

ROBERTS CHARLES D., AUBERT DE
PHILIPPE

CAMERON OF LOCHIEL

Philippe Aubert de Gaspé

Cameron of Lochiel

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PREFACE

In Canada there is settling into shape a nation of two races; there is springing into existence, at the same time, a literature in two languages. In the matter of strength and stamina there is no overwhelming disparity between the two races. The two languages are admittedly those to which belong the supreme literary achievements of the modern world. In this dual character of the Canadian people and the Canadian literature there is afforded a series of problems which the future will be taxed to solve. To make any intelligent forecast as to the solution is hardly possible without a fair comprehension of the two races as they appear at the point of contact. We, of English speech, turn naturally to French-Canadian literature for knowledge of the French-Canadian people. The romance before us, while intended for those who read to be entertained, and by no means weighted down with didactic purpose, succeeds in throwing, by its faithful depictions of life and sentiment among the early French Canadians, a strong side-light upon the motives and aspirations of the race.

In spite of the disclaimer with which the author begins, the romance of *Les Anciens Canadiens* is a classic. From the literary point of view it is markedly the best historical romance so far produced in French Canada. It gathers up and preserves in lasting form the songs and legends, the characteristic customs, the phases of thought and feeling, the very local and personal aroma of a rapidly changing civilization. Much of what de Gaspé has so vividly painted from his boyish reminiscences had faded out of the life upon which his alert eyes rested in old age. The origin of the romance, as given by his biographer, the Abbé Casgrain, is as follows:

When, in 1861, that patriotic French-Canadian publication the *Soirées Canadiennes* was established, its inaugurators adopted as their motto the words: "Let us make haste to write down the stories and traditions of the people, before they are forgotten." M. de Gaspé was struck with the idea; and seeing that the writers who were setting themselves the laudable task were all young men, he took the words as a summons to his old age, and so the book came to be written.

Patriotism, devotion to the French-Canadian nationality, a just pride of race, and a loving memory for his people's romantic and heroic past – these are the dominant chords which are struck throughout the story. Of special significance, therefore, are the words which are put in the mouth of the old seigneur as he bids his son a last farewell. The father has been almost ruined by the conquest. The son has left the French army and taken the oath of allegiance to the English crown. "Serve thy new sovereign," says the dying soldier, "as faithfully as I have served the King of France; and may God bless thee, my dear son!"

In the present day, when nationalism in Quebec appears rather given to extravagant dreams, it would be well for the distant observer to view the French Canadians through the faithful medium which de Gaspé's work affords him. Under constitutional forms of government it is inevitable that a vigorous and homogeneous minority, whose language and institutions are more or less threatened by the mere preponderance of the dominant race, should seem at times overvehement in its self-assertion. A closer knowledge leads us to conclude that perhaps the extreme of Quebec nationalism is but the froth on the surface of a not unworthy determination to keep intact the speech and institutions of French Canada. However this may be, it is certain that the point of contact between the two races in Canada is at the present day as rich a field for the romancer as de Gaspé found it at the close of the *old régime*.

According to the *Histoire de la littérature Canadienne* of Edmond Lareau, Philippe Aubert de Gaspé was born in Quebec on the 30th of October, 1786. He died in 1871. He belonged to a noble

French-Canadian family. At the manor of St. Jean-Port-Joli, of which he was seigneur, he passed a large part of his life; and there he laid the chief scenes of his great romance. He was educated at the seminary of Quebec, and then studied law in the city, under Sewell, afterward chief-justice. Only for a few years, however, did he devote himself to his profession – one from which so many a poet and man of letters has broken loose. He accepted the position of sheriff of Quebec, and afterward came misfortunes which Lareau passes over with sympathetic haste. His lavish generosity to his friends and the financial embarrassments into which he fell, his four years' confinement in the debtors' prison, his sufferings of soul and body, all doubtless contributed to the poignant coloring with which he has painted the misfortunes of M. d'Egmont, *le bon gentilhomme*. On his release from prison he retired to his estate of St. Jean-Port-Joli, but not to the solitude and benevolent melancholy of D'Egmont. The romancer was of too sunny a disposition, he was too genuine and tolerant a lover of his kind, to run much risk of becoming a recluse. A keynote to his nature may be found in the bright *Bonsoir la compagnie* with which, in the words of an old French-Canadian song, he closed his literary labors at the age of seventy-nine, when the last page of the *Mémoires* was completed.

The story we have translated, under the title of *The Canadians of Old*, was published in 1862. It is accompanied in the original by a mass of curious information, in the shape of notes and *addenda*, such as would hardly interest the general reader. They will more than repay, however, the attention of any one who wishes to study the French-Canadian people as they were in their early days. The story itself has the air of being the product of a happy leisure. The style is quaint and unhurried, with no fear of the printer's devil before its eyes. The stream of the narrative, while swift enough and direct enough at need, is taught to digress into fascinating cross-channels of highly colored local tradition, or to linger felicitously in eddies of feast and song.

The work begun in *Les Anciens Canadiens De Gaspé* carried to completion in his second and last composition, the *Mémoires*, published in 1866. As the former work is a vivid epitome of life at the *seigneuries* and among the *habitants* of those days, so the latter reproduces and fixes for us the picturesque effects of life in the city of Quebec itself in the generation or two succeeding the conquest – a period during which the French-Canadian *noblesse* yet maintained, about the person of the English governor, something of the remembered splendor of the old vice-regal court.

C. G. D. R.

Windsor, Nova Scotia, 1890.

FOREWORD

As my story lays no claim to classicism, either in style or structure, this foreword may as well be made to play the part of a preface. My acquaintances will, doubtless, open their eyes on seeing me thus enter, at the age of seventy-six, on the perilous paths of authorship. Possibly I owe them an explanation. Although tired of reading all these years with so little profit either to myself or others, I yet dreaded to pass the Rubicon. A matter small enough in itself in the end decided me.

One of my friends, a man of parts, whom I met last year in St Louis Street, in our good city of Quebec, grasped me warmly by the hand and exclaimed:

"Awfully glad to see you! Do you know, my dear fellow, I have talked this morning with no fewer than eleven people, not one of them with half an idea in his noddle!" And he wrung my arm almost out of joint.

"Really," said I, "you are very complimentary; for I perceive by the warmth of your greeting that I am the exception, the man you –"

"Oh, yes, indeed," he cried, without letting me finish my sentence, "those are the only sensible words I have heard this morning." And he crossed the street to speak to some one, probably his addlepate number twelve, who was seeking to attract his attention.

"The devil!" thought I to myself, "if what I just said is in any way brilliant, it would seem easy enough to shine. Though I have never yet been suspected of it, I must be rather a clever fellow."

Much elated with this discovery, and congratulating myself that I had more brains than the unhappy eleven of whom my friend had spoken, I hurry to my library, I furnish myself, perhaps all too appropriately, with a ream of the paper called "foolscap," and I set myself to work.

I write for my own amusement, at the risk of wearying the reader who may have the patience to go through this volume. But, as Nature has made me compassionate, I will give this dear reader a little good advice. He had better throw away the unlucky book without taking the trouble to criticise it, which would be making it much too important, and would be, moreover, but wasted labor for the serious critic; for, unlike that old Archbishop of Granada, so touchy on the subject of his sermons, of whom Gil Blas has told us, I am, for my part, blessed with an easy humor, and, instead of retorting to my critic, "I wish you good luck and very much better taste," I will frankly admit that my book has a thousand faults, of most of which I have a lively consciousness.

As for the unfriendly critic, his work will be all in vain, debarred as he will be from the privilege of dragging me into a controversy. Let me say beforehand that I grieve to deprive him of his gentle diversion, and to clip his claws so soon. I am old and indolently content, like Figaro of merry memory. Moreover, I have not enough self-conceit to engage in any defense of my literary productions. To record some incidents of a well-loved past, to chronicle some memories of a youth long flown – this is my whole ambition.

Many of the anecdotes, doubtless, will appear insignificant and childish to some readers. Let these lay the blame upon certain of our best men-of-letters, who besought me to leave out nothing which could illustrate the manners and customs of the early Canadians. "That which will appear insignificant and childish to the eyes of strangers," they urged, "in the records of a septuagenarian, born but twenty-eight years after the conquest of New France, will yet not fail to interest true Canadians."

This production of mine shall be neither very dull nor surpassingly brilliant. An author should assuredly have too much self-respect to make his appeal exclusively to the commonplace; and if I should make the work too fine, it would be appreciated by none but the *beaux esprits*. Under a constitutional government, a candidate must concern himself rather with the number than the quality of his votes.

This work will be Canadian through and through. It is hard for an old fellow of seventy to change his ancient coat for garb of modern pattern.

I must have also plenty of elbow-room. As for rule and precept – which, by the way, I am well enough acquainted with – I can not submit myself to them in a work like this. Let the purists, the past masters in the art of literature, shocked at my mistakes, dub my book romance, memoir, annals, miscellany, hotch-potch. It is all the same to me.

Having accomplished my preface, let me make a serious beginning with the following pretty bit of verse, hitherto unpublished, and doubtless now much surprised to find itself in such unworthy company:

QUEBEC, 1757

An eagle city on her heights austere,
Taker of tribute from the chainless flood,
She watches wave above her in the clear
The whiteness of her banner purged with blood.

Near her grim citadel the blinding sheen
Of her cathedral spire triumphant soars,
Rocked by the Angelus, whose peal serene
Beats over Beaupré and the Lévis shores.

Tossed in his light craft on the dancing wave,
A stranger where he once victorious trod,
The passing Iroquois, fierce-eyed and grave,
Frowns on the flag of France, the cross of God.

Let him who knows this Quebec of ours betake himself, in body or in spirit, to the market of the Upper Town, and consider the changes which the region has undergone since the year of grace 1757, whereat my story opens. There was then the same cathedral, minus its modern tower, which seems to implore the charitable either to raise it to its proper height or to decapitate its lofty and scornful sister.

The Jesuits' College, at a later date transformed into a barrack, looked much the same as it does to-day; but what has become of the church which stood of old in the place of the present halls? Where is the grove of venerable trees behind the building, which adorned the grounds, now so bare, of this edifice sacred to the education of Canadian youth? Time and the axe, alas! have worked their will. In place of the merry sports, the mirthful sallies of the students, the sober steps of the professors, the high philosophic discourse, we hear now the clatter of arms, the coarse jest of the guard.

Instead of the market of the present day, some low-built butchers' stalls, perhaps seven or eight in number, occupied a little plot between the cathedral and the college. Between these stalls and the college prattled a brook, which, after descending St. Louis Street and dividing Fabrique, traversed Couillard and the hospital garden, on its way to the river St. Charles. Our fathers were bucolic in their tastes!

It is the end of April. The brook is overflowing; children are amusing themselves by detaching from its edges cakes of ice, which, shrinking as they go, overleap all barriers, and lose themselves at last in the mighty tide of the St. Lawrence. A poet, who finds "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks," dreaming over the scene, and marking the descent of the ice-cakes, their pausings, their rebuffs, might have compared them to those ambitious men who, after a restless life, come with little wealth or fame to the end of their career, and are swallowed up in eternity.

The houses neighboring the market-place are, for the most part, of but one story, unlike our modern structures, which tower aloft as if dreading another deluge.

It is noon. The Angelus rings out from the cathedral belfry. All the city chimes proclaim the greeting of the angel to the Virgin, who is the Canadian's patron saint. The loitering *habitants*, whose calashes surround the stalls, take off their caps and devoutly murmur the Angelus. All worshipping alike, there is none to deride the pious custom.

Some of our nineteenth-century Christians seem ashamed to perform before others an act of worship; which is proof, to say the least, of a shrinking or cowardly spirit. The followers of Mohammed, who have the courage of their convictions wherever they may chance to be, will seven times daily make their prayers to Allah under the eyes of the more timid Christians.

The students of the Jesuits' College, noisy enough on ordinary occasions, move to-day in a serious silence from the church wherein they have been praying. What causes this unusual seriousness? They are on the eve of separation from two beloved fellow-students. The younger of the two, who, being more of their age, was wont to share more often in their boyish sports, was the protector of the feeble against the strong, the impartial arbitrator in all their petty disagreements.

The great door of the college opens, and two young men in traveling dress join the group of their fellow-students. Two leathern portmanteaus, five feet long, adorned with rings, chains, and padlocks which would seem strong enough for the mooring of a ship, lie at their feet. The younger of the two, slight and delicate-looking, is perhaps eighteen years old. His dark complexion, great black eyes, alert and keen, his abruptness of gesture, proclaim his French blood. His name is Jules D'Haberville. His father is one of the seigneurs, captain of a company in the colonial marine.

His companion, who is older by two or three years, is much taller and more robust of frame. His fine blue eyes, his chestnut hair, his blonde and ruddy complexion with a few scattered freckles on face and hands, his slightly aggressive chin – all these reveal a foreign origin. This is Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, commonly known as Archie of Lochiel, a young Scotch Highlander who has been studying at the Jesuits' College in Quebec. How is it that he, a stranger, finds himself in this remote French colony? We will let the sequel show.

The young men are both notably good looking. They are clad alike with hooded overcoat, scarlet leggings edged with green ribbon, blue woolen knitted garters, a broad belt of vivid colors embroidered with glass beads, deer-hide moccasins tied in Iroquois fashion, the insteps embroidered with porcupine-quills, and, finally, caps of beaver-skin fastened over the ears by means of a red silk handkerchief knotted under the chin.

The younger betrays a feverish eagerness, and keeps glancing along Buade Street.

"You are in a hurry to leave us, Jules," said one of his friends, reproachfully.

"No," replied D'Haberville, "oh, no, indeed, my dear De Laronde, I assure you; but, since this parting must take place, I wish it over. It unnerves me; and it is natural that I should be in a hurry to get back home again."

"That is right," said De Laronde; "and, moreover, since you are a Canadian, we hope to see you again before very long."

"But with you the case is different, my dear Archie," said another. "I fear this parting will be forever, if you return to your own country."

"Promise us that you will come back," cried all the students.

During this conversation Jules darts off like an arrow to meet two men, each with an oar on his right shoulder, who are hastening along by the cathedral. One of them wears the costume of the *habitants*—capote of black homespun, gray woolen cap, gray leggings and garters, belt of many colors, and heavy cowhide larrigans tied in the manner of the Iroquois. The dress of the other is more like that of our young travelers, although much less costly. The first, tall and rough-mannered, is a ferryman of Point Lévis. The second, shorter, but of athletic build, is a follower of Captain D'Haberville, Jules's father. In times of war, a soldier; in peace, he occupies the place of a favored servant. He is the

captain's foster-brother and of the same age. He is the right hand of the family. He has rocked Jules in his arms, singing him the gay catches of our up-river boatmen.

"Dear José, how are you? How have you left them all at home?" cried Jules, flinging his arms about him.

"All well enough, thank God," replied Jose; "they send you all kinds o' love, and are in a great way to see you. But how you have grown in the last few months! Lord! Master Jules, but it is good to set eyes on you again."

In spite of the familiar affection lavished upon José by the whole D'Haberville family, he never forgot to be scrupulously respectful.

Jules overwhelms him with eager inquiries. He asks about the servants, about the neighbors, and about the old dog whom, when in his thirty-sixth lesson, he had christened *Niger* to display his proficiency in Latin. He has forgiven even the greedy cat who, the year before, had gobbled up a young pet nightingale which he had intended to take to college with him. In the first heat of his wrath, it is true, he had hunted the assassin with a club, under tables, chairs, and beds, and finally on to the roof itself, which the guilty animal had sought as an impregnable refuge. Now, however, he has forgiven the creature's misdeeds and makes tender inquiry after its health.

"Hello there!" grumbles the ferryman, who takes very little interest in the above scenes, "when you have done slobbering and chattering about the cat and dog, perhaps you'll make a move. The tide won't wait for nobody."

In spite of the impatience and ill-humor of the ferryman, it took long to say farewell. Their instructors embraced them affectionately.

"You are to be soldiers, both of you", said the principal. "In daily peril of your life upon the battle-field, you must keep God ever before you. It may be the will of Heaven that you fall. Be ready, therefore, at all times, that you may go before the judgment-seat with a clear conscience. Take this for your battle-cry – 'God, the King, and Fatherland!'"

"Farewell!" exclaimed Archie – "you who have opened your hearts to the stranger. Farewell, kind friends, who have striven to make the poor exile forget that he belonged to an alien race. Farewell, perhaps forever."

"This parting would be hard indeed for me," said Jules, deeply moved, "had I not the hope that my regiment will soon be ordered to Canada." Then, turning to his instructors, he said:

"I have tried your patience sorely, gentlemen, but you know that my heart has always been better than my head; I beg that you will forgive the one for the sake of the other. – As for you, my fellow-students," he continued, with a lightness that was somewhat forced, "you must admit that, if I have tormented you sadly with my nonsense during the last ten years, I have at least succeeded in sometimes making you laugh."

Seizing Archie by the arm, he hurried him off in order to conceal his emotion.

We may leave our travelers now to cross the St. Lawrence, and rejoin them a little later at Point Lévis.

The Author.

CHAPTER I

D'HABERVILLE AND CAMERON OF LOCHIEL

Give me, oh! give me back the days
When I – I too – was young,
And felt, as they now feel, each coming hour,
New consciousness of power...

The fields, the grove, the air was haunted,
And all that age has disenchanted...

Give me, oh! give youth's passions unconfined,
The rush of joy that felt almost like pain.

Goethe.

Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, son of a Highland chief who had wedded a daughter of France, was but four years old when he lost his mother. Brought up by his father, who was, in the language of the Scriptures, a valiant hunter in the sight of God, ever since ten years old he had followed him in the chase of the roebuck and other wild beasts, scaling the highest mountains, swimming the icy torrents, making his couch on the wet sod with no covering but his plaid, no roof but the vault of heaven. Under such a Spartan training the boy came to find his chief delight in this wild and wandering life.

When Archie was but twelve years old, in the year 1745, his father joined the standard of that unhappy young prince who, after the old romantic fashion, threw himself into the arms of his Scottish countrymen, and called upon them to win him back a crown which the bloody field of Culloden forced him to renounce forever.

In the early days of this disastrous struggle, courage was triumphant over numbers and discipline, and their mountains re-echoed to their outmost isles the songs of victory. The enthusiasm was at its height. The victory seemed already won. But short-lived was their triumph. After achievements of most magnificent heroism they were forced to bow their necks to defeat. Lochiel shared the fate of the many brave whose blood reddened the heather on Culloden.

An uncle of Archie's, who had also followed the standard and fortunes of the unhappy prince, had the good fortune, after the disaster of Culloden, to save his head from the scaffold. Through a thousand perils, over a thousand obstacles, he made good his flight to France with his orphan nephew. The old gentleman, ruined in fortune and under sentence of banishment, was having a hard struggle to support himself and his charge, when a Jesuit, an uncle of the boy on his mother's side, undertook a share of the burden. Archie was sent to the Jesuits' College in Quebec. Having completed a thorough course in mathematics, he is leaving college when the reader makes his acquaintance.

Archibald Cameron of Lochiel, whom the harsh hand of misfortune had brought to an early maturity, knew not at first what to make of a boy noisy, troublesome and mocking, who seemed the despair alike of masters and students. To be sure, the boy had not all the fun on his own side. Out of twenty canings and impositions bestowed upon his class, Jules D'Haberville was sure to pocket at least nineteen for his share.

It must be acknowledged, also, that the older pupils, driven to the end of their patience, bestowed upon him sometimes more knocks than nuts; but you would have thought the youngster regarded all this as an encouragement, so ready was he to resume his tricks. We may add that Jules, without being vindictive, never wholly overlooked an injury. In one way or another he always made

matters even. His satire, his home thrusts, which could bring a flush to the face of even the most self-possessed, served his purpose very effectually with the masters or with those larger students whom he could not otherwise reach.

He had adopted it as his guiding principle, that he would never acknowledge himself beaten; and it was necessary, therefore, for his opponents, when weary of war, to make him proposals of peace.

The reader will doubtless conclude that the boy was cordially disliked; on the contrary, every one was fond of him; he was the pet of the college. The truth is, Jules had such a heart as pulses all too rarely in the breast of man. To say that he was generous to a fault, that he was ever ready to defend the absent, to sacrifice himself in order to conceal the faults of others, would not give an adequate description of his character. The following incident will reveal him more effectively: When he was about twelve years old, a senior student got out of patience and kicked him; with no intention, however, of hurting him much. It was contrary to Jules's code of honor to carry complaints to the masters. He contented himself with replying to his assailant: "You are too thick-headed, you big brute, for me to waste any sarcasm on you. You would not understand it. One must pierce your hide in some other way; but be patient, you will lose nothing by waiting!"

After rejecting certain more or less ingenious schemes of vengeance, Jules resolved to catch his enemy asleep and shave his eyebrows – a punishment which would be easy to inflict, as Dubuc, the youth who had kicked him, was a mighty heavy sleeper. This plan had the further advantage of touching him on a most sensitive point, for he was a handsome fellow and a good deal of a dandy.

Jules had just decided on this revenge, when he heard Dubuc say to one of his friends, who had rallied him on looking gloomy:

"Indeed, I have good reason to be, for I expect my father to-morrow. I have got into debt with the shop-keepers, hoping that my mother would come to Quebec ahead of him, and would relieve me without his knowing anything about it. Father is close-fisted and violent. He will probably strike me in the first heat of his anger; and I don't know where to hide my head. I have a mind to run away until the storm is over."

"Oh," said Jules, "why don't you let me help you out of the scrape?"

"The devil you say!" exclaimed Dubuc, shaking his head.

"Why," said Jules, "do you think that on account of a kick, more or less, I would leave a fellow-student in a scrape and exposed to the violence of his amiable papa? To be sure, you almost broke my back, but that is another affair, which we will settle later. How much cash do you want?"

"My dear fellow," answered Dubuc, "that would be abusing your kindness. I need a large sum, and I know you are not in funds just now; for you emptied your purse to help that poor woman whose husband was killed the other day."

"A pretty story," said Jules. "As if one could not always find money to save a friend from the wrath of a father who is going to break his neck! How much do you want?"

"Fifty francs!"

"You shall have them this evening," said the boy.

Jules, an only son, belonging to a rich family, indulged by everybody, had his pockets always full of money. Father and mother, uncles and aunts, godfathers and godmothers, they all kept loudly proclaiming that boys should not have too much money to spend. At the same time they outdid each other in surreptitiously supplying his purse!

Dubuc, however, had spoken truly; the boy's purse was empty for the moment. Fifty francs was, moreover, quite a sum in those days. The King of France was paying his red allies only fifty francs for an English scalp. His Britannic Majesty, richer or more generous, was paying a hundred for the scalp of a Frenchman!

Jules did not care to apply to his uncles and his aunts, the only relations he had in the city. His first thought was to borrow fifty francs by pawning his gold watch, which was worth at least twenty-five louis. Revolving the matter, however, he bethought himself of a certain old woman, a servant of

the house, whom his father had dowered at her marriage, and to whom he had afterward advanced enough money to set her up in business. The business had prospered in her hands. She was a widow, rich and childless.

There were difficulties to surmount, however. The old dame was rather avaricious and crusty; and on the occasion of Jules's last visit they had not parted on the best terms possible. She had even chased him into the street with a broomstick. The boy had done nothing more, however, than play her a little trick. He had given her pet spaniel a dose of snuff, and when the old lady ran to the help of her dog, who was conducting himself like a lunatic, he had emptied the rest of the snuff-box into a dandelion salad which she was carefully picking over for her supper.

"Hold on, mother," he cried, as he ran away, "there is a good seasoning for you."

Jules saw that it was very necessary to make his peace with the good dame, and hence these preliminaries. He threw his arms about her neck on entering, in spite of the old woman's attempt to shield herself from these too ardent demonstrations, after the way he had affronted her.

"See, my dear Madeleine," he cried, "I am come to pardon thine offenses as thou must pardon all who have offended against thee. Everybody says thou art stingy and revengeful, but that is no business of mine. Thou wilt get quit of it by roasting a little while in another world. I wash my hands of it entirely."

Madeleine hardly knew whether to laugh or be angry at this fantastic preamble; but, as she was fond of the boy, for all his tricks, she took the wiser course and smiled good-naturedly.

"Now that we are in a better humor," continued Jules, "let us proceed to business. I have been a little foolish and have got into debt, and I dread to trouble my good father about it. In fact, I want fifty francs to settle the unfortunate business. Can you lend me that much?"

"Indeed, now, Master D'Haberville," answered the old dame, "if that were all I had in the world, I would give it all to save your father any trouble. I owe so much to your father."

"Tut!" said Jules, "if you talk of those ha'pennies, there's an end of business. But listen, my good Madeleine, since I might break my neck when I least expect it, or still more probably when climbing on the roof or among the city bells, I must give you a bit of writing for security. I hope, however, to pay you back in a month at latest."

At this Madeleine was seriously offended. She refused the note, and counted him out the money. Jules almost choked her with his embrace, sprang through the window into the street and hurried back to the college.

At recess time that evening Dubuc was freed from all anxiety on the score of his amiable papa.

"But remember," said D'Haberville, "I still owe you for that kick."

"Hold on, dear boy," exclaimed Dubuc, with feeling. "I wish you would settle that right now. Break my head or my back with the poker, only let us settle it. To think that, after all you have done for me, you are still bearing me a grudge, would be nothing less than torture."

"A fine idea that," exclaimed the boy, "to think that I bear any one a grudge because I am in his debt in regard to a little exchange of compliments! So that is how you take it, eh? Shake, then, and let us think no more about it. You may brag of being the only one to scratch me without my having drawn his blood in return."

With these words he sprang upon the young man's shoulders like a monkey, pulled out a few hairs to satisfy his conscience, and scampered off to join the merry group which was waiting for him.

Archibald of Lochiel, matured by bitter experiences, and on that account more self-contained and more reserved than other boys of his age, on his first coming to college hardly knew whether to smile or be angry at the frolics of the little imp who seemed to have taken him for his special butt, and who hardly left him any peace. He could not be expected to divine that this was Jules's manner of showing his affection for those he loved the most. One day, driven to the end of his forbearance, Archie said to him:

"Do you know, you would try the patience of a saint! Verily I don't know what to do with you."

"But you have a way out of your difficulties," answered Jules. "My skin itches; give me a good hiding, and I'll leave you in peace. That will be easy enough for you, you young Hercules."

Lochiel, indeed, accustomed from his infancy to the trying sports of the young Highlanders, was at fourteen marvelously strong for his years.

"Do you think," exclaimed Archie, "that I am such a coward as to strike a boy younger and weaker than myself?"

"Oh, no," said Jules; "I see we agree on that score – never a knock for a little fellow. What suits me is a good tussle with a fellow of my own age, or even a little older; then shake hands and think no more about it. By the way," continued Jules, "you know that comical dog De Chavigny? He is older than I am, but so weak and miserable that I have never had the heart to punch him, although he has played me such a trick as even St. Francis himself would hardly pardon. Just think of him running to me all out of breath and exclaiming: 'I've just snatched an egg from that greedy Letourneau, who had stolen it out of the refectory. Here, hide it; he's after me!'"

"Where do you want me to hide it?" said I.

"Oh, in your hat," he answered; "he'll never think of looking for it there."

"As for me, I was fool enough to do it. I ought to have mistrusted him."

"In a moment Letourneau came up and jammed my cap down over my eyes. The accursed egg nearly blinded me, and I swear did not smell like a rose-garden! It was an addled egg found by Chavigny in a nest which the hen had probably abandoned a month before. I got out of that mess with the loss of a cap, a vest, and other garments. Well, after the first of my fury was over, I could not help laughing; and if I bear him any grudge at all, it is for having got ahead of me with so neat a trick. I should love to get it off on Derome, who keeps his hair so charmingly powdered. As for Letourneau, since he was too stupid to have invented the trick myself, I contented myself with saying to him, 'Blessed are they of little wit'; and he professed himself proud of the compliment, being glad enough, after all, to get off so cheaply."

"And now, my dear Archie," continued Jules, "let us come to terms. I am a kindly potentate, and my conditions shall be most easy. To please you, I undertake, on the word of a gentleman, to diminish by one third those tricks of mine which you lack the good taste to appreciate. Come, now, you ought to be satisfied with that if you are not utterly unreasonable, for you see, my dear boy, I love you. I would not have made peace with any one else on such advantageous terms."

Lochiel could not help laughing as he shook the irrepressible lad. It was from this conversation that the friendship between the two boys took its beginning – on Archie's part with a truly Scottish restraint, on the side of Jules with the passionate warmth of which the French heart is capable.

A few weeks later, about a month before the vacation, which began then on the 15th of August, Jules seized his friend's arm and whispered:

"Come into my room. I have just had a letter from father which concerns you."

"Concerns me!" exclaimed the other in astonishment.

"Why are you surprised?" retorted D'Haberville. "Do you think you are not of sufficient importance for any one to concern himself about you? Why, all New France is talking about the handsome Scotchman. The mammas, fearing your influence on the inflammable hearts of their daughters, talk seriously of petitioning our principal never to let you appear in public except with a veil on, like the women of the East."

"Come, stop your fooling, and let me go on with my reading."

"But I am very much in earnest," said Jules. And, dragging his friend along with him, he read him part of a letter from his father, which ran as follows:

"What you tell me about your young friend, Master de Lochiel, interests me very much. I grant your request with the greatest pleasure. Give him my compliments, and beg him to come and spend his next vacation with us, and all his vacations so long as he is attending college. If he does not consider this invitation

sufficiently formal, I will write to him myself. His father sleeps upon a glorious field. Soldiers are brothers everywhere; so should their sons be likewise. Let him come to our own hearth-stone, and our hearts shall open to him as to one of our own blood."

Archie was so affected by the warmth of this invitation that for some moments he could not answer.

"Come, my haughty Scotlander, will you do us the honor?" said his friend. "Or must my father send, on a special embassy, his chief butler, José Dubé, with the bagpipes slung on his back in the form of a St. Andrew's cross – as is the custom, I believe, among your Highland chiefs – to present you his invitation with all due formality?"

"As, fortunately, I am no longer in my Highlands," said Archie, laughing, "we can dispense with these formalities. I shall write at once to Captain D'Haberville, and thank him with my whole heart for his noble generosity to the exiled orphan."

"Then, let us speak reasonably for once," said Jules, "if only for the novelty of the thing. You think me very light, silly, and scatter-brained. I acknowledge that there is a little of all that in me, which does not prevent me from being in earnest more often than you think. I have long been seeking a friend, a true and high-hearted friend. I have watched you very closely, and I find you all I could wish. Lochiel, will you be my friend?"

"Without a moment's question, my dear boy," answered Archie, "for I have always felt strongly attracted toward you."

"Well, then," cried Jules, grasping his hand warmly, "it is for life and death with us Lochiel!"

Thus, between a boy of twelve and a boy of fourteen, was ratified a friendship which in the sequel will be exposed to the crudest tests.

"Here's a letter from mother," said Jules, "in which there is a word for you":

"I hope your friend, Master de Lochiel, will do us the pleasure of accepting your father's invitation. We are all eager to meet him. His room is ready, alongside of your own. In the box which José will hand you there is a parcel for him which he would grieve me greatly by refusing. In sending it I am thinking of the mother he has lost."

The box contained equal shares for the two boys of cakes, sweetmeats, jams, and other dainties.

The friendship between the two boys grew stronger day by day. They became inseparable. Their college-mates dubbed them variously Damon and Pythias, Orestes and Pylades, Nisus and Euryalus. At last they called them the brothers.

All the time Lochiel was at college he spent his vacations with the D'Habervilles, who made no difference between the two boys unless to lavish the more marked attentions upon the young Scotchman who had become as it were a son of the house. It was most natural, then, that Archie, before sailing for Europe, should accompany Jules on his farewell visit to his father's house.

The friendship between the two young men, as we have already said, is destined to be put to the bitterest trial, when that code of honor which has been substituted by civilization for the truest sentiments of the human heart, shall come to teach them the obligations of men who are fighting under hostile flags. But why anticipate the dark future? Have they not enjoyed during almost ten years of college life the passing griefs, the little jealousies, the eager pleasures, the differences and ardent reconciliations which characterize a boyish friendship?

CHAPTER II. A NIGHT WITH THE SORCERERS

Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell.

Hamlet.

Ecoute comme les bois crient. Les hiboux fuient épouvantés... Entends-tu ces voix dans les hauteurs, dans le lointain, ou près de nous?... Eh! oui! la montagne retentit, dans toute sa longueur, d'un furieux chant magique.

Faust.

Lest bogles catch him unawares...
Where ghaits and howlets nightly cry...
When out the hellish legion sallied.

Burns.

As soon as our young travelers, crossing the St. Lawrence opposite Quebec, have reached Point Lévis, José makes haste to harness a splendid Norman horse into one of those low sledges which furnish the only means of transport at this season, when the roads are only covered here and there with snow or ice, and when overflowing streams intercept the way at intervals. When they come to one of these obstacles José unharnesses the horse, all three mount, and the brook is speedily forded. It is true that Jules, who clasps José around the waist, tries every now and then to throw him off, at the risk of partaking with him the luxury of a bath at a little above zero. He might as well have tried to throw Cape Tourmente into the St. Lawrence. José, who, in spite of his comparatively small stature, is as strong as an elephant, laughs in his sleeve and pretends not to notice it. The brook forded, José goes back for the sledge, reharnesses the horse, climbs into the sledge with the baggage in front of him lest he should get it wet, and speedily overtakes his fellow-travelers, who have not halted a moment in their march.

Thanks to Jules, the conversation never flags during the journey. Archie does nothing but laugh over the witticisms that Jules perpetrates at his expense. He has long given up attempting any retort.

"We must hurry," exclaimed D'Haberville; "it is thirty-six miles from here to St. Thomas. My uncle De Beaumont takes supper at seven. If we get there too late, we shall probably make a poor meal. The good things will be all gobbled up. You know the proverb, *tarde venientibus ossa*."

"Scotch hospitality is proverbial," exclaimed Archie. "With us the welcome is the same day or night. That is the cook's business."

"Verily," said Jules, "I believe it as if I saw it with my own eyes; were it otherwise it would show a plentiful lack of skill or good-will on the part of your petticoated cooks. It is delightfully primitive, that Scotch cookery of yours. With a few handfuls of oatmeal sodden in cold water – since you have neither wood nor coal in your country – you can make an excellent soup at little cost and with no great expenditure of culinary science, and feast your guests as well in the night as in the daytime. It is quite true that, when some distinguished personage seeks your hospitality – which often happens, since Scotland is loaded down with enough coats-of-arms to crush a camel – it is true I say, that you set before him, in addition to your oatmeal soup, the head, feet, or nice, juicy tail of a sheep, with salt for sauce; the other parts of the animal never seem to grow in Scotland."

Lochiel contented himself with glancing at Jules over his shoulder and repeating:

"Quis talia fando Myrmidonum, Dolopumve' – "

"What's that?" exclaimed Jules, in assumed indignation; "you call me a Myrmidon, a Dolopian – me, the philosopher! And, moreover, my worthy pedant, you abuse me in Latin – you who so murder the accent with your Caledonian tongue that Virgil must squirm in his grave! You call me a Myrmidon – me, the geometrician of my class! You remember that the Professor of Mathematics predicted that I should be another Vauban – "

"Yes, indeed," interrupted Archie, "in recognition of your famous perpendicular line, which leaned so much to the left that all the class trembled lest it should fall and crush its base; seeing which, our professor sought to console you by predicting that your services would be required in case of the reconstruction of the Tower of Pisa."

Jules struck a tragic attitude and cried:

"Tu t'en souviens, Cinna! et veux m'assassiner."

"You are going to stab me upon the king's highway, beside this mighty St. Lawrence, untouched by all the beauty of nature which surrounds us – untouched by yon lovely cascade of Montmorency, which the *habitants* call 'The Cow,' a title very much the reverse of poetic, but which, nevertheless, expresses well enough the exquisite whiteness of the stream which leaps from its bosom like the rich and foaming flow from the milch-cow's udder. You are going to stab me right in sight of the Isle of Orleans, which, as we go on, conceals from our view the lovely waterfall which I have so poetically described! Heartless wretch! will nothing make you relent – not even the sight of poor José here, who is touched by all this wisdom and eloquence in one so young, as Fénelon would have said could he have written my adventures?"

"Do you know," interrupted Archie, "you are at least as remarkable in poetry as you are in geometry?"

"Who can doubt it?" answered Jules. "No matter, my perpendicular made you all laugh and myself most of all. You know, however, that that was only another trick of that scamp De Chavigny, who had stolen my exercise and rolled up another in place of it, which I handed in to the teacher. You all pretended not to believe me, since you were but too glad to see the trickster tricked."

José, who ordinarily took little part in the young men's conversation, and who, moreover, had been unable to understand what they had just been talking about, now began to mutter under his breath:

"What a queer kind of a country that, where the sheep have only heads, feet, and tails, and not even a handful of a body! But, after all, it is none of my business; the men who are the masters will fix things to suit themselves; but I can't help thinking of the poor horses!"

José, who was a regular jockey, had a most tender consideration for these noble beasts. Then, turning to Archie, he touched his cap and said:

"Saving your presence, sir, if the gentry themselves eat all the oats in your country, which is because they have nothing better to eat, I suppose, what do the poor horses do? They require to be well fed if they do much hard work."

The young men burst out laughing. José, a little abashed by their ridicule, exclaimed:

"Excuse me if I have said anything foolish. One may make mistakes without being drunk, just like Master Jules there, who was telling you that the *habitants* call Montmorency Falls 'The Cow' because their foam is white as milk. Now, I have a suspicion that it is because they bellow like a cow in certain winds. At least that is what the old bodies say when they get chattering."

"Don't be angry, old boy," answered Jules, "you are probably quite right. We were laughing because you thought there were horses in Scotland. The animal is unknown in that country."

"What! no horses, sir? What do the folks do when they want to travel?"

"When I say no horses," answered D'Haberville, "you must not understand me too literally. They have an animal resembling our horses, but not much taller than my big dog Niger. It lives in the

mountains, wild as our caribous, and not altogether unlike them. When a Highlander wants to travel, he sounds his bagpipe; all the villagers gather together and he unfolds to them his project. Then they scatter through the woods, or rather through the heather, and after a day or two of toil and tribulation they succeed, occasionally, in capturing one of these charming beasts; then, after another day or two, if the brute is not too obstinate, and if the Highlander has enough patience, he sets out on his journey, and sometimes even succeeds in coming to the end of it."

"Well, I must say," retorted Lochiel, "you are a pretty one to be making fun of my Highlanders! You have good right to be proud of this princely turn-out of your own! It will be hard for posterity to believe that the high and mighty lord of D'Haberville sends for his son and heir in a sort of dung-cart without wheels! Doubtless he will send some outriders on ahead of us, in order that nothing shall be lacking in our triumphal approach to the manor of St. Jean Port Joli!"

"Well done, Lochiel! you are saved, brother mine," cried Jules. "A very neat home thrust. Claws for claws, as one of your Scottish saints exclaimed one day, when he was having a scrimmage with the devil."

José, during this discussion, was scratching his head disconsolately. Like Caleb Balderstone, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, he was very sensitive on all subjects touching his master's honor.

"What a wretched fool I am!" he cried in a piteous voice. "It is all my fault. The seigneur has four carryalls in his coach-house, of which two are brand new and varnished up like fiddles, so that I used one for a looking-glass last Sunday. So, then, when the seigneur said to me yesterday morning, 'Get ready, José, for you must go to Quebec to fetch my son and his friend Mr. de Lochiel; see that you take a proper carriage' – I, like a fool, said to myself that when the roads were so bad the only thing to take was a sled like this! Oh, yes, I'm in for a good scolding! I shall get off cheap if I have to do without my brandy for a month! At three drinks a day," added José, "that will make a loss of ninety good drinks, without counting extras. But it's all the same to me; I'll take my punishment like a man."

The young men were greatly amused at José's ingenious lying for the honor of his master.

"Now," said Archie, "since you seem to have emptied your budget of all the absurdities that a hair-brained French head can contain, try and speak seriously, and tell me why the Isle of Orleans is called the Isle of the Sorcerers."

"For the very simple reason," answered Jules, "that a great many sorcerers live there."

"There you begin again with your nonsense," said Lochiel.

"I am in earnest," said Jules. "These Scotch are unbearably conceited. They can't acknowledge any excellence in other nations. Do you think, my dear fellow, that Scotland has the monopoly of witches and wizards? I would beg you to know that we too have our sorcerers; and that two hours ago, between Point Lévis and Beaumont, I might as easily as not have introduced you to a very respectable sorceress. I would have you know, moreover, that on the estate of my illustrious father you shall see a witch of the most remarkable skill. The difference is, my dear boy, that in Scotland you burn them, while here we treat them in a manner fitting their power and social influence. Ask José if I am not telling the truth?"

José did not fail to confirm all he said. In his eyes the witches of Beaumont and St. Jean Port Joli were genuine and mighty sorceresses.

"But to speak seriously," continued Jules, "since you would make a reasonable man of me, *volens volens*, as my sixth-form master used to say when he gave me a dose of the strap, I believe the fable takes its rise from the fact that the *habitants* on the north and south shores of the river, seeing the islanders on dark nights go out fishing with torches, mistake their lights for will-o'-the-wisps. Then, you know that our country folk regard the will-o'-the-wisps as witches, or as evil spirits who endeavor to lure the wandering wretch to his death. They even profess to hear them laugh when the deluded traveler falls into the quagmire. The truth is, that there is an inflammable gas continually escaping from our bogs and swampy places, from which to the hobgoblins and sorcerers is but a single step."

"Impossible," said Archie; "your logic is at fault, as the professor so often had to tell you. You see the inhabitants of the north and south shores themselves go fishing with torches, whence, according to your reasoning, the islanders should have called them sorcerers; which is not the case."

While Jules was shaking his head, with no answer ready, José took up the word.

"If you would let me speak, gentlemen, I might explain your difficulty by telling you what happened to my late father who is now dead."

"Oh, by all means, tell us that; tell us what happened to your late father who is now dead," cried Jules, with a marked emphasis on the last four words.

"Yes, my dear José, do us the favor of telling us about it," added Lochiel.

"I can't half tell the story," answered José, "for, you see, I have neither the fine accent nor the splendid voice of my lamented parent. When he used to tell us what happened to him in his vigil, our bodies would shake so, as if with ague, as would do you good to see. But I'll do my best to satisfy you:

"It happened one day that my late father, who is now dead, had left the city for home somewhat late. He had even diverted himself a little, so to speak, with his acquaintances in Point Lévis. Like an honest man, he loved his drop; and on his journeys he always carried a flask of brandy in his dogfish-skin satchel. They say the liquor is the milk for old men."

"*Lac dulce*," interjected Archie, sententiously.

"Begging your pardon, Mr. Archie," answered José, with some warmth, "it was neither *sweet water* (*de l'eau douce*) nor *lake-water* (*eau de lac*), but very good, unadulterated brandy which my late father, now dead, was carrying in his satchel."

"Capital, upon my word!" cried Jules. "It serves you right for your perpetual Latin quotations!"

"I beg your pardon, José," said Lochiel, very seriously. "I intended not the shadow of disrespect to your late father."

"You are excused, sir," said José, entirely mollified. "It happened that it was quite dark when my father at last got under way. His friends did their best to keep him all night, telling him that he would have to pass, all by himself, the iron cage wherein *La Corriveau* did penance for having killed her husband.

"You saw it yourselves, gentlemen, when leaving Point Lévis at one o'clock. She was quiet then in her cage, the wicked creature, with her eyeless skull. But never you trust to her being blind. She is a cunning one, you had better believe! If she can't see in the daytime, she knows well enough how to find her way to torment poor folks at night. Well, as for my late father, who was as brave as his captain's sword, he told his friends that he didn't care – that he didn't owe *La Corriveau* a farthing – with a heap more reasons which I can not remember now. He put the whip to his horse, a fine brute that could travel like the wind, and was gone in a second.

"As he was passing the skeleton, he thought he heard a noise, a sort of wailing; but, as a heavy southwest wind was blowing, he made up his mind it was only the gale whistling through the bones of the corpse. It gave him a kind of a start, nevertheless, and he took a good pull at the flask to brace himself up. All things considered, however, as he said to himself, Christians should be ready to help each other; perhaps the poor creature was wanting his prayers. He took off his cap and devoutly recited a *de profundis* for her benefit, thinking that, if it didn't do her any good, it could at least do her no harm, and that he himself would be the better for it. Well, then he kept on as fast as he could; but, for all that, he heard a queer sound behind him – tic-tac, tic-tac, like a piece of iron striking on the stones. He thought it was the tire of his wheel, or some piece of the wagon, that had come unfastened. He got out to see, but found everything snug. He touched the horse to make up for lost time, but after a little he heard again that tic-tac, tic-tac, on the stones. Being brave, he didn't pay much attention.

"When he got to the high ground of St. Michel, which we passed a little way back, he grew very drowsy. 'After all,' said my late father, 'a man is not a dog! let us take a little nap; we'll both be the better for it, my horse and I.' Well, he unharnessed his horse, tied his legs so he would not wander too far, and said: 'There, my pet, there's good grass, and you can hear the brook yonder. Good-night.'

"As my late father crawled himself into the wagon to keep out of the dew, it struck him to wonder what time it was. After studying the 'Three Kings' to the south'ard and the 'Wagon' to the north'ard, he made up his mind it must be midnight. 'It is time,' said he, 'for honest men to be in bed.'

"Suddenly, however, it seemed to him as if Isle d'Orléans was on fire. He sprang over the ditch, leaned on the fence, opened his eyes wide, and stared with all his might. He saw at last that the flames were dancing up and down the shore, as if all the will-o'-the-wisps, all the damned souls of Canada, were gathered there to hold the witches' sabbath. He stared so hard that his eyes which had grown a little dim grew very clear again, and he saw a curious sight; you would have said they were a kind of men, a queer breed altogether. They had a head big as a peck measure, topped off with a pointed cap a yard long; then they had arms, legs, feet, and hands armed with long claws, but no body to speak of. Their crotch, begging your pardon, gentlemen, was split right up to their ears. They had scarcely anything in the way of flesh; they were kind of all bone, like skeletons. Every one of these pretty fellows had his upper lip split like a rabbit's, and through the split stuck out a rhinoceros tusk a foot long, like you see, Mr. Archie, in your book of unnatural history. As for the nose, it was nothing more nor less, begging your pardon, than a long pig's snout, which they would rub first on one side and then on the other of their great tusk, perhaps to sharpen it. I almost forgot to say that they had a long tail, twice as long as a cow's, which they used, I suppose, to keep off the flies.

"The funniest thing of all was that there were but three eyes to every couple of imps. Those that had but one eye, in the middle of the forehead, like those Cyclopes that your uncle, who is a learned man, Mr. Jules, used to read to us about out of that big book of his, all Latin, like the priest's prayer-book, which he called his Virgil – those that had but one eye held each by the claw two novices with the proper number of eyes. Out of all these eyes spurted the flames which lit up Isle d'Orléans like broad day. The novices seemed very respectful to their companions, who were, as one might say, half blind; they bowed down to them, they fawned upon them, they fluttered their arms and legs, just like good Christians dancing the minuet.

"The eyes of my late father were fairly starting out of his head. It was worse and worse when they began to jump and dance without moving from their places, and to chant in a voice as hoarse as that of a choking cow, this song:

"Hoary Frisker, Goblin gay,
Long-nosed Neighbor, come away!
Come my Grumbler in the mud,
Brother Frog of tainted blood!
Come, and on this juicy Christian
Let us feast it while we may!"

"'Ah! the accursed heathens,' exclaimed my late father, 'an honest man can not be sure of his property for a moment! Not satisfied with having stolen my favorite song, which I always keep to wind up with at weddings and feasts, just see how they've played the devil with it! One would hardly recognize it. It is Christians instead of good wine that they are going to treat themselves to, the scoundrels!'

"Then the imps went on with their hellish song, glaring at my late father, and curling their long snouts around their great rhinoceros tusks:

"Come, my tricky Traveler's Guide,
Devil's Minion true and tried.
Come, my Sucking-Pig, my Simple,
Brother Wart and Brother Pimple;
Here's a fat and juicy Frenchman

To be pickled, to be fried!"

"All that I can say to you just now, my darlings,' cried my late father, 'is that if you get no more fat to eat than what I'm going to bring you on my lean carcass you'll hardly need to skim your broth.'

The goblins, however, seemed to be expecting something, for they kept turning their heads every moment. My late father looked in the same direction. What was that he saw on the hill-side? A mighty devil, built like the rest, but as long as the steeple St. Michel, which we passed awhile back. Instead of the pointed bonnet, he wore a three-horned hat, topped with a big thorn bush in place of a feather. He had but one eye, blackguard that he was, but that was as good as a dozen. He was doubtless the drum-major of the regiment, for he held in his hand a saucepan twice as big as our maple-sugar kettles, which hold twenty gallons, and in the other hand a bell-clapper, which no doubt the dog of a heretic had stolen from some church before its consecration. He pounded on his saucepan, and all the scoundrels began to laugh, to jump, to flutter, nodding to my late father as if inviting him to come and amuse himself with them.

"You'll wait a long time, my lambs,' thought my late father to himself, his teeth chattering in his head as if he had the shaking fever – 'you will wait a long time, my gentle lambs. I'm not in any hurry to quit the good Lord's earth to live with the goblins!'

Suddenly the tall devil began to sing a hellish round, accompanying himself on the saucepan, which he beat furiously, and all the goblins darted away like lightning – so fast, indeed, that it took them less than a minute to go all the way around the island. My poor late father was so stupefied by the hubbub that he could not remember more than three verses of the song, which ran like this:

"Here's the spot that suits us well
When it gets too hot in hell —
Toura-loura;
Here we go all round,
Hands all round,
Here we go all round.
"Come along and stir your sticks,
You jolly dogs of heretics —
Toura-loura;
Here we go all round,
Hands all round,
Here we go all round.
"Room for all, there's room for all
That skim or wriggle, bounce or crawl —
Toura-loura;
Here we go all round,
Hands all round,
Here we go all round."

"My late father was in a cold sweat; he had not yet, however, come to the worst of it."

Here José paused. "But I am dying for a smoke, and, with your permission, gentlemen, I'll light my pipe."

"Quite right, my dear José," answered D'Haberville. "For my own part, I am dying for something else. My stomach declares that this is dinner-hour at college. Let's have a bite to eat."

Jules enjoyed the privilege of aristocratic descent – he had always a magnificent appetite. This was specially excusable to-day, seeing that he had dined at noon, and had had an immense deal of exercise since.

CHAPTER III. LA CORRIVEAU

Sganarelle. – Seigneur commandeur, mon maître, Don Juan, vous demande si vous voulez lui faire l'honneur de venir souper avec lui.

Le même. – La statue m'a fait signe.

Le Festin de Pierre.

What? the ghosts are growing ruder,
How they beard me...
To-night – why this is Goblin Hall,
Spirits and specters all in all.

Faustus.

José, after having unbridled the horse and given him what he called a mouthful of hay, made haste to open a box which he had ingeniously arranged on the sled to serve, as needs might be, both for seat and larder. He brought out a great napkin in which were wrapped up two roast chickens, a tongue, a ham, a little flask of brandy, a good big bottle of wine. He was going to retire when Jules said to him:

"Come along and take a bite with us, José."

"Yes, indeed, come and sit here by me," said Archie.

"Oh, gentlemen," said José, "I know my place too well – "

"Come now, no affectations," said Jules. "We are here like three soldiers in camp; will you be so good as to come, you obstinate fellow?"

"Since you say so, gentlemen, I must obey my officers," answered Jules.

The two young men seated themselves on the box which served them also for a table. José took his place very comfortably on a bundle of hay, and all three began to eat and drink with a hearty appetite.

Archie, naturally abstemious, had soon finished his meal. Having nothing better to do, he began to philosophize. In his lighter moods he loved to propound paradoxes for the pleasure of the argument.

"Do you know, brother mine, what it was that interested me most in my friend's story?"

"No," exclaimed Jules, attacking another drumstick; "and what's more, for the next quarter of an hour I don't care. The hungry stomach has no ears."

"Oh, that's no matter," said Archie. "It was those devils, goblins, spirits, or whatever you choose to call them, with only one eye; I wish that the fashion could be adopted among men; there would be fewer hypocrites, fewer rogues, and therefore fewer dupes. Assuredly, it is some consolation to see that virtue is held in honor even among hobgoblins. Did you notice with what respect those one-eyed fellows were treated by the other imps?"

"That may be," said Jules, "but what does it prove?"

"It proves," answered Lochiel, "that the one-eyed fellows deserved the special attentions that were paid them; they are the *haute noblesse* among hobgoblins. Above all they are not hypocrites."

"Nonsense," said Jules, "I begin to be afraid your brain is softening."

"Oh, no, I'm not so crazy as you think," answered Archie. "Just watch a hypocrite with somebody he wants to deceive. With what humility he keeps one eye half shut while the other watches the effect of his words. If he had but one eye he would lose this immense advantage, and would have to give up his *rôle* of hypocrite which he finds so profitable. There, you see, is one vice the less. My

Cyclops of a hobgoblin has probably many other vices, but he is certainly no hypocrite; whence the respect to which he is treated by a class of beings stained with all the vices in the category."

"Here's your health, my Scottish philosopher," exclaimed Jules, tossing off a glass of wine. "Hanged if I understand a word of your reasoning though."

"But it's clear as day," answered Archie. "The heavy and indigestible stuff with which you are loading down your stomach must be clogging your brains. If you ate nothing but oatmeal, as we Highlanders do, your ideas would be a good deal clearer."

"That oatmeal seems to stick in your throat, my friend," said Jules; "it ought to be easy enough to digest, however, even without the help of sauce."

"Here's another example," said Archie. "A rogue who wishes to cheat an honest man in any kind of a transaction always keeps one eye winking or half shut, while the other watches to see whether he is gaining or losing in the trade. One eye is plotting while the other watches. That is a vast advantage for the rogue. His antagonist, on the other hand, seeing one eye clear, frank, and honest, can not suspect what is going on behind the eye which blinks, and plots, and calculates, while its fellow keeps as impenetrable as fate. Now let us reverse the matter," continued Archie. "Let us suppose the same rogue in the same circumstances, but blind of one eye. The honest man watching his face may often read in his eye his inmost thoughts; for my Cyclops, being himself suspicious, is constrained to keep his one eye wide open."

"Rather," laughed Jules, "if he doesn't want to break his neck."

"Granted," replied Lochiel, "but still more for the purpose of reading the soul of him he wants to deceive. He finds it necessary, moreover, to give his eye an expression of candor and good-fellowship in order to divert suspicion – which must absorb a portion of his wits. Then, since there are few men who can follow, without the help of both their eyes, two different trains of thought at the same time, our rogue finds that he has lost half of his advantage. He renounces his wicked calling, and society is the richer by one more honest man."

"My poor Archie," murmured Jules, "I see that we have exchanged *rôles*; that I am now the Scotch philosopher, as I so courteously entitle you, while you are the crazy Frenchman, as you irreverently term me. For, don't you see, my new Prometheus, that this one-eyed race of men, endowed with all the virtues which you intend to substitute, might very readily blink, if that is an infallible recipe for deception, and for the purpose of taking observations just open their eye from time to time."

"Oh, you French, you frivolous French, you deluded French, no wonder the English catch you on the hip in diplomacy!"

"It would seem to me," interrupted Jules, "that the Scotch ought to know something by this time about English diplomacy!"

Archie's face saddened and grew pale; his friend had touched a sore spot. Jules perceived this at once and said:

"Forgive me, dear fellow, if I have hurt you. I know the subject is one that calls up painful memories. I spoke, as usual, without thinking. One often thoughtlessly wounds those one best loves by a retort which one may think very witty. But come, let us drink to a merry life! Go on with your remarkable reasoning; that will be pleasanter for both of us."

"The cloud has passed over, and I resume my argument," said Lochiel, repressing his emotion. "Don't you see that my rascal could not shut his eye for an instant without the risk of his prey escaping him? Do you remember the squirrel that we saved last year from that great snake, at the foot of the old maple-tree in your father's park; remember how the snake kept its glowing eyes fixed upon the poor little creature in order to fascinate it; how the squirrel kept springing from branch to branch with piteous cries, unable to remove its gaze for an instant from that of the hideous reptile? When we made it look away it was saved. Do you remember how joyous it was after the death of its enemy? Well, my friend, let our rogue shut his eye and his prey escapes him."

"Verily," said Jules, "you are a mighty dialectician. I shouldn't wonder if you would some day eclipse, if you don't do it already, such prattlers as Socrates, Zeno, Montaigne, and other philosophers of that ilk. The only danger is lest your logic should some day land you in the moon."

"You think you can make fun of me," said Archie. "Very well, but only let some pedant, with his pen behind his ear, undertake to refute my thesis seriously, and a hundred scribblers in battle array will take sides for and against, and floods of ink will flow. The world has been deluged with blood itself in defense of theories about as reasonable as mine. Why such a thing has often been enough to make a man famous."

"Meanwhile," answered Jules, "your argument will serve as one of those after-pieces with which Sancho Panza used to put Don Quixote to sleep. As for me, I greatly prefer the story of our friend José."

"You are easily pleased, sir," said the latter, who had been taking a nap during the scientific discussion.

"Let us listen," said Archie; "*Conticuêre omnes, intentique ora tenebant.*"

"*Conticuêre* ... you irrepressible pedant," cried D'Haberville.

"It's not one of the priest's stories," put in José briskly; "but it is as true as if he had told it from the pulpit; for my late father never lied."

"We believe you, my dear José," said Lochiel. "But now please go on with your delightful narrative."

"Well," said José, "it happened that my late father, brave as he was, was in such a devil of a funk that the sweat was hanging from the end of his nose like a head of oats. There he was, the dear man, with his eyes bigger than his head, never daring to budge. Presently he thought he heard behind him the 'tic tac,' 'tic tac,' which he had already heard several times on the journey; but he had too much to occupy his attention in front of him to pay much heed to what might pass behind. Suddenly, when he was least expecting it, he felt two great bony hands, like the claws of a bear, grip him by the shoulders. He turned around horrified, and found himself face to face with La Corriveau, who was climbing on his back. She had thrust her hands through the bars of her cage and succeeded in clutching him; but the cage was heavy, and at every leap she fell back again to the ground with a hoarse cry, without losing her hold, however, on the shoulders of my late father, who bent under the burden. If he had not held tight to the fence with both hands, he would have been crushed under the weight. My poor late father was so overwhelmed with horror that one might have heard the sweat that rolled off his forehead dropping down on the fence like grains of duck-shot.

"My dear Francis," said La Corriveau, "do me the pleasure of taking me to dance with my friends of Isle d'Orléans?"

"Oh, you devil's wench!" cried my late father. That was the only oath the good man ever used, and that only when very much tried."

"The deuce!" exclaimed Jules, "it seems to me that the occasion was a very suitable one. For my own part, I should have been swearing like a heathen."

"And I," said Archie, "like an Englishman."

"Isn't that much the same thing," answered D'Haberville.

"You are wrong, my dear Jules. I must acknowledge that the heathen acquit themselves very well; but the English? Oh, my! Le Roux who, soon as he got out of college, made a point of reading all the bad books he could get hold of, told us, if you remember, that that blackguard of a Voltaire, as my uncle the Jesuit used to call him, had declared in a book of his, treating of what happened in France in the reign of Charles VII, when that prince was hunting the islanders out of his kingdom – Le Roux told us that Voltaire had put it on record that 'every Englishman swears.' Well, my boy, those events took place about the year 1445 – let us say, three hundred years ago. Judge, then, what dreadful oaths that ill-tempered nation must have invented in the course of three centuries!"

"I surrender," said Jules. "But go on, my dear José."

"'Devil's wench!' exclaimed my late father, 'is that your gratitude for my *de profundis* and all my other prayers? You'd drag *me* into the orgie, would you? I was thinking you must have been in for at least three or four thousand years of purgatory for your pranks; and you had only killed two husbands – which was a mere nothing. So having always a tender heart for everything, I felt sorry for you, and said to myself we must give you a helping hand. And this is the way you thank me, that you want to straddle my shoulders and ride me to hell like a heretic!'

"'My dear Francis,' said La Corriveau, 'take me over to dance with my dear friends;' and she knocked her head against that of my late father till her skull rattled like a dry bladder filled with pebbles.

"'You may be sure,' said my late father, 'You hellish wench of Judas Iscariot, I'm not going to be your jackass to carry you over to dance with those pretty darlings!'

"'My dear Francis,' answered the witch, 'I can not cross the St. Lawrence, which is a consecrated stream, except with the help of a Christian.'

"'Get over as best you can, you devilish gallows bird,' said my late father. 'Get over as best you can; every one to his own business. Oh, yes, a likely thing that I'll carry you over to dance with your dear friends; but that will be a devil of a journey you have come, the Lord knows how, dragging that fine cage of yours, which must have torn up all the stones on the king's highway! A nice row there'll be when the inspector passes this way one of these days and finds the road in such a condition! And then, who but the poor *habitant* will have to suffer for your frolics, getting fined for not having kept the road properly!'

"The drum-major suddenly stopped beating on his great sauce-pan. All the goblins halted and gave three yells, three frightful whoops, like the Indians give when they have danced that war-dance with which they always begin their bloody expeditions. The island was shaken to its foundation, the wolves, the bears, all the other wild beasts, and the demons of the northern mountains took up the cry, and the echoes repeated it till it was lost in the forests of the far-off Saguenay.

"My poor, late father thought that the end of the world had come, and the Day of Judgment.

"The tall devil with the sauce-pan struck three blows; and a silence most profound succeeded the hellish hubbub. He stretched out his arm toward my late father, and cried with a voice of thunder: 'Will you make haste, you lazy dog? will you make haste, you cur of a Christian, and ferry our friend across? We have only fourteen thousand four hundred times more to prance around the island before cock-crow. Are you going to make her lose the best of the fun?'

"'Go to the devil, where you all belong,' answered my late father, losing all patience.

"'Come, my dear Francis,' said La Corriveau, 'be a little more obliging. You are acting like a child about a mere trifle. Moreover, see how the time is flying. Come, now, one little effort!'

"'No, no, my wench of Satan,' said my late father. 'Would to Heaven you still had on the fine collar which the hangman put around your neck two years ago. You wouldn't have so clear a wind-pipe.'

"During this dialogue the goblins on the island resumed their chorus:

"'Here we go all round,
Hands all round,
Here we go all round.'"

"'My dear Francis,' said the witch, 'if your body and bones won't carry me over, I'm going to strangle you. I will straddle your soul and ride over to the festival.' With these words, she seized him by the throat and strangled him."

"What," exclaimed the young men, "she strangled your poor, late father, now dead?"

"When I said strangled, it was very little better than that," answered José, "for the dear man lost his consciousness."

"When he came to himself he heard a little bird, which cried *Qué-tu?* (Who art thou?)

"'Oh, ho!' said my late father, 'it's plain I'm not in hell, since I hear the dear Lord's birds!' He opened first one eye, then the other, and saw that it was broad daylight. The sun was shining right in his face; the little bird, perched on a neighboring branch, kept crying *qué-tu?*'

"'My dear child,' said my late father, 'it is not very easy to answer your question, for I'm not very certain this morning just who I am. Only yesterday I believed myself to be a brave, honest, and God-fearing man; but I have had such an experience this night that I can hardly be sure that it is I, Francis Dubé, here present in body and soul. Then the dear man began to sing:

'Here we go all round,
Hands all round,
Here we go all round.'

"In fact, he was half bewitched. At last, however, he perceived that he was lying full length in a ditch where, happily, there was more mud than water; but for that my poor, late father, who now sleeps with the saints, surrounded by all his relations and friends, and fortified by all the holy sacraments, would have died without absolution, like a monkey in his old tree, begging your pardon for the comparison, young gentlemen. When he had got his face clear from the mud of the ditch, in which he was stuck fast as in a vise, the first thing he saw was his flask on the bank above him. At this he plucked up his courage and stretched out his hand to take a drink. But no such luck! The flask was empty! The witch had drained every drop."

"My dear José," said Lochiel, "I think I am about as brave as the next one. Nevertheless, if such an adventure had happened to me, never again would I have traveled alone at night."

"Nor I either," said D'Haberville.

"To tell you the truth, gentlemen," said José, "since you are so discriminating, I will confess that my late father, who before this adventure would not have turned a hair in the graveyard at midnight, was never afterward so bold; he dared not even go alone after sunset to do his chores in the stable."

"And very sensible he was; but finish your story," said Jules.

"It is finished," said José. "My late father harnessed his horse, who appeared, poor brute, to have noticed nothing unusual, and made his way home fast as possible. It was not till a fortnight later that he told us his adventure."

"What do you say to all that, my self-satisfied skeptic who would refuse to Canada the luxury of witches and wizards?" inquired D'Haberville.

"I say," answered Archie, "that our Highland witches are mere infants compared with those of New France, and, what's more, if ever I get back to my Scottish hills, I'm going to imprison all our hobgoblins in bottles, as Le Sage did with his wooden-legged devil, Asmodeus."

"Hum-m-m!" said José. "It would serve them just right, accursed blackguards; but where would you get bottles big enough? There'd be the difficulty."

CHAPTER IV. THE BREAKING UP OF THE ICE

On entendit du côté de la mer un bruit épouvantable, comme si des torrents d'eau, mêlés à des tonnerres, eussent roulé du haut des montagnes; tout le monde s'écria: voilà l'ouragan.

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

Though aged, he was so iron of limb
Few of your youths could cope with him.

Byron.

Que j'aie à son secours, s'écria-t-il, ou que je meure.

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

Les vents et les vagues sont toujours du côté du plus habile nageur.

Gibbon.

The travelers merrily continued their journey. The day drew to a close, and they kept on for a time by starlight. At length the moon rose and shone far over the still bosom of the Saint Lawrence. At the sight of her, Jules broke out into rhapsodies, and cried:

"I feel myself inspired, not by the waters of Hippocrene, which I have never tasted and which, I trust, I never shall taste, but by the kindly juice of Bacchus, dearer than all the fountains in the world, not even excepting the limpid wave of Parnassus. Hail to thee, fair moon! Hail to thee, thou silvern lamp, that lightest the steps of two men free as the children of our mighty forests, two men but now escaped from the shackles of college! How many times, O moon, as thy pale rays pierced to my lonely couch, how many times have I longed to break my bonds and mingle with the joyous throngs at balls and routs, while a harsh and inexorable decree condemned me to a sleep which I abhorred! Ah, how many times, O moon, have I sighed to traverse, mounted upon thy crescent at the risk of breaking my neck, the regions thou wast illuminating in thy stately course, even though it should take me to another hemisphere! Ah, how many times – "

"Ah, how many times in thy life hast thou talked nonsense!" exclaimed Archie. "But, since frenzy is infectious, listen now to a true poet, and abase thyself, proud spirit. O moon, thou of the threefold essence, thou whom the poets of old invoked as Artemis the Huntress, how sweet it must be to thee to forsake the dark realms of Pluto, and not less the forests wherein, with thy baying pack, thou raisest a din enough to deafen all the demons of Canada! How sweet it must be to thee, O moon, to journey now in tranquil dominance, in stupendous silence, the ethereal spaces of heaven! Repent of thy work, I beseech thee! Restore the light of reason to this poor afflicted one, my dearest friend, who – "

"O Phoebe, patron of fools," interrupted Jules, "not for my friend have I any prayer to make thee. Thou art all guiltless of his infirmity, for the mischief was done – "

"I say, gentlemen," exclaimed José, "when you are done your conversation with my lady moon – I don't know how you find so much to say to her – would it please you to notice what a noise they are making in St. Thomas yonder?"

All listened intently. It was the church bell pealing wildly.

"It is the Angelus," exclaimed Jules D'Haberville.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed José, "the Angelus at eight o'clock in the evening."

"Then it's a fire," said Archie.

"But we don't see any flames," answered José. "Whatever it is let's make haste. There is something unusual going on yonder."

Driving as fast as they could, half an hour later they entered the village of St. Thomas. All was silence. The village appeared deserted. Only the dogs, shut up in some of the houses, were barking madly. But for the noise of the curs they might have thought themselves transported into that city which we read of in the Arabian Nights whose inhabitants had all been turned into marble.

Our travelers were on the point of entering the church, the bell of which was still ringing, when they noticed a light and heard shouts from the bank by the rapids near the manor house. Thither they made their way at full speed.

It would take the pen of a Cooper or a Chateaubriand to paint the scene that met their eyes on the bank of South River.

Captain Marcheterre, an old sailor of powerful frame, was returning to the village toward dusk at a brisk pace, when he heard out on the river a noise like some heavy body falling into the water, and immediately afterward the groans and cries of some one appealing for help. It was a rash *habitant* named Dumais, who, thinking the ice yet sufficiently firm, had ventured upon it with his team, about a dozen rods southwest of the town. The ice had split up so suddenly that his team vanished in the current. The unhappy Dumais, a man of great activity, had just succeeded in springing from the sled to a stronger piece of ice, but the violence of the effort had proved disastrous; catching his foot in a crevice, he had snapped his leg at the ankle like a bit of glass.

Marcheterre, who knew the dangerous condition of the ice, which was split in many places, shouted to him not to stir, and that he was going to bring him help. He ran at once to the sexton, telling him to ring the alarm while he was routing out the nearest neighbors. In a moment, all was bustle and confusion. Men ran hither and thither without accomplishing anything. Women and children began to cry. Dogs began to howl, sounding every note of the canine gamut; so that the captain, whose experience pointed him out as the one to direct the rescue, had great difficulty in making himself heard.

However, under the directions of Marcheterre, some ran for ropes and boards while others stripped the fences and wood-piles of their cedar and birch bark to make torches. The scene grew more and more animated, and by the light of fifty torches shedding abroad their fitful glare the crowd spread along the river bank to the spot pointed out by the old sailor.

Dumais waited patiently enough for the coming of help. As soon as he could make himself heard he implored them to hurry, for he was beginning to hear under the ice low grumbling sounds which seemed to come from far off toward the river's mouth.

"There's not a moment to lose, my friends," exclaimed the old captain, "for that is a sign the ice is going to break up."

Men less experienced than he wished immediately to thrust out upon the ice their planks and boards without waiting to tie them together; but this he forbade, for the ice was already full of cracks, and moreover the ice cake which supported Dumais was isolated, having on the one side the shattered surface where the horse had been engulfed, and on the other a large air-hole which cut off all approach. Marcheterre, who knew that the breaking up was not only inevitable, but to be expected at any moment, was unwilling to risk the life of so many people without taking every precaution that his experience could dictate.

Some thereupon with hatchets began to notch the planks and boards; some tied them together end to end; some, with the captain at their head, dragged them out on the ice, while others were pushing from the bank. This improvised bridge was not more than fifty feet from the bank when the old sailor cried: "Now, boys, let some strong active fellows follow me at a distance of ten feet from one another, and let the rest keep pushing as before!"

Marcheterre was closely followed by his son, a young man in the prime of life, who, knowing his father's boldness, kept within reach in order to help him in case of need, for lugubrious mutterings, the ominous forerunners of a mighty cataclysm, were making themselves heard beneath the ice. But every one was at his post and every one doing his utmost; those who broke through, dragged themselves out by means of the floating bridge, and, once more on the solid ice, resumed their efforts with renewed zeal. Two or three minutes more and Dumais would be saved.

The two Marcheterres, the father ahead, were within about a hundred feet of the wretched victim of his own imprudence, when a subterranean thunder, such as precedes a strong shock of earthquake, seemed to run the whole length of South River. This subterranean sound was at once followed by an explosion like the discharge of a great piece of artillery. Then rose a terrible cry. "The ice is going! the ice is going! save yourselves!" screamed the crowd on shore.

Indeed the ice cakes were shivering on all sides under the pressure of the flood, which was already invading the banks. Then followed dreadful confusion. The ice cakes turned completely over, climbed upon each other with a frightful grinding noise, piled themselves to a great height, then sank suddenly and disappeared beneath the waves. The planks and boards were tossed about like cockle-shells in an ocean gale. The ropes and chains threatened every moment to give away.

The spectators, horror-stricken at the sight of their kinsfolk exposed to almost certain destruction, kept crying: "Save yourselves! save yourselves!" It would have been indeed tempting Providence to continue any longer the rash and unequal struggle with the flood.

Marcheterre, however, who seemed rather inspired than daunted by the appalling spectacle, ceased not to shout: "Forward boys! forward, for God's sake!"

This old sea-lion, ever cool and unmoved when on the deck of his reeling ship and directing a manœuvre on whose success the lives of all depended, was just as calm in the face of a peril which froze the boldest hearts. Turning round, he perceived that, with the exception of his son and Joncas, one of his sailors, the rest had all sought safety in a headlong flight. "Oh, you cowards, you cowards!" he cried.

He was interrupted by his son, who, seeing him rushing to certain death, seized him and threw him down on a plank, where he held him some moments in spite of the old man's mighty struggles. Then followed a terrible conflict between father and son. It was filial love against that sublime self-abnegation, the love of humanity.

The old man, by a tremendous effort, succeeded in throwing himself off the plank, and he and his son rolled on to the ice, where the struggle was continued fiercely. At this crisis, Joncas, leaping from plank to plank, from board to board, came to the young man's assistance.

The spectators, who from the shore lost nothing of the heart-rending scene, in spite of the water already pursuing them, made haste to draw in the ropes, and the united efforts of a hundred brawny arms were successful in rescuing the three heroes. Scarcely, indeed, had they reached a place of safety, when the great sheet of ice, which had hitherto remained stationary in spite of the furious attacks of the enemy assailing it on all sides, groaning, and with a slow majesty of movement, began its descent toward the falls.

All eyes were straightway fixed upon Dumais. He was a brave man. Many a time had he proved his courage upon the enemies of his country. He had even faced the most hideous of deaths, when, bound to a post, he was on the point of being burned alive by the Iroquois, which he would have been but for the timely aid of his friends the Melicites. Now he was sitting on his precarious refuge calm and unmoved as a statue of death. He made some signs toward the shore, which the spectators understood as a last farewell to his friends. Then, folding his arms, or occasionally lifting them toward heaven, he appeared to forget all earthly ties and to prepare himself for passing the dread limits which divide man from the eternal.

Once safely ashore, the captain displayed no more of his anger. Regaining his customary coolness he gave his orders calmly and precisely.

"Let us take our floating bridge," said he, "and follow yonder sheet of ice down river."

"What is the use?" cried some who appeared to have had experience. "The poor fellow is beyond the reach of help."

"There's one chance yet, one little chance of saving him," said the old sailor, giving ear to certain sounds which he heard far off to the southward, "and we must be ready for it. The ice is on the point of breaking up in the St. Nicholas, which, as you know, is very rapid. The violence of the flood at that point is likely to crowd the ice of South River over against our shore; and what's more, we shall have no reason to reproach ourselves."

It fell out as Captain Marcheterre predicted. In a moment or two there was a mighty report like a peal of thunder; and the St. Nicholas, bursting madly from its fetters, hurled itself upon the flank of the vast procession of ice floes which, having hitherto encountered no obstacle, were pursuing their triumphant way to the St. Lawrence. It seemed for a moment that the fierce and swift attack, the sudden thrust, was going to pile the greater part of the ice cakes upon the other shore as the captain hoped. The change it wrought was but momentary, for the channel getting choked there was an abrupt halt, and the ice cakes, piling one upon another, took the shape of a lofty rampart. Checked by this obstacle, the waves spread far beyond both shores and flooded the greater part of the village. This sudden deluge, driving the spectators from the banks, destroyed the last hope of poor Dumais.

The struggle was long and obstinate between the angry element and the obstacle which barred its course; but at length the great lake, ceaselessly fed by the main river and the tributaries, rose to the top of the dam, whose foundations it was at the same time eating away from beneath. The barrier, unable to resist the stupendous weight, burst with a roar that shook both banks. As South River widens suddenly below its junction with the St. Nicholas, the unchained mass darted down stream like an arrow, and its course was unimpeded to the cataract.

Dumais had resigned himself to his fate. Calm amid the tumult, his hands crossed upon his breast, his eyes lifted heavenward, he seemed absorbed in contemplation.

The spectators crowded toward the cataract to see the end of the tragedy. Numbers, roused by the alarm bell, had gathered on the other shore and had supplied themselves with torches by stripping off the bark from the cedar rails. The dreadful scene was lighted as if for a festival.

One could see in the distance the long, imposing structure of the manor house, to the southwest of the river. It was built on the top of a knoll overlooking the basin and ran parallel to the falls. About a hundred feet from the manor house rose the roof of a saw mill, the sluice of which was connected with the fall itself. Two hundred feet from the mill, upon the crest of the fall, were sharply outlined the remnants of a little island upon which, for ages, the spring floods had spent their fury. Shorn of its former size – for it had once been a peninsula – the islet was not now more than twelve feet square.

Of all the trees that had once adorned the spot there remained but a single cedar. This veteran, which for so many years had braved the fury of the equinoxes and the ice floods of South River, had half given way before the relentless assaults. Its crown hung sadly over the abyss in which it threatened soon to disappear. Several hundred feet from this islet stood a grist mill, to the northwest of the fall.

Owing to a curve in the shore, the tremendous mass of ice which, drawn by the fall, was darting down the river with frightful speed, crowded all into the channel between the islet and the flour mill, the sluice of which was demolished in a moment. Then the ice cakes, piling themselves against the timbers to the height of the roof, ended by crushing the mill itself as if it had been a house of cards. The ice having taken this direction, the channel between the saw mill and the island was comparatively free.

The crowd kept running along the bank and watching with horrified interest the man whom nothing short of a miracle could save from a hideous death. Indeed, up to within about thirty feet of the island, Dumais was being carried farther and farther from his only hope of rescue, when an enormous ice cake, dashing down with furious speed, struck one corner of the piece on which he was sitting, and diverted it violently from its course. It wheeled upon the little island and came in contact

with the ancient cedar, the only barrier between Dumais and the abyss. The tree groaned under the shock; its top broke off and vanished in the foam. Relieved of this weight, the old tree recovered itself suddenly, and made ready for one more struggle against the enemies it had so often conquered.

Dumais, thrown forward by the unexpected shock, clasped the trunk of the cedar convulsively with both arms. Supporting himself on one leg, he clung there desperately while the ice swayed and cracked and threatened every instant to drag him from his frail support.

Nothing was lacking to the lurid and dreadful scene. The hurrying torches on the shores threw a grim light on the ghastly features and staring eyes of the poor wretch thus hanging by a hair above the gulf of death. Unquestionably Dumais was brave, but in this position of unspeakable horror he lost his self-control.

Marcheterre and his friends, however, still cherished a hope of saving him.

Descrying on the shore near the saw mill two great pieces of squared timber, they dragged these to a rock which projected into the river about two hundred feet above the fall; to each of these timbers they attached a cable and launched them forth, in hopes that the current would carry them upon the island. Vain attempt! They could not thrust them far enough out into the stream, and the timbers, anchored, as it were, by the weight of the chains, kept swaying mid way between shore and island.

It seemed impossible to add to the awful sublimity of the picture, but on the shore was being enacted a most impressive scene. It was religion preparing the Christian to appear before the dread tribunal; it was religion supporting him to endure the final agony.

The parish priest, who had been at a sick bed, was now upon the scene. He was a tall old man of ninety. The burden of years had not availed to bend this modern Nestor, who had baptized and married all his parishioners, and had buried three generations of them. His long hair, white as snow and tossed by the night wind, made him look like a prophet of old. He stood erect on the shore, his hands stretched out to the miserable Dumais. He loved him; he had christened him; he had prepared him for that significant rite of the Catholic Church which seems suddenly to touch a child's nature with something of the angelic. He loved him also as the husband of an orphan girl whom the old priest had brought up. He loved him for the sake of his two little ones, who were the joy of his old age. Standing there on the shore, like the Angel of Pity, he not only administered the consolations of his sacred office, but spoke to him tender words of love. He promised him that the seigneur would never let his family come to want. Finally, seeing the tree yield more and more before every shock, he cried in a loud voice, broken with sobs: "My son, make me the 'Act of Contrition' and I will give you absolution." A moment later, in a voice that rang clear above the roaring of the flood and of the cataract, the old priest pronounced these words: "My son, in the name of God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son, by whose authority I speak, in the name of the Holy Ghost, your sins are forgiven you. Amen." And all the people sobbed, "Amen."

Then Nature reasserted herself, and the old man's voice was choked with tears. Again he regained his self-control, and cried: "Kneel, brethren, while I say the prayers for the dying."

Once more the old priest's voice soared above the tumult, as he cried:

"Blessed soul, we dismiss you from the body in the name of God the Father Almighty who created you, in the name of Jesus Christ who suffered for you, in the name of the Holy Ghost in whom you were regenerate and born again, in the name of the angels and the archangels, in the name of the thrones and the dominions, in the name of the cherubim and seraphim, in the name of the patriarchs and prophets, in the name of the blessed monks and nuns and all the saints of God. The peace of God be with you this day, and your dwelling forever in Sion; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." And all the people wailed "Amen."

A death-like silence fell upon the scene, when suddenly shrieks were heard in the rear of the crowd, and a woman in disordered garments, her hair streaming out behind her, carrying a child in her arms and dragging another at her side, pushed her way wildly to the river's edge. It was the wife of Dumais.

Dwelling about a mile and a half from the village, she had heard the alarm bell; but being alone with her children, whom she could not leave, she had resigned herself as best she could till her husband should return and tell her the cause of the excitement.

The woman, when she saw her husband thus hanging on the lip of the fall, uttered but one cry, a cry so terrible that it pierced every heart, and sank in a merciful unconsciousness. She was carried to the manor house, where every care was lavished upon her by Madame de Beaumont and her family.

As for Dumais, at the sight of his wife and children, a hoarse scream, inarticulate and like the voice of a wounded beast, forced its way from his lips and made all that heard it shudder. Then he appeared to fall into a kind of stupor.

At the very moment when the old priest was administering the absolution our travelers arrived upon the scene. Jules thrust through the crowd and took his place between the priest and his uncle de Beaumont. Archie, on the other hand, pushed forward to the water's edge, folded his arms, took a rapid survey of the situation, and calculated the chances of rescue.

After a moment's thought, he bounded rather than ran toward the group surrounding Marcheterre. He began to strip off his clothes and to give directions at the same time. His words were few and to the point: "Captain, I am like a fish in the water; there is no danger for me, but for the poor fellow yonder, in case I should strike that block of ice too hard and dash it from its place. Stop me about a dozen feet above the island, that I may calculate the distance better and break the shock. Your own judgment will tell you what else to do. Now, for a strong rope, but as light as possible, and a good sailor's knot."

While the old captain was fastening the rope under his arms, he attached another rope to his body, taking the coil in his right hand. Thus equipped, he sprang into the river, where he disappeared for an instant, but when he came to the surface the current bore him rapidly toward the shore. He made the mightiest efforts to gain the island, but without succeeding, seeing which Marcheterre made all haste to draw him back to land before his strength was exhausted. The moment he was on shore, he made his way to the jutting rock. The spectators scarcely breathed when they saw Archie plunge into the flood. Every one knew of his giant strength, his exploits as a swimmer during his vacation visits to the manor house of Beaumont. The anxiety of the crowd, therefore, had been intense during the young man's superhuman efforts, and, on seeing his failure, a cry of disappointment went up from every breast.

Jules D'Haberville was all unaware of his friend's heroic undertaking. Of an emotional and sympathetic nature, he could not endure the heart-rending sight that met his view. After one glance of measureless pity, he had fixed his eyes on the ground and refused to raise them. This human being suspended on the verge of the bellowing gulf, this venerable priest administering from afar under the open heaven the sacrament of penance, the anguished prayers, the sublime invocation, all seemed to him a dreadful dream.

Absorbed in these conflicting emotions, Jules D'Haberville had no idea of Archie's efforts to save Dumais. He had heard the lamentations which greeted the first fruitless effort, and had attributed them to some little variation in the spectacle from which he withheld his gaze.

The bond between these two friends was no ordinary tie; it was the love between a David and a Jonathan, "passing the love of woman."

Jules, indeed, spared Archie none of his ridicule, but the privilege of tormenting was one which he would permit no other to share. Unlucky would he be who should affront Lochiel in the presence of the impetuous young Frenchman!

Whence arose this passionate affection? The young men had apparently little in common. Lochiel was somewhat cold in demeanor, while Jules was exuberantly demonstrative. They resembled one another, however, in one point of profoundest importance; they were both high-hearted and generous to the last degree.

José, who had been watching Lochiel's every movement, and who well knew the extravagance of Jules's devotion, had slipped behind his young master, and stood ready to restrain, by force, if necessary, this fiery and indomitable spirit.

The anxiety of the spectators became almost unendurable over Archie's second attempt to save Dumais, whom they regarded as utterly beyond hope. The convulsive trembling of the unhappy man showed that his strength was rapidly ebbing. Nothing but the old priest's prayers broke the deathly silence.

As for Lochiel, his failure had but strengthened him in his heroic purpose. He saw clearly that the effort was likely to cost him his life. The rope, his only safety, might well break when charged with a double burden and doubly exposed to the torrent's force. Too skillful a swimmer was he not to realize the peril of endeavoring to rescue one who could in no way help himself.

Preserving his coolness, however, he merely said to Marcheterre:

"We must change our tactics. It is this coil of rope in my right hand which has hampered me from first to last."

Thereupon he enlarged the loop, which he passed over his right shoulder and under his left armpit, in order to leave both arms free. This done, he made a bound like that of a tiger, and, disappearing beneath the waves, which bore him downward at lightning speed, he did not come to the surface until within about a dozen feet of the island, where, according to agreement, Marcheterre checked his course. This movement appeared likely to prove fatal, for, losing his balance, he was so turned over that his head remained under the waves while the rest of his body was held horizontally on the surface of the current. Happily his coolness did not desert him in this crisis, so great was his confidence in the old sailor. The latter promptly let out two more coils of rope with a jerky movement, and Lochiel, employing one of those devices which are known to skillful swimmers, drew his heels suddenly up to his hips, thrust them out perpendicularly with all his strength, beat the water violently on one side with his hands, and so regained his balance. Then, thrusting forward his right shoulder to protect his breast from a shock which might be as fatal to himself as to Dumais, he was swept upon the island in a flash.

Dumais, in spite of his apparent stupor, had lost nothing of what was passing. A ray of hope had struggled through his despair at sight of Lochiel's tremendous leap from the summit of the rock. Scarcely had the latter, indeed, reached the edge of the ice, where he clung with one hand while loosening with the other the coil of rope, than Dumais, dropping his hold on the cedar, took such a leap upon his one uninjured leg that he fell into Archie's very arms.

The torrent at once rose upon the ice, which, borne down by the double weight, reared like an angry horse. The towering mass, pushed irresistibly by the torrent, fell upon the cedar, and the old tree, after a vain resistance, sank into the abyss, dragging with it in its fall a large portion of the domain over which it had held sway for centuries.

Mighty was the shout that went up from both banks of South River – a shout of triumph from the more distant spectators, a heart-rending cry of anguish from those nearer the stage whereon this drama of life and death was playing itself out. Indeed, all had disappeared, as if the wand of a mighty enchanter had been waved over scene and actors. From bank to bank, in all its breadth, the cataract displayed nothing but a line of gigantic waves falling with a sound of thunder, and a curtain of pale foam waving to the summit of its crest.

Jules D'Haberville had not recognized his friend till the moment when, for the second time, he plunged into the waves. Having often witnessed his exploits as a swimmer, and knowing his tremendous strength, Jules had manifested at first merely a bewildered astonishment; but when he saw his friend disappear beneath the torrent, he uttered such a mad cry as comes from the heart of a mother at sight of the mangled body of an only son. Wild with grief, he was on the point of springing into the river, when he felt himself imprisoned by the iron arms of José.

Prayers, threats, cries of rage and despair, blows and bites – all were utterly wasted on the faithful José.

"There, there, my dear Master Jules," said José, "strike me, bite me, if that's any comfort to you, but, for God's sake, be calm. You'll see your friend again all right enough; you know he dives like a porpoise, and one never knows when he is going to come up again when once he goes under water. Be calm, my dear little Master Jules, you wouldn't want to be the death of poor José, who loves you so, and who has so often carried you in his arms. Your father sent me to bring you from Quebec. I am answerable for you, body and soul, and it won't be my fault if I don't hand you over to him safe and sound. Otherwise, you see, Master Jules, why just a little bullet through old José's head! But, hold on, there's the captain hauling in on the rope with all his might, and you may be sure Master Archie is on the other end of it and lively as ever."

It was as José said; Marcheterre and his companions, in furious haste, were running down the shore and by mighty armfuls dragging in the rope, at the end of which they felt a double burden.

In another moment the weight was dragged ashore. It was all that they could do to set Lochiel free from the convulsive clasp of Dumais, who gave no other sign of life. Archie, on the other hand, when delivered from the embrace which was strangling him, vomited a few mouthfuls of water, breathed hoarsely, and exclaimed:

"He is not dead; it is nothing more than a swoon; he was lively enough a minute ago."

Dumais was carried in all haste to the manor house, where everything that the most loving care could suggest was done for him. At the end of a half-hour some drops of wholesome moisture gathered upon his brow, and a little later he reopened haggard eyes. After staring wildly around the room for a time, he at length fixed his regard upon the old priest. The latter placed his ear to Dumais's lips, and the first words he gathered were: "My wife! My children! Mr. Archie!"

"Be at ease, my dear Dumais," said the old man. "Your wife has recovered from her swoon; but, as she believes you to be dead, I must be careful how I tell her of your deliverance, lest I kill her with joy. As soon as prudent I will bring her to you. Meanwhile, here is Mr. de Lochiel, to whom, through God, you owe your life."

At the sight of his deliverer, whom he had not yet recognized among the attendants who crowded about him, a change came over the sick man. He embraced Archie, he pressed his lips to his cheek, and a flood of tears broke from his eyes.

"How can I ever repay you," said he, "for all you have done for me, for my poor wife, and for my children?"

"By getting well again as soon as possible," answered Lochiel gayly. "The seigneur has sent a messenger post-haste to Quebec to fetch the most skillful surgeon, and another to place relays of horses along the whole route, so that by midday to-morrow, at the latest, your leg will be so well set that within two months you will be able again to carry the musket against your old enemies the Iroquois."

When the old priest entered the room whither they had taken his adopted daughter, the latter was sitting up in bed, holding her youngest child in her arms while the other slept at her feet. Pale as death, cold, and unresponsive to all that was said by Madame de Beaumont and the other women, she kept repeating incessantly: "My husband! my poor husband! I shall not even be allowed to kiss the dead body of my husband, the father of my children!"

When she saw the old priest she stretched out her arms to him and cried: "Is it you, my father, you who have been so kind to me since childhood? Is it you who can have the heart to come and tell me all is over? No, I know your love too well; you can not bring such a message. Speak, I implore you, you whose lips can utter nothing but good!"

"Your husband," said the old man, "will receive Christian burial."

"He is dead, then," cried the unhappy woman; and for the first time she burst into tears.

This was the reaction which the old priest looked for.

"My daughter," said he, "but a moment ago you were praying as a peculiar favor that you might be permitted once more to embrace the body of your husband, and God has heard your petition. Trust in him, for the mighty hand which has plucked your husband out of the abyss is able also to give him back to life." The young woman answered with a fresh storm of sobs.

"He is the same all-merciful God," went on the old priest, "who said to Lazarus in the tomb, 'Friend, I say unto you arise!' All hope is not yet lost, for your husband in his present state of suffering —"

The poor woman, who had hitherto listened to her old friend without understanding him, seemed suddenly to awaken as from a horrible nightmare, and clasping her sleeping children in her arms she sprang to the door.

On the meeting between Dumais and his family we will not intrude.

"Now, let us go to supper," said the seigneur to his venerable friend. "We all need it, but more especially this heroic young man," added he, bringing Archie forward.

"Gently, gently, my dear sir," said the old priest. "We have first a more pressing duty to fulfill. We have to thank God, who has so manifested his favor this night."

All present fell on their knees; and the old priest in a short but touching prayer rendered thanks to Him who commands the sea in its fury, who holds His creatures in the hollow of His hand.

CHAPTER V. A SUPPER AT THE HOUSE OF A FRENCH-CANADIAN SEIGNEUR

Half-cut-down, a pasty costly made,
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret, lay
Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
Imbedded and injellied.

Tennyson.

The table was spread in a low but spacious room, whose furniture, though not luxurious, lacked nothing of what an Englishman calls comfort.

A thick woolen carpet, of Canadian manufacture and of a diamond pattern, covered the greater part of the dining-room floor. The bright woolen curtains, the backs of the mahogany sofa, ottomans, and chairs were embroidered with gigantic birds, such as it would have puzzled the most brilliant ornithologist to classify.

A great sideboard, reaching almost to the ceiling, displayed on its many shelves a service of blue Marseilles china, of a thickness to defy the awkwardness of the servants. Over the lower part of this sideboard, which served the purpose of a cupboard and which might be called the ground floor of the structure, projected a shelf a foot and a half wide, on which stood a sort of tall narrow cabinet, whose drawers, lined with green cloth, held the silver spoons and forks. On this shelf also were some bottles of old wine, together with a great silver jar of water, for the use of those who cared to dilute their beverage.

A pile of plates of the finest porcelain, two decanters of white wine, a couple of tarts, a dish of whipped cream, some delicate biscuits, a bowl of sweetmeats, on a little table near the sideboard covered with a white cloth, constituted the dessert. In one corner of the room stood a sort of barrel-shaped fountain of blue and white stone china, with faucet and basin, where the family might rinse their hands.

In an opposite corner a great closet, containing square bottles filled with brandy, absinthe, *liqueurs* of peach kernel, raspberry, black currant, anise, etc., for daily use, completed the furnishing of the room.

The table was set for eight persons. A silver fork and spoon, wrapped in a napkin, were placed at the left of each plate, and a bottle of light wine at the right. There was not a knife on the table during the serving of the courses; each was already supplied with this useful instrument, which only the Orientals know how to do without. If the knife one affected was a clasp knife, it was carried in the pocket; if a sheath-knife, it was worn suspended from the neck in a case of morocco, of silk, or even of birch-bark artistically wrought by the Indians. The handles were usually of ivory riveted with silver; those for the use of ladies were of mother-of-pearl.

To the right of each plate was a silver cup or goblet. These cups were of different forms and sizes, some being of simple pattern with or without hoops, some with handles, some in the form of a chalice, some worked in relief, and very many lined with gold.

A servant, placing on a side-table the customary appetizers, namely, brandy for the men and sweet cordials for the women, came to announce that the supper was served. Eight persons sat down at the table – the Seigneur de Beaumont and his wife; their sister, Madame Descarrières; the old priest; Captain Marcheterre and his son Henri; and lastly Archie and Jules. The lady of the house gave the place of honor at her right to the priest, and the next place, at her left, to the old captain. The

menu opened with an excellent soup (soup was then *de rigueur* for dinner and supper alike), followed by a cold pasty, called the Easter pasty, which, on account of its immense proportions, was served on a great tray covered with a napkin. This pasty, which would have aroused the envy of Brillat-Savarin, consisted of one turkey, two chickens, two partridges, two pigeons, the backs and thighs of two rabbits, all larded with slices of fat pork. The balls of force-meat on which rested, as on a thick, soft bed, these gastronomic riches, were made of two hams of that animal which the Jew despises, but which the Christian treats with more regard. Large onions scattered here and there and a liberal seasoning of the finest spices completed the appetizing marvel. But a very important point was the cooking, which was beset with difficulty; for should the gigantic structure be allowed to break, it would lose at least fifty per cent of its flavor. To guard against so lamentable a catastrophe, the lower crust, coming at least three inches up the sides, was not less than an inch thick. This crust itself, saturated with the juices of all the good things inside, was one of the best parts of this unique dish.

Chickens and partridges roasted in slices of pork, pigs feet *à la Sainte-Ménéhould*, a hare stew, very different from that with which the Spanish landlord regaled the unhappy Gil Blas – these were among the other dishes which the seigneur set before his friends.

For a time there was silence with great appetites; but when dessert was reached, the old sailor, who had been eating like a hungry wolf and drinking proportionately, and all the time managing to keep his eyes on Archie, was the first to break the silence.

"It would seem, young man," said he facetiously, "that you are not much afraid of a cold in your head. It would seem, also, that you don't really need to breathe the air of heaven, and that, like your cousins the beaver and otter, you only put your nose out of water every half-hour, for form sake, and to see what's going on in the upper world. You are a good deal like a salmon – when one gives him line he knows how to profit by it. It's my opinion, however, that gudgeons like you are not found in every brook."

"It was only your presence of mind, captain," said Archie, "your admirable judgment in letting out the exact quantity of rope, that prevented me smashing my head or my stomach on the ice; and but for you, poor Dumais, instead of being warm in bed would now be rolling under the St. Lawrence ice."

"A nice joke," cried Marcheterre; "to hear him talk as if I had done the thing! It was very necessary to give you line when I saw that you threatened to stand on your head, which would have been a very uncomfortable position in those waves. I wish to the d – Beg pardon, your reverence, I was just going to swear; it is a habit with us sailors."

"Nonsense," laughed the old priest, "you have been accustomed to it so long, you old sinner, that one more or less hardly matters; your record is full, and you no longer keep count of them."

"When the tally-board is quite full, reverend father," said Marcheterre, "you shall just pass the plane over it, as you have done so often before, and we'll run up another score. Moreover, I am sure not to escape you, for you know so well when and where to hook me and drag me into a blessed harbor with the rest of the sinners."

"You are too severe, sir," said Jules. "How could you wish to deprive our dear captain of the comfort of swearing a little, if only against his darky cook, who burns his fricassees as black as his own phiz?"

"You hair-brained young scoundrel," cried the captain with a comical assumption of anger, "do you dare talk to me so after the trick you played me?"

"I!" said Jules innocently, "I played you a trick? I am incapable of it, dear captain. You are slandering me cruelly."

"Just listen to the young saint!" said Marcheterre. "I slandering him! No matter, let us drop the subject for a moment. 'Lay to' for a bit, boy; I shall know how to find you again soon. I was going to say," continued the captain, "when his reverence tumbled my unfortunate exclamation to the bottom of the hold and shut the hatch down on it, that if out of curiosity, Mr. Archie, you had gone down to the foot of the fall, then, like your *confrère*

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