joe Glasgow who, as usual, was at our house that night seemed very curious regarding the schooner. I went to bed early that I might be awake before daylight next morning for I was going to the town with one of our neighbors.

I was awakened by the loud report of a gun, which echoed over the silent hills in awful fashion. Suddenly I heard a second report. I was very frightened. My father alarmed me more for I heard him getting out of bed, then saying quickly to my mother.

"Mon Dieu! There are people moving about on the island, Rosalie. I think somebody is being killed. I must go and see what is the matter."

"I will go with you," said my mother in her quiet voice.

Presently I heard them quickly descending the creaking wooden stairway.

Suddenly out of the tense darkness of the night a voice called loudly, "Ouvre la port!" In a moment another voice called in English, "Hurry, Ben, for God's sake!"

I could bear the alarm which I felt no longer. In the twinkling of an eye, I threw on my clothes and raced downstairs. As I entered the kitchen my father opened the door. Doctor and Joe Glasgow entered. Between them they carried the limp form of a man. They laid him upon the settee and I

gave a loud cry of fear, for I thought he was dead. It was John Desmond. Somebody had shot him.

"Don't speak, any of you," said Doctor, "until I see just how much this gentleman is hurt."

He began directing my mother to get the things he needed. Doctor then examined the wounded man.

"He is not badly hurt, after all," said he; "just two or three flesh wounds, I think; but he has had a shock which has caused him to become unconscious."

I looked on in wonder as Doctor skilfully attended his patient. It was strange to see how quickly our friend had changed from the rough lumber jack to the skilful surgeon. When Doctor and my mother had put Desmond into bed, he opened his eyes and looked vacantly about him.

"Hello, Ben!" he said. "Those rascals nearly finished me; but they will get very little for their pains. Take the canister out of my coat pocket and give it to me"!

Doctor put his hand into the pocket of Desmond's blood stained coat. He drew out a queer looking tube-like box which looked like a piece of piping. One end was open, but we afterward found the cover in the pocket where the box had been.

He gave this object to Desmond who weakly smiled his thanks, but no sooner had he taken it, than weakness caused by loss of blood, overcame him. He fell back once more unconscious.

"Seigneur," gasped my mother, "I must run for the curé. He is dying."

"Keep quiet, madame," said Doctor. "He is in no danger and will be all right again in a moment, if you have some warm broth ready for him after I have given him a nip of Ben's brandy. But he must be kept quiet."

When Desmond's eyes opened, Doctor held up a warning finger. "Now, sir," he said, "I'm the Doctor. You must keep perfectly quiet, and later on you will tell us how all this happened."

"Look here!" said Desmond excitedly. "I've got to speak. You don't understand."

"I think," said Doctor, "that I understand a little about it. To keep you quiet, I will tell you that I was walking along the road, when I noticed a light moving about on the island. I crept along, toward the boats, thinking I would go and see what was going on. Suddenly I heard gunshots, and by the light of a lantern which one of them carried, I saw three men scrambling into a boat. They left the island and made for the strange schooner at the mouth of the harbor."

"Suddenly, Joe Glasgow, as though he had risen from the earth, stood beside me. 'Let us go and look for the dead one,' said he. 'Moi, I hear heem lament.'

"We rowed over to the island. Guided by the moans which we heard, we found you in a clump of bushes, near a great gaping hole which had just been dug. I stopped the flow of blood which would have soon caused your death, and we brought you here. You are safe here, you know, so keep quiet and we will take care of you. Voila tout."

"Aha!" exclaimed Joe Glasgow. "You say 'voila tout,' but me I say not all said yet. Look!"

He held out a Spanish doubloon.

My father shook his head.

"They've got ahead of us, Doctor," he said, while Joe Glasgow, looking very puzzled, began to rub the doubloon with his coat sleeve.

"Ben," said Desmond, "listen to me. Get a horse and go to Halifax as quickly as you can. Wait for the arrival of the yacht *Ichthus*, and I will give you a letter to a chap who will stop the three men on board of her, and make them give up what we dug up on that island tonight." As he spoke his eyes gleamed feverishly. Doctor bent over him.

"Son," he said, "don't worry. We need not go to Halifax tonight. I noticed that schooner inside the bar before sundown. The tide is falling now. They being strangers don't know the channel, consequently they can't move before high tide and daylight. Besides, the wind is southeast, and 'dead ahead' as the sailors say. You lie still. I will attend to the *Ichthus* and her crew."

He turned to my father. "Ben," he said, "let's go on board of her now."

"Coming, Joe?"

"Ciel!" gasped my mother. "Do you want to get killed?"

"How is that, madame?" grinned Joe. "How you tink they can kill us? We three, they three." He grasped Doctor by the arm eagerly. "Come on, Doctaire," he said. "Vite-ment!"

My father told mother to bolt the door until their return. Desmond held out his hand to her. "Take care of me," he said weakly. "I will make it all right with you tomorrow."

That was the last sensible word he said for a week. When he regained consciousness the first word he spoke was for my good mother, and the first thing he saw was the shrewd, whimsical face of Doctor, as he sat, smoking thoughtfully by the open window.

CHAPTER XI.

"Et quand Octobre suffle emondeur des vieux arbrac
Sont vent mellancolique a l'entour de leur marbres
Certe its doirent trouves vivanus bien ingrats."

—Beaudelaire.

WHEN my father, Doctor and Joe Glasgow reached the *Ichthus,* a light gleamed in her cabin. Peter Marks, the cross-eyed skipper, and his two burly companions were there, but they sat in sullen silence. Perhaps the reason for their mood was because the rough chest which lay open upon the cabin floor contained nothing but bones. There was a human skull there, and the smoky light of the swinging lamp cast a sinister shadow upon it.

A dark scowl was on the countenance of the skipper.

"Well," he said at last, "wot sort of goins on is this 'ere? 'Ere we are agin, done brown by a bloomin' land shark, wot takes us on our second cruise to that there blarsted island. I say, whoever fired the gun at that bloke done right one way, and I hopes he up and died right there, and blarst his hide and buttons. Yes, I hopes he's dead, I do!"

"Oh!" said Doctor in a sweet and gentle voice, coolly dropping down the hatchway into the little cabin, "so you wish Mr. Desmond had died tonight. Very kind of you, really."

Doctor was followed in his descent by my father and Joe Glasgow.

Doctor's advent was too much for the skipper. He caught up a spade which was lying in one of the berths, but somehow he didn't use it. "Haul away, you lubbers," he growled in a deep husky voice. "Wot do ye fellers want aboard of me?"

"My good man," said Doctor blandly, "a man has been nearly killed by one or other of you tonight. Besides, you have been trespassing on Brean's property. No doubt you've come across something with which you intend to make off. I think you understand me."

"Wot has all this to do with yer worship," growled Peter Marks derisively. "I'll poke yer faces in, if ye stop 'ere too long," rising heavily as he spoke.

Doctor gripped his shoulder, and looked him square in the eye. "Skipper," he said, "ante up or you'll be sorry." Doctor did not even speak louder than was usual with him, yet the skipper wilted suddenly.

"If you're the constable," he growled, "and you want to see wot we got on that there cussed ole island, 'ere it is. Look at it, and you kin hev it and welcome if you wants to take it." He pointed to the box.

"Desmond got an old can full of papers," he continued, "and I got a couple of handsful of gold pieces in that hole we worked so hard to dig. 'Ere they are for ye, and if you think us fellers shot Desmond, you're on the wrong tack. We runned away. We don't know who done it nuther." Having finished his speech, he cocked his eye cunningly at Doctor, who said quietly, "Oh! what an artistic liar you are skipper. Now, my lads, which of you fired those shots," he asked the sailormen, who might have been wooden images for all the life they showed as they sat blinking at him. "Nary one of us Mister," answered they simultaneously in their husky sea voices, "because we have only one gun aboard and we didn't take it with us tonight. It's here yet, loaded with buckshot." They pointed to a musket which was lying in one of the berths. Doctor seized it, pointing it up through the hatch way, he fired.

I shall never forget my feelings when I, safe at home with my mother, heard the echo of that shot. My mother caught me in her arms excitedly.

"We must pray, Gervais," she said quickly, "for the safe return of your father and his friends." We knelt, and I never prayed so fervently either before or since that night.

When day was just breaking they returned. My father told us what had occurred on board of the schooner. The sailors brought the chest which contained the skeleton ashore next morning, and my father and Joe Glasgow went with them to pilot them out of the harbor. They were glad to go.

Captain Peter Marks said he felt satisfied "one way" because the pieces of eight which they had found would pay them well for their time since leaving Halifax. "But," said

he, in parting to my father, "you kin bet your bottom dollar I never wants to clap eye on that blarsted island again. If ever another landshark mentions that 'Chetigne Island' name to me again, I will put my trade mark onto him, I will. First time I were decoyed here I gets nothin'. Next time I lights onto a box of bones. Whose bones is they anyway? The only thing bothers me is who fired that shot at us that's wot I'd like to know. I say treasure! There ain't none there and never was any. If there had been anything buried there, you kin lay to it them nosey 'Johnny Crapauds'—with a scent for money like they got—would have smelled it out long ago. I'm well out of it anyway. Yah! I say treasure," and he spat contemptuously, and sailed away with his two familiars. In the darkness of the sweet spring night, my father and Joe, with the Cure's permission, interred those poor bones in the graveyard behind the village church.

When John Desmond was convalescent, he asked for the canister which had been his share of the night's work upon Chetigne Island. When he had spread the mildewed papers which it contained upon the table before him, he exclaimed, "Why! these are parchment, and I am unable to read what is written here!" Both Desmond and Doctor puzzled over it for a while and could not seem to get the sense of the curious characters written there, which had been hidden beneath the earth, perhaps for centuries.

My grandfather looked at the writing. "It is Latin," he said. He took from its place beside the clock, the leather-covered volume in which the letters were so curious that I was always amused when looking over it. This book was called, "The Life and Death of a Sinner," and it was written on leaves of parchment, by a Spanish Monk, over four hundred years ago. "See, Monsieur," said he, "Here in this book you will see the same characters. None could read it but the old Curé, who has been dead for many years. Knowing I had a fondness for such things he taught me that I might read the sermons here written. I will read and translate those papers if you wish."

For answer, Desmond passed the sheets of parchment to him. "One moment, Grandpa," said Doctor, "will you tell us where you came across this old book?" "Surely," said my grandfather. "When I was a lad, my father found it in the stone house." As he adjusted his spectacles and prepared to read, Doctor laughed softly. "That stone house is a sort of 'El Dorado'" he said.

We all sat quietly round to hear what my grandfather would make out of the writing upon the sheets of parchment, yellowed and mildewed by age, the finding of which had nearly cost John Desmond his life.

CHAPTER XII.

"I was a Viking bold, my deeds tho manifold,
No skald in song has told, no saga taught thee;
Hed thou that in thy verse, thou dost my tale rehearse
Else dread a dead man's curse, for this I sought thee."
—Longfellow.

THE day was waning. As my grandfather began to read, my chair was drawn up close to the table, and my eyes, luminous with the wonder which I could not suppress were fixed upon him.

These are the words which were written in the curious medieval Latin upon the sheets of parchment which had been buried upon the mysterious little island so long ago, as my grandfather translated them for us:

"I, Gervaise Honoré Breau Count d'Avignore and d'Auteuil, of France, set down upon this parchment that in company with my brother Jules, who isa Priest, and my son Gervaise, I am kept against my will and theirs a prisoner upon this island. Our ship, in which we left by Coligny's advice and aid the troublous times in France, being driven from her course by the elements, we were captured by these malevolent pirates who now have us in their power. We had some store of gold and jewels which were taken by our captors, except some personal ornaments which I made out to secrete.

"It was on the evening of August fifteenth, 1572, that Coligny came to me. 'Gervaise,' he said, 'the Queen has caused it to be spoken abroad that you have become a Huguenot.' 'It is false,' cried I. 'But,' said he, 'you know the mental state of our King. The Queen will persuade him that you are really one of the Huguenots who has been plotting to exterminate the Royal family. Trusty friends have counseled me that Her Majesty is even now urging to have the King sign a declaration by which all the Huguenots will be executed. She will point you out as one of the most prominent. I will have a ship ready in which yourself and family, and your brother Jules may escape.'

"'But,' I said again, "Jules is a Priest, how could he be blamed as being a Huguenot.'

"'Alas,' said Coligny, 'Jules has great influence with His Majesty the King. Therefore the Queen hates him. Make a decision to leave France until the trouble is over, when you will return. You are but a dreamer of dreams, Gervaise, and you cannot protect yourself. You are unfit for such troublous times as these. I will send a messenger to you when I know for certain that the King has signed that document. The ship will be at anchor near your Chateau d'Auteuil. Will you take advantage of this chance to escape.'

"'I pondered. I will not leave my home to please the intrigues and caprice of Catharine de Medicis,' I said proudly.

"'Think of your wife and children,' said Coligny. 'Why should they be murdered by order of an intriguante if you can save them. And Jules, too. See how helpless he would be among those jealous ones.'

"'I am not a Huguenot,' I said once more.

"'The Queen wishes you removed, and you will be killed like all the rest. Why be stubborn,' said Coligny. 'Think of your children.'

"I remained in thought for a short time. Then 'I will go,' I said, 'if you will have the ship in readiness.'

"The evening of August 22nd came. Coligny's messenger came to me, riding at speed from the Tuilleries. He bore a packet. Feverishly I opened it. 'Our death warrant is signed' I read. 'Go, Gervaise, and God be with you.' Thus I had no choice but to leave Paris. Jules and I at once rode away to the Chateau d'Auteuil. But when we reached our home we found the emissaries of the Queen had preceded us. My servants were all dead—murdered by these fiends—and my Countess, the beautiful woman whom I loved, lay dead upon a couch in the entrance hall, with my second child. Gervaise, my first born, had escaped. Amid all this carnage he lay asleep, as if by a miracle. The ship which Coligny had promised lay offshore.

"We could not delay, for suddenly life had become sweet. I thirsted to live until I revenged my dear ones. I gathered what store of gold and jewels I could and we then embarked. Jules, my little son and myself. Alas, for my plans for re-

venge! I was captured in company with my companions on ship board and brought far across the sea to this hideous place; never shall we escape these fiends.

"Among them Jules is tortured greatly. They think that, because he is a Priest, he could tell them where great treasures lie hid, and will not reveal the hiding places to them. He is kept chained in their hideous stone house, and always is there one left behind to guard us when they go abroad. There is one of these pirates who is not as hardened as his companions. I cured a frightful wound which he suffered from and when he is here on guard we do not suffer. He is grateful for my help and promised me to bring a friendly Indian who will take Gervaise to the black robe at the Mission. Where this may be I know not, but I will send Gervaise forth when the band of rovers shall be abroad once more. I will give him my personal ornaments, all save one buckle, which I will keep. It was from his mother's jewels and will be a souvenir to me of happier days.

I will give instructions to Jules to tell nothing to Gervaise, but to give him a letter for the black robe at the Mission. Should he never reach friends alive, I will here set down that the deeds of gift which my King bestowed upon me, and the charter of possession of my ancestors, lie hidden beneath the pavement of the Chapel at Chateau d'Auteuil. Let who finds this cause them to be restored to their rightful possessor.

"Alas! so many years have been spent here by us in hideous captivity. My pirate friend has promised to bury Jules and me respectfully should we die here. We have never heard news of France since we left it. The circumstances of our life here forbade me to tell his true rank to my son. Alas! that we have been permitted to live so long."

Here the writing ended abruptly.

Now, among the sheets of mouldering parchment, my grandfather found one of stout paper. Desmond remarked that he had not noticed this, but observed that my grandfather might as well read what was written upon it also.

The sheet of paper contained the following:

"I found the documents which accompany this note buried in a small iron casket near the stone house upon this island. I pondered over them and considered it would be safer to return them to the earth. Later, while digging a well, I discovered two skeletons, the skull of one of which was missing. Feeling that these skeletons had some connection with the documents, I enclosed the documents in a brass canister and re-buried them, with the skeletons, in a stout box of deal which I possessed, praying that if any person should find them he might do what, but for circumstances, I would have done, i. e., give them Christian burial."

My grandfather had finished his task and silence reigned in the kitchen of our humble home.

"Well," said Doctor, at last, "what a small world this is after all. I wonder whose skeletons these were, and who buried them at first."

"Ah!" replied Desmond quietly, "we will never be certain, but I will hazard that they are all that now remains of Gervaise Honoré Breau, Count d'Avignon and d'Auteuil and his saintly brother Jules. Doubtless the pirate who gave his promise that he would bury them respectfully kept his word. You know it is an old saying that there is honor among thieves. But now we know that those poor skeletons have at last been given the Christian burial that the first finder of them asked for. I wonder who he could have been and why he did not attend to the matter himself."

I now spoke up, excitedly. "Doctor," I said, "does not the old document that was written in Latin describe the dreams I told you about?"

"Why, indeed it does," replied he. Desmond looked surprised. My father now spoke. "Is it not strange," said he, "that the name of the writer of that document should be the same as that of he who has just read it for us—"Gervaise Honoré Breau."

Desmond started up from his chair, but sank weakly back again.

"By George, Breau!" almost shouted Doctor, "maybe you are really a descendant of that old fellow; you are, no doubt, really the person who has most right to all these things; skeletons, treasure, estates in France, parchments and all the rest of it."

My grandfather shook his head sorrowfully.

"Even so, Monsieur," he said, "you must remember there are few estates in France now to be inherited. Doubtless you remember your history. You see, the Coligny whom Gervaise of the parchments mentions, was the Admiral of that name, who was destroyed by the malignant hatred of Catherine de Medicis on that fatal eve of St. Bartholomew, so long ago. Since that time France passed through the awful throes of two revolutions and you will remember that the old noblesse were almost totally extinguished. I fear we are not aristocrats, because my grandfather came first to Grande Pré from Quebec. The writer of that parchment left France many years ago, and he mentions that they remained, that is, I mean, that he has written that they remained for a long time on the island."

"Yes," interrupted Doctor, "but you know Quebec was settled long ago. Perhaps even many years before its settlement was officially dated. Perhaps the 'black robe' to whom the youth Gervaise was taken by the Indian was at Quebec, devoting his life there to the Children of the Forest. I really believe, Grandpa," he continued whimsically, his blue eyes shining, yet filled with a very suspicious moisture withal, "I really believe you are of the old noblesse and everything is really yours as aforesaid, even the treasure."

Desmond smiled. "None of you have enquired," he said, "what brought me to the island?"

"My friend," said Doctor, "your motive was obvious. However you may tell your reason for coming in your own way if you want to."

Desmond proceeded to tell us of the finding of old Elwood the pirate's diary, and of his quest for the buried treasure therein described. When he had finished, Doctor said musing-

ly, "Unless there were two different sets of pirates who obligingly buried their hoard upon that island, I guess we will have to divide the spoil, for Ben and I have been left a sort of legacy of a treasure which is really there."

"It was strange," said Desmond, "that you happened to be on hand on the night on which I made the venture."

"It was rather strange," replied Doctor, "tho' it was a good thing for you that I was there. As I was coming out of the woods that afternoon, I met a fellow I knew out West long ago. 'Straight Flush' Elwood we called him. He is a brother of the ladies for whom Joe the half-breed is working. He invited me to the house for supper and a game of cards. I met an old acquaintance of mine there." He smiled. After a moment he resumed (to our great disappointment). "An old acquaintance of mine, my old negro mammy, whom I supposed dead years ago, a way down in New Orleans, where last I saw her. Between the supper and cards, time passed pleasantly until Elwood and I separated for the night.

"I walked slowly along among the trees toward home. When I heard a soft voice say, 'Why Massa Jimmy chile.' I give you my word it gave me a shock, especially when I saw the form of old black Mammy Low standing before me in the moonlight.

"'Don't be skeered Chile,' she said, 'I see'd you here tonight, and I just wants to warn you honey.

"'Mr. Jerry Elwood is a very bad man. You beware of him.'

"Hush!" I said, "you may be overheard."

"No Chile," she answered. "He kaint overhear me. He's done gone out the back way across the meadow yonder with his gun."

"At the time I thought nothing of this. I talked to Mammy Lou a long while. She told me of all her wanderings since the death of my mother, which broke up our household. But several times since we wondered why Elwood did not mention that he was going after the birds that night. It cannot be possible that it was he who fired the shot that injured you."

Desmond shook his head. "It seems to be a little mysterious," he said, "but I want to tell you that I will withdraw my claim to the treasure of Chetigne Island."

"Well! well!" said Doctor, amusedly. "You won't withdraw your claim, my dear lad, solely because we want to do the resurrecting of that treasure legally. So you see we need you to look after that part of it." So saying, Doctor, grinning broadly, walked off to bed.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear."
—Longfellow.

DESMOND was thinking hard. He wondered if Elwood knew anything about the buried treasure of Chetigne Island and if he himself had fired the shots with the intention of frightening himself and the sailors away from obtaining it. He could not imagine who had given Doctor and my father the knowledge possessed by them of the hidden hoard. Try as he would he couldn't come to any reasonable conclusion, and he was glad to see Doctor himself coming gaily up the hillside toward the house.

"Bon soir mes amis," said Doctor on entering. "How is his honorable nibs tonight?"

"For a professional man to come walking in on his only patient in such a manner and with such a speech is, to say the least, most unusual," said Desmond in a mock-severe tone.

"Is that so," said Doctor. "Well, if you will allow me to express an opinion, I will say what is more unusual than to catch a professional man who goes digging at night on an island?"

A burst of laughter from all of us followed this speech.

"Ben," said Doctor, "I've taken the liberty to ask Elwood to come here tonight. I thought it would be a diversion to have a game of cards."

"That's just the thing," said my father, "only you must excuse me, for I have never played a game in my life."

Doctor laughed. "Never to old to learn, Ben," he replied.

Presently Elwood, accompanied by Joe Glasgow, entered. Joe, altho' a farm laborer and a half-breed, was perfectly at home. With us Acadians there were no distinctions. Gentle and simple, all were alike, that is while they behaved properly. Otherwise the door would be closed alike on rich or poor. Our motto was simply, "By their deeds ye shall know them."

Desmond had never met Elwood, who, with pleasant bonhomie, held out his hand. "Joe," he said, "told me of your accident. I am glad you are recovering."

My father shot a glance of reproof toward Joe, for he had been cautioned against talking. It seemed, however, that Joe knew nothing of the art of discretion. We soon had opportunity to learn of this lack on the part of the half-breed, for when the cards grew monotonous, which will often occur when no stake is being played for, Elwood said to my father, "Joe has told me about the pretty buckle which your son found in the stone house on Chetigne Island. Was it not a coincidence that his grandmother should have possessed a similar one, and so obligingly turned it over to your wife? I should like to see the buckles. I am quite curious about them."

My mother was about to reply to this speech when Doctor who stirred in his chair as tho' about to rise, caught his foot in the legs of the bench which held the pails of water. With a whirl and swish the pails fell upon the floor and the water went streaming in all directions. My mother and I ran for cloths with which to dry the floor.

"As I am the culprit, I will refill the pails," said Doctor. He caught up the pails, "If you will just show me where the well is Madam?" he continued, turning to my mother. "Yes," she said, and he followed her into the garden.

"Down there among the lilacs," she said, pointing.

As I went out to hang up the wet cloth I had been using, I caught his whispered words. "Madam," he said, "please do not show what you have put away in the tin box to anyone, vous savez?"

Away he went, whistling gaily, down to the well. But in spite of this interruption, Elwood's curiosity had not abated.

"It is curious," he said, "about those buckles. Maybe they originally belonged to the same person."

"Perhaps so," said my mother, quietly, and the subject was dropped. Shortly after this our visitors bade us good-night.

When they were gone, Desmond, turning to my mother, said, "That was quite a good trick of Doctor's, wasn't it?"

"Trick," said my mother, "I don't know."

"Oh! come," said Desmond, "you know why it was done, but won't you let *me* see those buckles?"

"I will," said my mother. "I don't know why Doctor makes such a fuss over them, I'm sure." She brought him the tin box. He opened it, and gave an exclamation as he saw its contents. If the bits of glass that Doctor had told us were diamonds had glistened brightly in the sunlight, how much more brightly they scintillated and shot little sparks of light into the semi-gloom of the big room, lit only by a homemade tallow dip.

Desmond looked for a long while at these marvelous heirlooms, for such they were indeed. The curious ring pleased him greatly. "I have read a description of a ring which must have been a replica of this," he said. "It belonged to 'Charles Stewart'—Bonnie Prince Charlie. But who does this represent?" he asked my grandfather, holding up the miniature as he spoke.

"That is a portrait of one of my ancestors. I don't know his name, but my grandfather had all those trinkets which you see here, save the buckle, which Gervaise found in the stone house," answered my grandfather. "You see," he resumed, "my son Ben married his third cousin as most of the villagers are related to him and they are all inter-married, doubtless the original of that portrait was a relative of the majority of them. After the expulsion of the Acadians from Grand Pré, my grandfather and a few more managed to make their way here. They were the founders of this settlement. Well, M'sieu, my grandfather did not prize those things, I suppose. Probably he, like myself, had to be told they were valuable by somebody who knew about such things. At all events, I remember that when I was but a boy an Indian who had become very familiar with out family, disappeared from his usual haunts. We missed the trinkets then, and although we searched high and low for them no trace of their whereabouts was ever found, so you can imagine how surprised I was when Joe Glasgow, who was not born himself until years after their disappearance, brought them here to us."

Desmond gave the box to my mother without comment on what my grandfather had just told him. He said, however, to my mother, in a low tone, "If I were you, I should take great care of those things. They are worth a fortune."

"I wish it was true," smiled she, as she returned them to their place of safety in the sea-chest.

And now Doctor entered. "I want a word with you," he said to my father and Desmond. After lighting his faithful black briar, he seated himself and began to speak. "I might as well tell you," he said, "that I have made a discovery. You've told us," turning to Desmond, "that your information was obtained from a diary which you found in the old Elwood house. What you didn't find out, however, was that old Jerry Elwood, who built that house, was the great grandfather of its present occupants. He was also 'Black Jerry,' one of Morgan's original crew, and as villainous a cutthroat as ever flew the Jolly Roger."

"Good heavens, my dear fellow," gasped Desmond, "did *they* (I mean he ladies) tell you this?"

"No," said Doctor, "but I came to know it in this way: My faithful old negro mammy has been working like a beaver since coming to that house. She discovered another volume of old Elwood's diary. Mammy Lou does not like the present Mr. Elwood, and she promptly turned the book over to me. Mammy can read a little, and she was much gratified to learn, after a perusal of the atrocious incidents of the life which was recorded there, that her estimate of Jerry Elwood had been correct. In spite of the fact that the writer of the diary has been dead many years, and even mentions the building of the house, mammy could not be persuaded that he and the present Jerry Elwood are two different persons. She solemnly declared when giving the book to me, 'Heah now, Massa Jimmy! maybe you will believe what I done tole you chile befo!'"

I had no scruples about reading the diary. It is filled with the record of fearful deeds, boldly written, as if in savage satisfaction, by this fiend in human shape. He writes quite cold-bloodedly that he had old his wife to go to a region which is usually more often imagined than heard of; that he had

given her money enough to educate her whelp of a son, who had heard things which made him ashamed of his father. He mentions that his fine son, having gone along with his mother's *genteel* people, had become an officer in the army and that his regiment was stationed at Halifax. He wrote, "They were ashamed of the pirate, but they would like his gold. Oh! what a son for a man of red blood to have.' Again he wrote, 'Ah! he is married, the fine coxcomb. He has a son and heir, but the wicked pirate will keep his gold. My young George Edward, your grandfather wants none of you. Grow and flourish, become a milk-and-water dandy, like your father. I shall give my gold to my old crew who will return for it.' Now this is proof enough that the treasure of the island must be old Elwood's pirate gold."

"But," said Desmond, "how do you know the present occupants of the house are descendants of the old pirate?"

"Because," said Doctor, "I have learned that their father, who was himself a British officer, was born while his father was stationed at the Garrison Town of Halifax. I have learned also that his father's name was 'George Edward.' I, therefore, conclude that it was he of whom the old fellow wrote so contemptuously in his diary as the 'son and heir.'"

"But," said Desmond, it is also written in that diary that the 'whelp of a son' had gone to his mother's 'genteel' people. Surely no woman of gentle birth could have ever wedded such a ruffiian?"

"It is also written, friend," replied Doctor, quietly, "that she did not remain with him; his way of explaining why seems to be because he didn't want her. Doubtless her refinement was a great restraint upon one of his uncouth nature. He must have been sailing under false colors when he married her."

"Can you vouch for the truth of his relationship to the ladies who now inhabit that house?" queried Desmond.

"For the benefit of your legal mind," came the answer, "I will simply say, 'I allege it to be the truth. Some other time we may discuss the matter again; but it really makes no difference one way or another to me."

"I shouldn't like," said Desmond, absently, "to have a pirate as an ancestor of my family." Doctor gazed at him sharply. Leaning toward him he said gravely, "Why, really, I don't believe piracy is hereditary; and Desmond blushed as rosily as any school girl. He felt that Doctor had penetrated his secret, but he did not care.

"If this treasure that we are looking for is pirates' gold, and was hidden on the island by Jerry Elwood, and if these are his descendants who have come among us bearing his name they and not we are entitled to it," said my father. He was that noblest and rarest work of God, an honest man.

"Ben," replied Doctor, "you are enough to make anybody weary with your eternal scruples about whether or not we have a right to that treasure. Now, once for all, let me give you my advice. Stop your worrying over nothing. In the first place where did this old fiend get the treasure, that is, if it really was put there by him? He got it by murder and robbery, by plundering—in short, he was a pirate. Where is the person who could restore it to the descendants ofthose from whom it was taken by force so long ago. That person is not in existence. The descendants of the pirate are no more entitled to it than we are. Don't be foolish, Ben."

My father shook his head. He was very skeptical about his right to a share of the treasure.

"Ben," said Desmond, "I have a theory. I think the buckle which your son found in the stone house was the one which the nobleman mentioned that he would keep as a souvenir. I think, too, that those other jewels are the ones which he gave to his son Gervaise when he journeyed forth to meet the 'black robe' at the Mission. It is likely there are two treasures. One that was buried by the pirates of old times and then, perhaps, another hoard which was hidden away by Elwood. I think that the old house was built when Elwood grew tired of the sea, but that his old crew still kept up their piracy. It is likely that there being but few people here to notice what was going on, when old Elwood had unloaded the ship in which he came here he might have caused her to be sunk at the mouth ofthis harbor, so as to cause the drifting sand to block

the mouth of the harbor, leaving only a narrow channel, of whose depths and location only his own crew would be aware. Perhaps his crew might have visited him under cover of night, without the villagers being aware of their coming. And the old hull lying near the island might have been a ship which came in here to evade pursuit and went to pieces."

"Oh! M'sieu," replied my grandfather, "doubtless you are right. When I was a boy I often listened to strange stories about fierce looking men who used to visit old Elwood in my father's time, and of strange ships which lay at evening off our harbor, but which were gone before day. They could not well venture in, because of the shallow depths of water here."

"But," said my father, "if there is so much treasure as you suppose hidden on the island, it is strange that the crew of the white yacht did not come across some of it."

"If you will examine this plan," said Doctor, spreading upon the table the plan which was part of the packet left by the silent man of the island for his kinsman, "you will find nothing strange about their not locating it."

We gathered about the table. The plan was very simple. "Now," explained Doctor, "you see, here is marked 'stone house', see this line, so many feet to where this S is. That is where the skeletons were found. Now look. Here is the harbor, see this straight line from the southeast corner of the house to the shore. North ten feet. Now here is the water, see this wavy line, well look at the straight line above it, that means twenty-five feet from shore. Now notice this cross. That means that the treasure is buried twenty-five feet from shore, beneath the harbor bed. Also you will notice that there is 1st marked here. That means first treasure. Well, ten feet north, see this other line; that is marked with a star and 2nd. So you see we have two treasures, as Desmond said, and both are safely laid away awaiting us. Therefore, we need not be avaricious, as we shall have plenty."

"But the Ladies Elwood?" asked my father.

Doctor grinned like a schoolboy. "Desmond and I will not forget them, Ben," he said.

Desmond blushed again. I thought he had a rush of blood to his head so I went for a chair; when I offered it to him, he laughed softly.

"People who have rushes of blood to their head often die of heart disease I've heard," I said.

"That's what the matter is with our legal friend now, Gervaise," smiled Doctor, "but somehow I don't believe he will die of it."

CHAPTER XIV.

"Truth is stranger than fiction."—Proverb.

THE person who has been so unfortunate as to spend a wet and stormy Sunday in the country, near the seashore, has without doubt passed one of the most dreary days in their existence. The dripping trees, the gray, sullen, tumultuous sea, and the sodden gloom of the atmosphere will quench the gayest of spirits. At least we found it to be so, on the Sunday in April of which I am writing. Doctor having long since forsaken the lumber camp, (where nothing remained now but the spring-time "drive" of the logs down the lake to the mill), was living at our house.

Our neighbors were greatly perplexed over Desmond's lengthened visit. It was a matter, too, of great interest in the village that the light no longer appeared in the window of the stone house. I often thought that its disappearance was due to the fact that the skeletons had at last received proper burial.

When I spoke to Doctor about this he pinched my ear, and said, "Why, I guess it's been such a long time burning, that the old spook used up all the oil he had, and perhaps has given up lighting his lamp."

"You forget that I dreamed it was a candle," I said peevishly.

"Well, then," said Doctor, "the candle is all burned away. You just feel uncomfortable, Gervaise, because you have to stay indoors."

I shook my head. "Perhaps so," I answered.

On this dreary Sunday Desmond seemed very restless. Even Doctor seemed depressed.

"Ben," he said to my father, "I wish you would give us some music. It might make time pass a little more pleasantly."

Seeing my father seated, with the violin in his hands, Desmond grew merry.

"I like nothing better than the music of a country fiddler," said he. "If I just close my eyes while listening, I seem to

hear the stamping of the dancers' feet upon the floor. I remember hearing a fiddler play here years ago. He could actually get the fiddle to say rum, rum, rum, and he would play no other tune until the rum was forthcoming."

Doctor did not reply. He stood looking out of the window, across the gray water, to the old stone house. My father drew the bow across the strings of the violin, and the strange and beautiful melody which had been taught him by the silent man of the island came floating into the room.

> "It rose on the tremulous silence,
> Like the sound of an angel's psalm,
> And it lay on our fevered spirits with
> A touch of infinite calm."

Desmond, who was extremely sensitive, lost the look of gay anticipation, with which he had watched my father begin to play. Wonder was in his eyes, when that beautiful, sweet melody, seemed to envelope us in a cloud of charming sounds, and with its last, sobbing plaintive chord, to end like the echo of an angel's sigh.

There were a few moments of silence, which was broken by Doctor, who, turning to Desmond asked, "Have you ever heard of the Clairmont case?"

"Eh!" queried Desmond, awakened from a reverie.

Doctor repeated the question.

"Yes," said Desmond, "I believe that I've read an account of it, but it was quite a while ago. But before we speak of anything else, I should like to enquire who taught Ben to play the violin so wonderfully."

"Clairmont," answered Doctor, gravely.

Desmond gazed at him in a compassionate way. "Look here, old fellow," he said, in a very serious tone, "all this talk of long dead counts, treasures, resurrected skeletons, parchments, and divers grandfathers, some of whom would be better left minus the investigation of the multitude, has proved too strong for you. You are in a state of mind which is best defined as 'rattled.' Who ever heard of Clairmont, the hero of that most notorious case of the unwritten law, of old tunes

and even a different country? How could he have taught Ben, who most likely has never left home to go further than Halifax, to handle the bow in such a wonderful way?"

"I have never travelled farther than Halifax, m'sieu," smiled my father.

"Just so," answered Desmond. "I remember reading that Clairmont of whom we are speaking, escaped from prison in the South years ago. He was heard of but once afterward. A negro was said to have seen him in Florida, and it was always supposed he must have perished there in some unknown swamp or morass."

"Come here," was Doctor's answer. When Desmond stood beside him at the window he pointed to the stone house. "Clairmont lived there for forty-eight years and died, as he had lived—alone."

"Great God!" gasped Desmond, "how could that have been possible?"

"Friend," replied Doctor, "I will tell you as strange a tale as ever you have heard."

"I have a feeling," Desmond said, "that we should not talk of the dead. They should be left in peace. Sacred ,as it were, you know."

Doctor looked at him gravely. Then he said banteringly, to hide the real feeling behind his words, "Desmond, you are quite a good lad for a 'limb of the law,' aren't you, sonny? But," he continued in quite another tone, "your grandfather is always your grandfather even if he is—dead."

Desmond gazed at him in amazement.

"Don't look so astonished," said Doctor, "what I am going to tell you is simply a part of my family history."

"I suppose," said Desmond, "that we cannot refuse to listen to what you have to say."

* * * * *

We are taught in childhood that the ethics of good form have raised a barrier between our personal or family history and the public ear. Doubtless there may be persons who would think Doctor deficient in proper delicacy, because he wished to speak of one who had passed away so long

before, that grown men among us held him but in dimest memory. After consideration, I have reached the conclusion, that it was the natural desire of the human being for the sympathy of his fellows which caused my friend the Doctor thus to bare to our gaze the tragedy of the life of the silent man of Chetigne Island.

Imagine that desolate little island where stood the miserable old stone hut. Think of the cultured gentleman whose life was spent there in such dreary exile, lashed as he was by the whip of remorse (which strikes so hard upon the nature of those who have been gently bred), because through the greatness of the pure love of his manhood he bore the brand of Cain.

Here, to this dreary spot, after time had brought the oblivion of the grave, came, not the son whom he had longed for it is true, but his grandson, whose heart went out in piteous love to the kinsman he had never known. Ah! Gay and bantering always as was my friend, the Doctor, beneath it all pulsed a tender, pitiful heart. It was a grim story he told us, there in the kitchen of our simple country home, on that dreary April day, when the moan of the sea beating upon the rock-bound coast, and the swish of the raindrops upon the windows made everything so indescribably lonely. It was a story of primeval passions, and of the unwritten law, which was the cave man's justice at the beginning of things, and which is still the justice of the man who loves and is betrayed.

* * * *

"Many years ago," began Doctor, "there came a beautiful English girl to New Orleans. She was an actress who had come at the invitation of her relatives to visit them. Her beauty and charm were such that all hearts were captured, and her admirers were numbered by the score. Chief among them was my grandfather, James Clairmont, a planter, wealthy, handsome and accomplished. A gentleman by birth, he was a fitting mate for the greatest lady in all that happy country.

"He chose the beautiful actress, Pamela Wentworth. They were married and went to live on the plantation which was his

home. I wish I could describe the beauty of that home. Even now, after the lapse of cruel years have left it in a state of decay and desolation, no word of mine can adequately describe its beauty. The house was colonial in structure, with that hospitable style of architecture usually seen in the old homes of the Southerners. Before it lies a gleaming, still bayou. On either side are the meadows where the darkies sang so happily once, as they gathered the harvests, or danced to the banjo's twanging music under the golden light of the Southern moon, amid the spicy fragrance of the myriad blossoms of the meadows. The deep dark forest makes a fitting background for the whole beautiful picture.

"Can there be aught but pity for the young master of all this loveliness, who had to spend many years in a vile prison, and then to flee for his life from all he held most dear. To leave forever all his youthful associations, the wife of his young manhood, and come to that desolate stone house to live, and above all, to die—alone. To live a long life of perpetual silence, while remorseful memory gnawed, as with a serpent's tooth, that once gay heart. He had but one solace. The music which his cultured brain and gifted hand could draw forth from his violin.

"Some time after her marriage a profligate neighbor began to annoy Pamela. She repudiated his advances, but, with the modesty of a pure woman, forebore to call her husband's attention to the scoundrel. This bitter world is filled with such as he! Would to God she had spoken! Sheldon, for that was his name, like all men of bestial nature, retaliated for the repulse which she had given him, by such diabolically diparaging scandal that the ladies of the neighborhood (in priggish self-conscious condemnation of her) ceased to visit the Clairmonts. No word of all this reached the ear of the young husband, so happy in his love.

Having been called North on business, Clairmont, on the night of his return, in company with a friend, entered a tavern in New Orleans. Sheldon was there with some boon companions. Being in a state of foolish inebriation, he was speaking in horrible and boastful innuendo of Clairmont's wife.

"Those who were present said that Clairmont went mad. He drew a pistol, and in the twinkling of an eye had shot the blustering braggart through his false heart. In the trial that followed Clairmont faced grimly a jury of his peers. His outraged honor, and the broken sanctity of his home, alike persuaded him that he had acted the man's part. But man-made laws counted his act of justification a most heinous crime.

"The dead Sheldon had many friends at court, and there seemed scant hope for his slayer.

"When all else failed, Pamela came to his rescue. Her early training stood her now in good stead. Never in her life had Pamela reached such a pinnacle of perfect acting, as when in the crowded court house she accused herself of all that Sheldon had insinuated. She won the day. Clairmont's life was spared, but his faith and trust in the wife he had so greatly loved were shattered. Pamela bowed her head beneath the terrible yoke of circumstance. She had falsified herself for love of her husband. With the characteristic blindness of all our race, he scorned that sacrifice.

" His sentence was changed from death to life imprisonment. No sooner had the prison doors closed behind him, than memories of those awful revelations which Pamela had made at his trial, began to scourge him as with whips. Torn as he was by the shame and agony of remorse, he could not discern that out of the greatness of her love for him, she had gladly immolated herself, and that all she had said was but a gigantic falsehood told for his sake. He knew nothing of the agony of conscience in which she agreed to falsify herself to save his life. Thus when her son was born he fiercely denied the child its birthright. Smarting under this injustice she left his house forever. She returned to the stage and became a great favorite.

" Clairmont escaped from prison and through the influence of friends in Canada, he obtained the little island. Barren and desolate though it was, he found it a haven of rest after all his troubles. It was there he dwelt in silence as penance for his deed of blood. It was there that he taught Ben that wonderful music."

Doctor had finished. Desmond gazed at him in sympathetic wonder.

"He was your grandfather," said he. "Then you must be the son of the child that was born to Pamela when he was in prison?"

"Yes," said Doctor [illegible] The plantation was destroyed during the war. To me [illegible] seemed people with the ghosts of bygone memories."

"Ah!" said De[illegible] "It is indeed true that truth is stran[illegible]"

After a pause [illegible] "the world is full of strange things."

"Yes, indeed," replied the father, "it is strange that a ship should be lying beneath [illegible] the mouth of this harbor. It is strange that three frame hou[illegible] in a state of decay stood on the cape at the entrance [illegible] harbor when the first French settlers came here. It is strange that Gervais has had so many queer dreams, and that Chetigne Island has been the home at different times of so many strange people. But see, m'sieur, the sun is coming out, the rain is over. Let us go for a stroll to the hilltop where we may look at the village from one end to the other, and far out to sea."

We did so. Standing on the hilltop where the sun was peeping out from behind a bank of clouds and gilding the spire of the village church, some lines of Longfellow's *Evangeline* came drifting into my mind.

"Then came the laborers home from
The field and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed.
Anon from the belfry
Slowly the angelus sounded, and over the
Roofs of the village,
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds
Of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes
Of peace and contentment
Thus dwelt together in love, those simple
Acadian farmers
Dwelt in the love of God and man."

I looked across at the little island. Tears arose to my eyes, as I thought of the tragedy of that life which Doctor had just revealed to us. Poor Clairmont!

CHAPTER XV.

"Ex nihilo nihil jit."

MR. Jerry Elwood, brother of the young ladies who dwelt there, was playing solitaire in the dining room of the old house. Like most people who have a passion for gambling and kindred vices, the instrument of his indulgence was never out of his reach. Sitting there, quietly amusing himself, his outward appearance gave no evidence of the turmoil within.

"What a fool I was," he thought, "not to have taken care that none of them got hurt when I fired those shots. I only wanted to scare them off. I wonder if Desmond has given up the idea of there being a treasure on that island. Astute as he is, he must have been surprised to find bones where he expected to find a treasure. Now I am sure those skeletons occupied the place of the treasure, which has doubtless been removed to a safer spot or away altogether, as witness the doubloons found in the hole by the sailors. What a blessing that half-breed is to me! He is a regular news bureau! But I must be wary. 'Doctor,' as they call him here, has neatly done me out of a chance of seeing those diamonds, but I will get my hands on them before long. Of what use are such things to a parcel of lubberly Johnny Crapauds, who don't know anything of life!"

"Ruminating thus, he did not at first hear my knock at the door. I had walked the three miles between our house and the old Elwood house, carrying lobsters and fresh eggs for the young ladies, which they had bought from my mother.. I found nobody at home but Mr. Elwood, who, at my second knock, threw the door wide open..

"Walk in sonny," said he, genially. "I suppose you are tired?" I answered truthfully that I was, and I gladly accepted the refreshment he gave me. He was a very pleasant spoken gentleman, and when I left him, by his kindly interest in my affairs he had learned from me all the history of our home life, and he knew that the diamonds (for I had told him what Doctor had called them) were very valuable, and that

my mother had locked them away in my father's sea-chest, which stood in the little store room off our kitchen. I went whistling gaily homeward. I did not return by the road which skirted the shore, because the spring rain had washed away the outer-edge of the road which lay across the cliff. The soft darkness of the spring night had fallen, and the chirping of the frogs in all the swampy places could be plainly heard. I had a much longer walk, but I was afraid that, should I have ventured to take the short cut across the cliffs, I might lose my footing in the darkness, and go crashing down to death on the jagged rocks of the beach, thirty feet below.

When I reached home, I went to my chimney closet, and brought forth the old cutlass. Mr. Desmond had asked to see it, and he found it very curious indeed. He told us that he had seen other cutlasses, but that this was a different specimen from those others, because of its lightness.

I returned the cutlass to its place in the closet in my bed chamber, and that night I dreamed once more. And strange as it may seem, never since have I been troubled with those ghostly visions of a forgotten life in the dim and distant days of the past. Only those who may have had similar experiences can imagine the groping way in which the subconscious mind seems to be turning backward as it were, over a familiar path, to scenes which, like a landscape, once seen and half forgotten, seem but revealing themselves once more.

I slept and once more my spirit seemed carried along by an invisible force, and I came again to that unknown portal, but I was not alone. A pale spectre of the past accompanied me, and when the portal was reached, he stretched forth a hand, and the curtain that obscured the past was rolled away. "Hearken, Gervaise!" he said, "do not fear, you will see tonight, scenes from the past life of many of your family. The golden key, which you will see ere long is the talisman which gives you this power." He said no more, and I beheld, as upon a dissolving screen, the first scene ofthis strange vision.

Two men were embarking in a rude boat upon the shore at Chetigne Island. The moon was bright, and its light shone

full upon the face and figure of an aged man who stood, sadly watching them. They sailed away.

The scene changed, and I beheld these two men, in company with an Indian walking through the dim aisles of a forest.

Again the scene changed. There was now a cluster of log houses before my vision and a stockade of trunks of trees surrounding them. Within the stockade were a number of persons. Two travellers were there and there was also a Priest. He embraced the younger of the two men and the other who was an Indian re-entered the forest.

The next scene showed me the interior of the Priest's rude log house. The traveller was there; he placed on the table the trinkets (or similar ones) that my mother had in the tin box.

The scene dissolved before my vision and I slept. I awoke to find my very soul slipping from my body, and in a dim way I realized that I was another person and that I was about to pass through experiences which had been those of that person.

"I had awakened to find myself lying on a rude bed in the log house of the Priest.

"Where am I?" I questioned.

"You have come to Port Royal," he said.

"But my father," I asked, "will you not try to rescue him? You know he is on that island I told you of. My Uncle Jules was murdered there, and when the malefactors return and find me gone, perhaps my father will also be killed."

"Patience, Gervaise," said the Priest, and in his full and tender voice he spoke to me of many things.

"This is a new land," he said, "where old-time rancors can be all forgotten, and a new life will unfold before you in which you may be happy. Remain here with me and we will see what can be done for your father?"

I lay upon that rude couch and stared into the darkness and thought strange thoughts. I do not know how many days I spent there for dreams count not time, but the moment came when I was to hear news of my father, for in my dream I had become that other Gervaise of long ago.

The Priest stood beside me. "A ship has arrived," he said. "The rescuers went to that island, but they found nobody there. An empty ship which had foundered on the reef at the harbor's mouth alone remained. The captain told me the winds and tides would wash the ship off the reef and sink her there in time. Your father is dead, Gervaise." I felt great sorrow, and begged him to tell me more, but he would not, and again I slept.

When I awakened ,it was on a gallant ship in the pleasant company of my countrymen. I had grown older, and the days of captivity among the pirates of the island seemed very distant. The ship sailed over the sea in pleasant weather, and among friends the time passed swiftly.

"How long did you stay in Port Royal?" asked a voice.

"Three years," I heard myself answer, "but I have heard that in Quebec a young man has better ways of living."

"Bah!" answered the voice again, "Quebec is new yet and you are not a young man.

There was the sound of laughter and then a voice said: "In a few hours we will see Quebec."

Now, as a person who passes through a mansion containing many chambers, and in each finds a different company, so was I, during my dream. I was a spectator at scenes of joy and sorrow, peace and war, but ever I was accompanied by friends. I journeyed, until at length, when I suppose the endurance of my spirit was exhausted, I realized that I lay upon my own bed, in the little low ceiled chamber beneath the eaves, and that someone from whom I had been parted for unmeasurable time, and whom I most dearly loved, sat beside me and held my hand. He spoke to me in the familiar voice of the past and as I listened I was well content.

"In the beautiful country of d'Avignon," he said, "once stood our ancestral home. Many were the years that it stood, silent and deserted, awaiting us. The red torches of war and revolutions blazed about it, but by some great miracle it was spared. Once I thought we should return to that home once more, but the agesthat have passed have made, in their passing, our return impossible. You have nothing remaining of

the past grandeurs ofthe counts of d'Avignon and d'Auteuil, but you have the golden key to life which is the family honor. Gervaise, and you have life itself." There came the rushing sound of many waters. "It was my cutlass, Gervaise," he said; and then I awoke.

Doctor was standing beside me. "Come," he said, "you've slept two whole days and a night. What a lazy fellow mother's boy is getting to be."

"I have a golden key to life," I babbled as I felt myself slipping into eternity. For many days I was bedfast, and as I had always been of a delicate nature, my father and mother feared lest I should die. One beautiful evening, as I was lying on the old couch in the kitchen, the blacksmith entered. He still wore his leathern apron and he said to Doctor: "You were right, sir. The hilt of that old cutlass was hollow and came apart with a spring. It was badly rusted, so I opened it in another way. I found this in it. "He held out a tiny golden key.

"Give it to me," I cried, "it is mine." Without knowing why I knew or who had told me, I said quickly, "It is the key of the casket which contains all the family jewels. They are all here; we did not leave any at home in the Chateau d'Avignon. I will find the casket, for I have life—life—!"

"Oh! Mon Dieu," cried my mother. "Oh! my poor little boy."

"Here, Gervaise," said Doctor, "take the key. Take your medicine, too, like a man, and you and I will go when you are better, and look for the casket of beautiful jewels of d'Avignon."

The big smith dashed his hand across his eyes as he went out. My mother gathered me into her tender arms.

"Monsieur," she said, tensely, turning to Doctor, "go, if only to please me, and destroy that accursed cutlass, and never speak of it again. "But," I said softly, "never mind, mother, I am alright, it was only the dream again." I told her about it, while Doctor and Desmond listened wonderingly to the tale. But she shook her head, poor little mother.

"I do not like this dreaming," she said, "I thought when I heard you calling to the smith to give you that key, that you had lost your senses, and that my little boy would be an idiot all his days, but you must forget this way of dreaming of people who have returned to dust."

CHAPTER XVI.

"At heart he was a buccaneer,
This laughing lad, so debonair."

I WAS awakened during the night by a dull, muffled sound. Presently I heard a gentle sort of scraping noise, which seemed to be in the room below. I was getting out of bed to go and investigate, when Doctor, in whose room I had slept since my illness, caught my arm.

"Lie down, Gervaise, I will go downstairs myself," he said. He crept gently down the rickety stairway, while I lay quite still, intensely listening.

All at once he said sternly, "What are you doing?" There was the sharp crack of a pistol, and then the noise of a scuffle.

Instantly, all was confusion in the house. We all ran downstairs without thinking of a light, so that when my mother came with a lighted candle, all we could see was Doctor lying unconscious near the open window, and the sea-chest with its cover wrenched off.

My father raised Doctor's head. He was only stunned, and soon opened his eyes.

"After him, Ben," he gasped, pointing to the open window.

"Who?" asked my father.

"Elwood," said Doctor. "Go quickly, he has stolen the diamonds."

My father, followed by Desmond, vaulted through the window.

"Mon Dieu!" said my mother, "this is awful. Shall we never have peace in this house again?" But my father and Desmond soon returned.

"There has been an awful ending to tonight's work," said my father. "As we raced to the hilltop, we saw the form of a man just at the brow of the hill. The moonlight showed him plainly. He became aware that we were following him, and began running over the cliff road. In his haste he missed his footing, and with a cry that I will hear the echo of until I die, he fell down onto the jagged rocks of the beach. The tide is

falling and at daybreak I will take the boat and go for his body. We stood near where he had fallen over for a few moments, but heard no sound.

"Ah!" said Desmond, with a shiver, "what an awful death for a man to meet so suddenly."

They found him in the morning, broken by the fall. Life had been extinct for hours. In his breast pocket were found the diamonds for which he had given so much. They carried to the old house a sorrowful burden, and his sisters wept sorely, for with all his faults they loved him, and had been children together.

The neighbors looked upon his death as an accident; Doctor said it was better so. And that night I mused over all the strange things which had happened since I found the cutlass buried in the mud of the plateau. I thought of how in my dreaming I had wandered beneath the silvery moonlight upon unknown shores or through the green forests, and sailed in strange company over seas whose giant waves now rolled in awful fury, or whose iridescent water reflected the jeweled stars that shone above me. Always in my musing arose the image of that pale spectre who had held my hand and spoken to me of family honor. Could I, a poor Acadian lad, have need for what great nobles fought and died to foster?

Like the rolling anthem of some great organ in dim Cathedral dome came the consciousness that I, Gervaise Honore Breau, had need of honor, and that I would give my life to defend it. Thinking of Chetigne Island and its mysteries, recalled to my mind another island, that mythical island off the Irish coast of which 'twas written:

> "Isle of the blest, in the dim days departed,
> On the dark deep you rode,
> Green from the deep, your happy banks upstarted.
> When they the death boat rowed;
> For there the shades of warriors, happy-hearted
> In peace abode."

FINIS.

THE treasure was safely removed from its hiding place and brought to our house. There were two great chests of iron. It was as Desmond had said. These were indeed two treasures.

In one of the iron chests was an inscription; it read: "Raoul d'Orre, St. Malo, 1570," in raised letters of metal. Its contents were jewels, golden chalices, and coins of ancient date.

Among the rest was a golden casket. Upon this was a crest, a wreath entwining the letters G. and A., with the Latin motto beneath, "Ne cede Malis."

"Now, Gervaise, try your key," said Doctor, and I unlocked the casket, with the golden key which had been in the hollow hilt of the old cutlass.

Within the casket was a miscellaneous collection of personal ornaments, and two miniatures. One was that of a beautiful lady, with powdered hair dressed high. The other was a replica of the one which Joe Glasgow had given my mother. But none of these things bore the design of the fleur-de-lys which formed the buckle which I had found in the stone house, and its mate. These must have been a gift to that unhappy lady who was murdered in the Chateau d'Auteuil so long ago. perhaps from the King himself. The other iron chest had painted in huge whitish rusted letters with its lid, this legend:

JERRY ELWOOD,

Captain of the Schooner
"Susannah."

And within was a conglomeration of wealth, to satisfy the most grasping. Here were pieces of eight, golden coins of all mintage, precious objects of art, rudely torn from their original places by ruthless hands of the long ago; priceless jewels and golden loving cups, mute witnesses of the evil passions of those who had garnered them.

Among all these lay a folde[illegible]r, yellowed with the lapse of time. Opening it, Desmond r[illegible] its contents aloud. "My lads, it began, "all the spoil is here for you, my free companions of better times. Give up the life at sea when you have divided it among you, and I only ask as my share that you will ask some Priest to pray for my soul. Jerry Elwood."

Desmond dropped the paper in amazed wonder.

"I was right, old chap," said Doctor. "The piratical tendencies of this *gentleman* will not be hereditary."

I was lost in wonder. The awful old pirate had asked, as is the fashion of every Irishman, for prayers for his soul.

Now I understood why it happened that this man, with all his atrocities could have inspired love in the bosom of a lady of gentle birth. Doubtless, he had not always been the ferocious fiend we imagined him to be.

My father said quietly, "We must see to it that the prayers he asks for are said."

"We will attend to that, Ben," said Doctor, gravely.

And so they made a division of the treasure. Doctor told me to keep the casket and its contents, and I have vowed never to part with them. I often look at them, and try to picture to myself the scenes through which their jeweled beauty have passed.

Alas, that life should be so fleeting. All this happened, it seems, but yesterday, and now all those good friends are separated, some are cold in death. My father's violin will never more make wondering music, for the hand that awakened it is still. My gentle little mother, too, has gone to a better home. And the ladies Elwood.'

It is only seemly to tell of the happiness that both Desmond and Doctor found awaiting them at the old house, and that through its gaunt and lonely chambers, made hideous by the presence ofthat atrocious man who had asked in his last hours for prayers, echoed the happy laughter of children. Once. too, I visited Doctor in the beautiful old home from which his grandfather departed as a felon so long before, and I found its loveliness a reward for my long journey.

I tell my wife sometimes that we will go to the beautiful country of d'Avignon, if only to see the place of my ancestors. "But, no," she answers, "we are happy here in Acadie, and have no fear of tyrants or other things from which your ancestors fled.

The stone house still stands on the little island, but it holds no secrets now. When evening shadows are falling over the saltly sweet marshlands, and the sea is murmuring over the sunken reefs, while the Vesper bell is pealing with sonorous chime, I sit and think ofthe two men who spent a weary life of exile until death, upon its desolate strand, and of that other who grew to manhood among the pirates of long ago. There are mysteries in all such things, mysteries which only the spirits of the past can solve.

The Vesper bell is chiming, and here, in sweet Acadie, all is well with the world. The shadows are falling now over the little island, and the strange men who dwelt there have gone to that bourne from which no traveller returns." Afar over the distant iridescent sea, the chimes are pealing, over the sweet meadowlands, the hills and forest aisles.

Presently the moon will rise, and in her silvery beauty, will shine serenely over this Acadian hamlet, the noisy cities and the rolling sea. Afar in the beautiful country of d'Avignon her light will shine, and fairies of the forest will cluster afar in that old land, and here amid the woodlands of the new My tale has ended, with the chiming of the Vesper bell. Old memories come crowding upon me, but I must banish them, for we are happy here in Acadie and all is well.

"When in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat, in snow white caps and in kirtles.

* * * * * * *

"Then came the laborers home from
The field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed.
Anon from the belfry, slowly the angelus sounded."