

## Alice of Old Vincennes

By Maurice Thompson

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BEGIN HERE  
HERE we have the foster children of GASPARD ROUSSILLON, who in the absence of a military commander, was a good as chief of Vincennes.

A bottle of fine brandy sent to LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ABBOTT was stolen. Governor ABBOTT was a man with LONG HAIR, an Indian, who escaped after being caught short.

Alice attracts the attention of RENE DE RONVILLE, a handsome youth of the village, but she has a jealous rival in the person of Mlle. ANDRIENNE BOURCIER.

Because of a singular birthmark on her shoulder, Alice has a picture of "Tartan" on the small locket she possessed containing her baby picture. Alice hoped some day to be identified with her own mother.

GO ON WITH THE STORY.

ROUSSILLON changed the subject, for he always somehow dreaded to have the good priest fall into the strain of argument. He was about to begin a stray speech, Alice interrupted him with a hearty burst of laughter.

"A very pretty twist you give to my words, I must declare," she said. "But not new by any means. Little Adrienne Bourciere could tell you that. She says that you have vowed to her over and over that you dream about her and wish for her, and wait for her, precisely as you have just said to me."

Rene's brown face flushed to the temples, partly with anger, partly with the shock of mingled surprise and fear. He was guilty, and the guilt showed in his eyes and paralyzed his tongue, so that he sat there before Alice with his under jaw sagging ludicrously.

"Don't you rather think, Monsieur Rene de Ronville," she presently added in a calm, advisory tone, "that you had better quit trying to say such foolish things to me, and just be my very good friend? If you don't, I do, which comes to the same thing. What's more, I won't be your partenaire at the dance unless you promise me on your word of honor that you will dance two dances with Adrienne to every one that you have with me. Do you promise?"

He dared not oppose her outwardly, although in his heart resistance amounted to furious revolt and riot.

"I promise anything you ask me," he said resignedly, almost sullenly; "anything for you."

"Well, I ask nothing whatever on my own account," Alice quickly replied; "but I do tell you firmly that you shall not maltreat little Adrienne Bourciere and remain a friend of mine. She loves you, Rene de Ronville, and you have told her that you love her. If you are a man worthy of respect you will not desert her. Don't you think I am right?"

Like a singed and crippled moth vainly trying to rise once again to the alluring yet deadly flame, Rene de Ronville essayed to break out of his embarrassment and resume equal footing with the girl so suddenly become his commanding superior; but the effort disclosed to him as well as to her that he had fallen to rise no more. In his abject defeat he accepted the terms dictated by Alice and was glad when she adroitly changed her manner and tone in going on to discuss the approaching dance.

"Now let me make one request of you," he demanded after a while. "It's a small favor; may I ask it?"

"Yes, but I don't grant it in advance."

"I want you to wear, for my sake, the buff gown which they say was your grandmother's."

"No, I won't wear it."

"But why, Alice?"

"None of the other girls have anything like such a dress; it would not be right for me to put it on and make them all feel that I had taken the advantage of them, just because I could; that's why."

"But then none of them is beautiful and educated like you," he said; "you'll outshine them anyway."

"Save your compliments for poor pretty little Adrienne," she firmly responded. "I positively do not wish to hear them. I have agreed to be your partenaire at this dance of Papa Roussillon's, but it is understood between us that Adrienne is your sweetheart. I am not, and I'm not going to be, either. So for your sake and Adrienne's, as well as out of consideration for the rest of the girls who have no fine dresses, I am not going to wear the buff brocade gown that belonged to Papa Roussillon's mother long ago. I shall dress just as I rest do."

It is safe to say that Rene de Ronville went home with a troublesome bee in his bonnet. He was not a bad-hearted fellow. Many a right good young man, before him and since, has loved an Adrienne and been dazzled by an Alice. A violet is sweet, but a rose is the garden's queen. The poor youthful frontiersman ought to have been stronger; but he was not, and what have we to say?

As for Alice, since having a confidential talk with Adrienne Bourciere recently, she had come to realize what M. Roussillon meant when he said: "But my little girl is better than most of them, not a foolish mischief maker, I hope." She saw through the situation with a quick understanding of what Adrienne might suffer should Rene prove permanently fickle. The thought of it aroused all her natural honest and serious nobleness of character, which lay deep under the almost hoydenish levity usually observable in her manner. Crude as her sense of life's larger significance was, and meager as had been her experience in the things which count for most in the sum of a young girl's existence under fair circumstances, she grasped intuitively the gist of all.

The dance did not come off; it had to be postponed indefinitely on account of a grave change in the political relations of the little post. A day or two before the time set for that function a rumor ran through the town that something of importance was about to happen. Father Gibault, at the head of a small party, had arrived from Kaskaskia, far away on the Mississippi, with the news that France and the American colonies had made common cause against the English in the great war of which the people of Vincennes neither knew the cause nor cared a straw about the outcome.

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How good it feels. Your nostrils are open. Your head is clear. No more sniffling, snuffling, dryness or tugging for breath. Get a small jar of Ely's Cream Balm from druggist. Colds and catarrh yield magic. Don't stay stupefied up, it is sure.—Advertisement.

The scalps of old fighters chuckled

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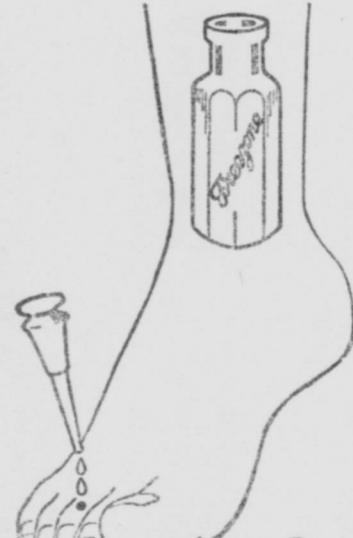
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## THE OLD HOME TOWN—By STANLEY



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