



CHAPTER I

Mark Darrell crouched beside his timber-cruiser, Nat Page, at the engine of the motor-boat, peering out through the storm.

Through the great clouds of spray that went sweeping past them, everything was alternately as black as pitch and suddenly illumined again by the one-two, one-two of the lighthouse beam, as it clove the night.

The foghorn, which had been intermittently sounding its dull note for the past hour, had ceased; evidently the fog had lifted, though that fact was not apparent to the two men in the boat, cutting her swath through mountainous seas that threatened each instant to capsize her.

The drizzling rain showed no sign of lessening, and the howling of the wind had become an inferno as they approached the lighthouse point, a long ridge of land projecting from the black, rugged coastline of the northern St. Lawrence. The little boat, apparently heading straight for the rocks beneath the lighthouse, seemed doomed to swift destruction.

Nat-Page turned and shouted in Mark's ear, "No hope of rounding the point. But there's the little cove among the rocks at the point. We'll make her."

"We'll make her," Mark shouted back.

And neither man believed it, for here, off the point, the seas were frightful. Huddled up in their drenched furs, the two watched the treacherous, black, shifting panorama of shore and rocks, while the boat, already growing water-logged, rolled crazily in the troughs, and barely seemed to surmount the towering crests above her.

It had been a foolish act to start across the St. Lawrence that treacherous noon in spring, when the ice had only lately gone out of the river, and the first ocean liners had but a week before forged their way upstream to Montreal. But those logs in the icebound St. Victor would be ready for running in a week or so, and that would mean a little more cash for the new enterprise. And Horace Broussac's curt note from Montreal, demanding that the sale of the mill and lumber rights be canceled, had disturbed Mark a good deal.

It was disturbing Mark even now, though their lives seemed a matter of seconds rather than of minutes. The thud of the breakers on the rocks was louder than the wind. Straight ahead, visible only when the one-two of the light gleamed, was the tall lighthouse tower, all about it the black impenetrable silence of the cliffs; underneath the rush and roar of the cross-currents about the point, the dash of the waves, the back-suction of the undertow, the blinding spray.

Mark gripped the side of the boat as a great ledge of rocks rose almost beside them. They had escaped that by a miracle of luck. At the wheel Nat Page was fighting with all his might to keep the little craft head-on, to save her from being battered against the rocks like a swirling log in the St. Victor.

Profits in Pulpwood Interest Mark

With six years' experience working for a company on the second-growth logging lands higher up the St. Lawrence, with the increasing price of pulpwood, Mark had realized that the time had come to take toll of the huge, untapped forest resources further east, a hundred miles beyond Tadoussac and the Saguenay, where summer tourists fish and play golf. With his little capital, and two backers who believed in him, he had seen the profits to be made out of the timber lease on the Kinross Seigniory.

And there was something more to it than the profits. There was the sense of mastery in the taming of the great forests and harnessing of the streams, driving runways, building corduroys, sending the logs swirling down the rapids into the flume. It meant accomplishment, it meant life itself.

The lease of that waterfront section of the Kinross Seigniory had been in the market for three years. None of the big companies had been ready to negotiate. The fall previously, Mark had closed with Horace Broussac, the Quebec lawyer, acting on behalf of his ward, the widow of the late seigneur, who had been drowned at sea with the sealing fleet five years before.

Broussac, smooth, suave, ingratiating, had struck Mark as the type of customer who required watching. But Mark had satisfied himself that the rights were indisputable, and had seen Madame Kinross' signature authorizing her guardian, Horace Broussac, to make the lease on her behalf.

which her late father had had charge. She wouldn't see him, and Mark had sensed an indescribable hostility among the sullen habitants. They lived by fishing, and each spring they joined the sealing squadrons off Newfoundland. They were not woodsmen, like the people of the upper St. Lawrence, probably resented the presence of an American, even though Mark could speak French with fair fluency.

The landlord of the tiny hotel, patronized only by traveling seamen, had been dour and uncommunicative, a Frenchman of Scots ancestry, like so many of the people. But Broussac had been with Mark, and Broussac had been effusive, conciliatory, and evidently the one man whose word counted in the tiny settlement, where he had a summer home.

The cheap little milling outfit would serve as a start. Loggers, brought from higher up the river, were hard at work along the banks of the St. Victor. Broussac had promised two thousand cords of logs at the runways before spring. Mark was satisfied with his purchase, still more so with the fine growth of heavy timber. For the first time in his life he was his own master.

It was Broussac's curt letter from Montreal that had decided Mark to take Nat Page to St. Victor at once, and look into the situation. There was no transportation in April, except by motor-boat from the south shore. They should have reached

the wharf before dark, except for the sudden storm. Now there was about one chance in ten that they might make the little cove at the point. They'd never round that point.



Tons of green-white water hurled him forward.

"We'll make her!" Nat shouted once more. His voice was exultant, a defiant challenge to death. A swirl of white water half-engulfed them. The boat righted herself and sped on. Another ledge of rocks, another, leaning up, needle-fanged, out of the white water. Darkness. The eye, the double eye of the light above them—

Then, miraculously, the little sandy beach among the rocks at the point. But they'd never make it. They were approaching it diagonally, and a ledge of rocks on either side shut off the direct approach, and the boat was being sucked sidewise into a vortex of boiling water.

A Miraculous Escape From Drowning

Nat's shout was cut off by the crash of the little craft as the underfangs ripped the bottom out of her. She sank like a stone, and in an instant Mark and Nat were fighting blindly in that frightful surge of seething water. And for some seconds Mark knew nothing except the tense, vivid joy of physical combat with the tons of green-white water that hurled him forward, sucked him back, then raised him like a roller-coaster and sent him plunging forward.

His hands clutched gravel. He drew in a deep breath and clung, while the undertow grasped him and buffeted him; then another surge swept him forward again, and, in the double light of the eye overhead, he saw Nat's figure doubled up on the shingle ahead of him.

On hands and knees he crawled forward, over the groaning shingle, still wave-swept, dazed, feeling as if his whole body had been beaten into pulp. But Nat was on his feet now, and staggering toward him. His hand grasped his. The two young men stood silent, motionless, suddenly aware of the miracle that had befallen them.

derly man and a boy, clothed in sleek, dripping slickers, were approaching them, a coil of rope in their hands. Behind them, clothed also in a slicker, a girl was standing.

"They are all right, Madame!" the elderly man shouted to her.

"Bring them up to the cottage immediately!"

She turned, and next moment Mark and Nat were being assisted up a long gravel trail, then up two flights of concrete steps, to the plateau on which the lighthouse stood.

Here were other structures too, presumably housing the stores, the dynamo, and the apparatus for the foghorn, and opposite them was a long, single-story cottage, with a light shining in one room.

The girl turned, holding up a lantern, and inspecting the two young men. She looked about one-and-twenty, her dark hair was tumbled about her face, her hood dripped, and Mark noticed, by the lantern light, the firm setting of the corners of her mouth, odd in so young and beautiful a girl.

"Bring them here, Andre; I will question them," she said. Again Mark thought that odd.

She addressed Mark in French. "Monsieur, we have been watching your boat half the afternoon, and were afraid you would never make the landing. You owe your thanks to God," she said. "There is but one question. Is either of you the Monsieur Darrell, who was here last fall?"

"It is he—this one!" cried old Andre suddenly.

"I am Mark Darrell, and this is Mr. Page," Mark replied. "You must be Madame Kinross, whose lands I have leased."

A growl like a bear's came from old Andre's throat. For a moment he looked as if he was about to hurl himself at Mark. Madeline Kinross' quiet, level tones restrained him.

"Be quiet, Andre!" she commanded. "These men are guests. They cannot go back until tomorrow. Put some more logs into the stove in the spare room. And bring them dry clothes. I, Messieurs, shall heat you some soup and coffee."

She disappeared into the back of the house, and old Andre viciously flung open the door of the room that occupied the other wing of the one-story house. It was damp and cold inside, but a flicker of fire came from a stove. Andre lit a candle and placed it on a table. He thrust two logs into the stove, and turned, grinning malevolently at Dan and Nat through his gray beard.

"It was the devil saved you from the sea," he growled. "Tomorrow you can go back to him."

There were two cots in the room. From a closet the old man pulled some clothes—trousers, pullovers, mackinaws, and socks.

"It is because she told me to do so," he snarled. "We do not want you here!"

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL Lesson

Lesson for January 26

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JESUS CROSSES RACIAL BOUNDARIES

LESSON TEXT—John 4:1-42, 27-30, 39-42. MEMORY SELECTION—Whoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.—John 4:14.

Racial and social prejudice divide mankind, although they are really one family by the creation of God. Speaking a thousand or more tongues and countless dialects; living in separated areas; suffering under or priding themselves in (as the case may be) a certain social order, and disagreeing even about the things of God, they manage to build up formidable barriers between their various groups.

The Word of God by both precept and practical example teaches just the opposite.

I. Barriers Broken (vv. 4-9). Contrast the woman of Samaria with Nicodemus, whose coming to Christ we studied last week. He was rich; she was poor. He was a Jew; she was of the mixed race of Samaritans. He was a man of character and high position; she was immoral and uneducated. He sought Jesus; Jesus sought her.

In doing so, he cut straight across the barriers of race, tradition, social position, education, everything. He was interested in her soul's salvation and nothing could stand in his way. We would do well to follow his example.

Every Christian is by his very calling a soul-winner. We dare not delegate this responsibility to the pastor or missionary. As soul-winners we are vitally interested in our Lord's approach to this woman who was far from God, apparently hopelessly involved in sinful associations, a citizen of a hostile nation and an adherent of another religious faith.

By asking a favor of her, Christ tactfully placed himself (as does any petitioner), for the moment, on her own plane. He was not a distant, learned religious leader deigning to cast a bit of religious philosophy to her. He was a tired, thirsty man asking for a drink of water.

But he was more! He was the gracious Son of God, declaring to her that he was ready to give to her the water of life.

II. Problems Solved (vv. 9, 10, 27-30). The first problem this poor woman had to face was her sin problem. Is not that true of all of us?

She first tried to avoid it by raising the race problem, and the reply of Jesus told her of the water of life. Her quick desire to escape the drudgery of carrying water, gave him opportunity to face her with her sin. She could never find peace and joy until there was a frank and open facing of sin in her life.

Let us make no mistake at this point, for the moral law of God is the same now as it was on that far-off day when Jesus brought the woman of Samaria face to face with her own sin.

Possibly in an effort to evade her moral problem by theological discussion (a common practice in our day, too!), and partly because of her ignorance of true worship, she asked a question about a controversial matter relating to outward ceremony. Is it not a singular thing how men who know nothing of spiritual life delight in the propagation and defense of organizations and in the conduct of outward religious exercises?

True worship is revealed (v. 23) as being first "in spirit." We do not cast aside all external helps to worship, but real worship goes through and beyond both place and symbol to real soul communion with God, second, "in truth."

The disciples were wise enough not to interfere with what Jesus was doing (personal workers take note!), and it was not long before the woman saw Jesus as the Christ! Observe how quickly she went to tell others.

III. Salvation Declared (vv. 39-42). Jesus honors this poor fallen woman by making to her his first declaration of himself as the Messiah (v. 26, 27). He is the high and exalted One, but he is at the same time the friend of sinners. To Nicodemus, the learned ruler of the Jews, he spoke of the new birth. To the poor woman of Samaria he declared his Messiahship. He is no respecter of persons, and neither are those who truly follow him.



IN FULL PRODUCTION FOR QUIZ PROGRAMS

"How now?" we asked the Man Who Built a Better Mousetrap. "What's the situation?" "Everything's going good," he replied. "We're in full production." "Stuff getting through to the American homes at last, eh?" we said.

"Oh, no," said the Man Who Built a Better Mousetrap. "Nothing's getting through to the American home. Nothing at all." "Where is the stuff going?" we asked.

"Radio programs," said the M. W. B. A. B. M. "We're just like most industries, we don't expect to get much through to the customers for a couple of years. The radio programs take everything we can turn out."

"Don't tell me that mousetraps, too, are among the prizes on radio programs."

"Why not? The radio people don't tell the winners they're mousetraps necessarily. They say they're a new ash tray imported from France, or a novelty air purifier or an electric lighter or Swiss book ends. Of course, if a master of ceremonies on a radio program sees a contestant who doesn't look very bright he may admit it's just a mousetrap but tells the radio audience it can be applied to a stiff shoulder as a poultice."

"The quiz program has been a great thing for industry," we suggested. "In the old days a slump could not be cushioned by merely getting a lot of people into a studio and seeing if they knew the name of the bridge Steve Brodie jumped from."

"It must have been tough," sighed the Mousetrap Builder. "Fancy being in the manufacturing business and not be able to supply prizes for the Queen For a Day program!"

"One thing is not clear," we said. "Isn't there a terrific public demand for most everything manufacturers produce today?" "Oh yes."

"Then, why do the manufacturers deluge quiz programs with millions of dollars worth of products hourly?"

The Man Who Built a Better Mousetrap regarded us sternly. "So you'd get stuff to the consumer and not to all those people who turn up on radio programs and tell what Washington's first name was!" he said, abruptly leaving us.

Presidential Campaign And Television

More bad news!

The candidates and orators in the 1948 presidential campaign are coming to us by television!

The long-suffering public is going to get not only alarming speeches but alarming faces!

Just as election campaigns were first broadcast in the Hoover era, the first big-time television performance will be put on during the next Presidential campaign.

Candidates should be heard but not screened. Only one in a million has a face that an interior decorator would call essential. Under simple radio, there was always the comforting thought a candidate might not look as bad as he sounded. Under television he can be guilty on both counts.

We predict right now that television will cancel out the women's vote. It took 150 years for them to get the ballot. Under television they may give it back.

The only candidate with a chance may be the fellow who makes the women voters remark not "Sound, isn't he?" but "ah-h-h! What a hunk of man!"

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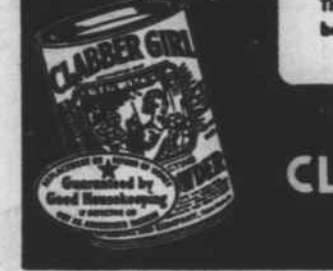
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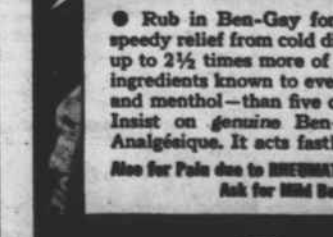
Collecting picture post cards, which was indulged in halfheartedly 30 years ago by almost every American family, is today a serious hobby carried on by 5,000 individuals who have a national organization and support two magazines. Of their many outstanding collections, the largest is that of a Californian of Sierra Madre which contains 1,000,000 cards and is valued at \$200,000.



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