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ALICE of OLD

By MAURICE THOMPSON

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(Continued.)

Farnsworth heard her utter a low cry of surprise or dismay, and was on the point of going in when Futher Beret, coming around the corner of the cable, confronted him. The meeting was so sudden and unexpected that both men recoiled slightly, and then, with a mutual start, saluted.

"I came with a young lady to get the sald Farnsworth. "She is inside. I hope there is no serious intrusion. She says the flag is hidden

under your floor."

Father Beret said nothing, but frowning as if much annoyed, stepped through the doorway to Alice's side, and stooping where she knelt, inid a hand on her shoulder as she glanced up and recognized blm.

What are you doing, my child?" "Oh, father, where is the flag?" It was all that she could say. "Where is the fing?

"Why, isn't It there?" 'No, you see it isn't there! Where

The priest stood as if dumfounded, gazing into the vacant space uncovered by the puncheon.

"Is it gone? Has some one taken it nway?

They turned up all the floor to no La banniere d'Alice Roussilion had disappeared and Captain Farusworth went forthwith to report the fact to his commander. When he reached the shed at the angle of the fort he found Governor Hamilton sitting stupid and dased on the ground. One Jaw was inflamed and swollen and an eye was half closed and bloodshot. He turned his head with a painful, irregular motion and his chin

Farnsworth sprang to him and lifted him to his feet, but he could scarcely stand. He lieked his lips clumsily. What is the matter? What hurts Fou?'

The governor rubbed his forehead, trying to recollect.

"He struck me," he presently said with difficulty. "He hit me with his fist. Where-where is he?"

"Who? "That blg French Idiot-that Roussillon. Go after him, take him, shoo him-quick! I have been stunned. don't know how long he's been gone Give the glarm-do something?"

Hamilton, as he gathered his wits together, began to foam with rage, and his passion gave his bruised and swoll-

en face a terrible look. The story was short and may be quickly told. M. Roussillon had taken advantage of the first moment when he and Hamilton were left alone. One herculean buffet, a swinging smash of his enormous fist on the point of the governor's jaw, and then he walked out of the fort unchallenged, doubtless on

account of his lordly and masterful air. "Ziff!" he exclaimed, shaking himself and lifting his shoulders when he had passed beyond hearing of the sentinel at the gate. "Ziff! I can punch a good stiff stroke yet, M. le Gouverneur. Ah, ziff!" and he blew like a porpolse.

Every effort was promptly made to recapture M. Roussillon, but his disappearance was absolute. Even the reward offered for his scalp by Hamllton only gave the Indians great trouble; they could not find the man.

Such a beginning of his administration of affairs at Vincennes did not put Hamilton into a good humor. He was overbearing and truscible at best, and under the irritation of small but exceedingly unpleasant experishees he made life well nigh unendurable to those upon whom his dislike chanced to full. Beverley quickly felt that it was going to be very difficult for him and Hamilton to get along agreeably. With Helm it was quite different; smoking. drinking, playing cards, telling good stories-in a word, rude and not infrequently boisterous conviviality drew him and the commandant together,

Under Captain Farnsworth's imme diate supervision the fort was soon in excellent repair and a large blockhouse and comfortable quarters for the men were built. Every day added to the strength of the works and to the importance of the post as a strategic position for the advance guard of the British army.

Hamilton was ambitious to prove himself conspicuously valuable to his country. He was dreaming vast dreams and laying large plans. The Indians were soon anxious to gain his favor, and to bind them securely to him he offered liberal pay in rom and firearms, blankets, trinkets and ammunition for the scalps of rebels. He kept this as secret as possible from his prisoners, but Beverley soon suspected that a "traffic in hair," as the terrible business had been named, was going on. Savages came in from far, away with scalps yet scarcely dry daugling at their belts. It made the young Virginian's blood chill in his heart, and he regretted that he had given Hamilton his parole of honor not to attempt

to escape. Among the Indians occasionally reporting to Hamilton with their ghastly but valuable trophies was Long Hair. who slipped into the fort and out again rather warily, not having much cons.

Gence in those Frenchmen who had once upon a time given him a mem-

orable run for his life. Winter shut down, not cold, but damp, changeable, raw. The work on the fort was nearly completed, and Rene de Ronville would have soon been relieved of his servile and exasperating employment under the Irish corporal, but just at the polat of time when only a few days' work remained for him he became furious, on account of an insulting remark, and struck the corporal over the head with a handspike. This happened in a wood some miles from town, where he was loading logs upon a sled. There chanced to be no third person present when the deed was done, and some hours passed before they found the officer quite cold and stiff beside the sied. His head was crushed to a pulp.

Hamilton, now thoroughly exasperated, began to look upon the French inhabitants of Vincennes as all like M. Roussillon and Rene-but waiting for an opportunity to strike him unawares. He increased his military vigtlance, ordered the town patrolled day and night, and forbade public gatherings of the citizens, while at the same time he forced them to furnish him a large amount of provisions.

When little Adrienne Bourcier heard of Rene's terrible act, followed by his successful escape to the woods and of the tempting reward offered by Hamilton for his scalp, she ran to Roussillon place well nigh crazed with excitement She had always depended upon Alice for advice, encouragement and comfort in her troubles, but in the present case there was not much that her friend could do to cheer her. With M. Rous sillon and Rene both fugitives, tracked by willy savages, a price on their heads, while every day added new dangers to the French inhabitants of Vincennes no rosy view could possibly be taken of the situation. Alice did her best, however, to strengthen her little friend's faith in a happy outcome. She quoted what she considered unimpeach able authority to support her optimistic argument.

"Lieutenant Beverley says that the Americans will be suce to drive Hamilton out of Vincennes or capture him. Probably they are not so very far away now, and Rene may join them and come back to help punish these brutal Englishmen. Don't you wish he would, Adrienne? Wouldn't it be romantic?

"He's armed; I know that," said Adrienne, brightening a little, "and he's brave, Alice; brave as can be. He came right back into town the other night and got his gun and pistols. He was at our house, too, and, oh"-

She burst outcrying again. Adrienne's simple heart could not grasp the romantic criterion with which Alice was wont to measure action. Her mind was single, impulsive, narrow and direct in all its movements. She loved, hated, desired, careused, repulsed not for any assignable reason more solid or more luminous than "because." She adored Rene and wanted him near her. "Why couldn't he be quiet and do as

your man, Lieutenant Beverley, did?" she cried in a sudden change of mood, the tears streaming down her cheeks. "Lieutenant Heverley surrendered and took the consequences. He didn't kill somebody and run off to be hunted like a bear. No wonder you're happy. Alice. I'd be happy, too, if Rene were here and came to spend half of every day with me. I"-

Why, what a silly girl you are!" Alice exclaimed, her face reddening prettily. "How foolish you prattle! I'm sure I don't trouble myself about Lieutenant Beverley. What put such absurd rensense into your head. Adrienne?"

"Because that's what, and you know It's so too. You love him just as much as I love Rene, and that's just all the love in the world, and you needn't deny it, Alice Rousellion!"

Alice laughed and bugged the was, brown faced mite of a girl until she almost smothered her.

It was growing dusk when Adrienne left Roussilion place to go home. The wind cut icily across the commons and monned as it whirled around the cabins and cattle sheds. She ran briskly, muffled in a wrap, partly through feur and partly to keep warm, and had gone two-thirds of her way when she was brought to an abrupt stop by the arms of a man. She screamed sharply, and Father Beret, who was coming out of a cabin not far away, heard and knew the voice.

Ho, bo, my little lady!" cried Adrieune's captor in a breezy, jocund tone. "You wouldn't run over a fellow, would you?" The words were French, but the voice was that of Captalo Farnsworth, who laughed while he spoke. "You jump like a rabbit, my darling! Why, what a lively little chick of a girl it is!"

Adrience screamed and struggled recklessly.

"Now, don't rouse up the town." coaxed the captain. He was just drunk enough to be quite a fool, yet suffciently sober to imagine himself the most proper person in the world. "I

Father Beret hurried to the spot, and

when in the deepening gloom he saw Adrienne flinging herself violently this way and that, helplessly trying to escape from the clasp of a man, he did to perfection what a priest is supposed to be the least fitted to do. Indeed. considering his age and leaving his vocation out of the reckoning, his performance was amusing. It is not certain that the blow dealt upon Govern



"Oh, Father Beretl Help me!" or Hamilton's Jaw by M. Roussfillon was a stiffer one than that sent straight from the priest's shoulder right into the short ribs of Captain Farnsworth, who thereupon released a mighty grunt and doubled himself up. Adrienne recognized her assallant at the first and used his name freely during the struggle. When Father Beret

appeared she cried out to him: "Oh, Futher-Father Beret! Help me!

Help me!"

When Farnsworth recovered from the breath expelling shock of the jab in his side and got himself once more in a vertical position, both girl and priest sight of the priest, he accosted him inwere gone. He looked this way and solently, demanding information as to that, rapidly becoming soher and beginning to wonder how the thing could have happened so easily. His ribs felt as if they had been hit with a heavy hammer.

"By Jove!" he muttered all to himself. "The old prayer sinking heathen! By Jove!" And with this very brilliant and relevant observation he rubbed his

CHAPTER XI.

A SWORD AND A HORSE PISTOL. HE captain's adventure with Father Beret came just in time to make it count against that courageous and bellicose missionary in more ways than one. Farnsworth did not tell Hamilton or any other person about what the priest had done, but nursed his sore ribs and his wrath, waiting patiently for the revenge that he meant soon to take.

Alloe heard from Adrienne the story of Farnsworth's conduct and his humiliating discomfiture at the hands of Father Beret. She was both indignant and delighted, sympathizing with Adrience and glorying in the friest's vigorous pugilistic achievement.

"Well," she remarked, with one of her infectious trills of laughter, "so far the French have the best of it, anygovernor's cheek nearly off, then Rene cracked the Irish corporal's head, and now Father Beret has taught Captain Farnsworth a lesson in fisticuffs that he'll not soon forget. If the good work can only go on a little longer we shall see every English soldier in Vincennes wearing the mark of a Frenchman's Then her mood suddenly blow." changed from smiling lightness to almost flerce gravity, and she added:

"Adrienne Bourcier, if Captain Parnsworth ever offers to treat me as he did you, mark my words, I'll kill him-kill him! Indeed I will! You ought to see me!"

"But he won't dare touch you," said Adrienne, looking at her friend with round, admiring eyes. "He knows very well that you are not little and timld like me. He'd be afraid of you." "I wish he would try it. How I would love to shoot him into pieces the hateful wretch! I wish he would.

The French inhabitants all, or nearly all, felt as Alice did, but at present they were belpiess and dared not say or do anything against the English Nor was this feeling confined to the creoles of Vincennes; it had spread to most of the points where trading posts existed. Hamilton found this out too late to mend some of his mistakes, but he set himself on the alert and organized scouting bodies of Indians under white officers to keep him informed as to the American movements in Kentucky and along the Ohio. One of these bands brought in as espitive Colonel Francis Vigo of St. Louis, a Spaniard by birth, so American by adoption, a patriot to the core, who had large influence over both Indians and creoles in the Illinois country.

Colonel Vigo was not long held a prisoner. Hamilton dared not exasperate the creoies beyond their endurance, for he knew that the savages would closely sympathize with their friends of long standing, and this might lead to a revolt and condition against him-a very dangerous possibility. In deed, at least one of the great Indian chieftains had already frankly informed him that he and his tribe were loyal to the Americans. Here was a dilemma requiring consummate diplomacy. Hamilton saw it, but he was not of a diplomatic temper or character. With the Indians he used a demoralizing system of bribery, while don't mean you any harm, made toward the whites he was too often moiselle. Pli just ace you safe home, gruff, imperious, repellant. Helm unyou know; 'scort you to your residence. derstood the whole situation and was

quick to take advantage of it. rais pe sonal relations with Hamilton were easy and familiar, so that he did not healtate to give advice upon all occasions. Here his jovini disposition belped

"You'd better let Vigo return to St.

Louis," he said. They had a bowl of

comething hot steaming between them. "I know him. He's harmless if you don't rub him too hard the wrong way. He'll go back if you treat him well and tell Clark how strong you are here and how foolish it would be to think of attacking you. Clark has but a handful of men, poorly supplied and tired with long, hard marches. If you'll think a moment you can't fall to understand that you'd better be friends with this man Vigo. He and Father Gibault and this old priest here, Beret, carry these Frenchmen in their pockets. I'm not en your side, anderstand-I'm an American, and I'd blow the whole of you to kingdom come in a minute if I could-but common sense is common sense all the same. There's no good to you and no harm to Clark in mistreating or even holding this prisoner, What barm can be do you by going back to Clark and telling him the whole truth? Clark knew everything long before Vigo reached here. Old Jason. my best scout, left here the day you took possession, and you may bet be got to Kaskaskia in short order. He never fails. But he'll teil Clark to stay where he is, and Vigo can do no more.

ently arties talk had upon Hamilton's mind is not recorded, but the meaner historical facts at command show that vigo was released and permitteet to re-

What effect Helm's bold and appar-

turn under promise that he would give no information to the enemy on bis way to Kashashla.

Doubtless this bit of careless diplomacy on the governor's part did have a somewhat soothing effect upon a large class of Frenchmen at Vincennes, Farnsworth quickly neutralized it to a serious extent by a foolish act while slightly under the influence of liquor.

He met l'ather Beret near Roussillon place, and, feeling his ribs squirm at the whereabouts of the missing flag.

A priest may be good and true-Pather Boret certainly was and yet have the strongest characteristics of a worldly man. This thing of being builled day after day, as had recently been the rule, generated nothing to aid in removing a refractory desire from the priest's heart-the worldly dealers sore side and went his way to the fort. to repent with great increment of force the punch against Farnsworth's lower etbs.

"I order you, sir, to produce that rebel flag," said Farnaworth, "You will obey forthwith or take the consequences. I am no longer in the humor to be trifled with. Do you understand?"

"I might be forced to obey you if I could," said the priest, drawing his robe about him; "but, as I have often told you, my son, I do not know where the fing is or who took it. I do not even suspect any person of taking it. All that I know about it is the simple

fact that it is gone." "You canting old foot?" cried Parasworth. "Don't lie to me any longer! I won't have it. Don't stand there grinning at me. Get that flag or I'll make

"What is impossible, my son, is possible to God alone. Apud homines hoe Papa Roussilion knocked the impossibile est, apud Deum autem

omnie possibilia sunt." "None of your Josuit Latin or logic to me. I am not here to argue, but to command. Get that flag. Be in a

horry about it, sir." He whipped out his sword, and in his half drunken eyes there gathered the

dull film of murderous passion. "Put up your weapon, captain. You will not attack an unarmed priest. You are a soldier and will not dare strike as old, defenseless man."

"But I will strike a black cobed and black hearted French rebel. Get that fing, you grinning fool?" "Strike if you must," he said very gently, very firmly. "I never yet have seen the man that could make me

afraid." His speech was slightly singsong in tone, as it would have been during a prayer or a blessing. "Got the flag, then!" raged Farms worth, in whose veins the heat of liquor

was aided by an unreasoning choler. "I cannot," said Father Beret, "Then take the consequences!"
Farnsworth lifted his sword, not to

thrust, but to strike with its fat side, and down it flashed with a noisy whack. Father Boret flung out an arm and deftly turned the blow aside. It was done so easily that Farnsworth sprang back glaring and surprised.

"You old fool" he cried, leveling his weapon for a direct lunge. "You deve illah hypocrite!" It was then that Father Beret turned

deadly pale and swiftly crossed him-His face looked as if he saw something just beyond his adversary. Possibly this sudden change of expres sion caused Farnsworth to hesitate for a mere point of time. Then there was the swish of a woman's skirts; a light step pattered on the frozen ground, and Alice sprang between the men, facing Farnsworth. As she did this something small and yellow-the locket at her throat-fell and rolled under her feet. Nobody saw it.

In her band she held an immense horse pistol, which she leveled to the captain's face, its saring, bugle shaped muszie gaping not a yard from by nose. The heavy tube was as steady

as if in a vise. "Drop that sword?"

That was all she said, but her finger was pressing the trigger, and the fit in the backward slanting hammer w ready to click against the steel. The leaden sings were on the point of leap tog forth.

"Drop that sword!"