

**THE TRANSLATION  
OF A SAVAGE**

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The translation of a savage by Gilbert Parker

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**GILBERT PARKER**

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OF A SAVAGE**



# THE TRANSLATION OF A SAVAGE

BY

GILBERT PARKER

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MRS. FALCHION, ETC.



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## The Translation of a Savage.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### HIS GREAT MISTAKE.

**I**T appeared that Armour had made the great mistake of his life. When people came to know, they said that to have done it when sober had shown him possessed of a kind of maliciousness and cynicism almost pardonable, but to do it when tipsy proved him merely weak and foolish. But the fact is, he was less tipsy at the time than was imagined; and he could have answered to more malice and cynicism than was credited to him. To those who know the world it is not singular that, of the two, Armour was thought to have made the mistake and had the misfortune, or that people wasted their pity and their

scorn upon him alone. Apparently they did not see that the woman was to be pitied. He had married her; and she was only an Indian girl from Fort Charles of the Hudson's Bay Company, with a little honest white blood in her veins. Nobody, not even her own people, felt that she had anything at stake, or was in danger of unhappiness, or was other than a person who had ludicrously come to bear the name of Mrs. Francis Armour. If anyone had said in justification that she loved the man, the answer would have been that plenty of Indian women had loved white men, but had not married them, and yet the population of half-breeds went on increasing.

Frank Armour had been a popular man in London. His club might be found in the vicinity of Pall Mall, his father's name was high and honoured in the Army List, one of his brothers had served with Wolseley in Africa, and himself, having no profession, but with a taste for business and investment, had gone to Canada with some such intention as Lord Selkirk's in the early part of the century. He owned large



shares in the Hudson's Bay Company, and when he travelled through the North-West country, prospecting, he was received most hospitably. Of an inquiring and gregarious nature he went as much among the half-breeds—or métis, as they are called—and Indians as among the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company and the white settlers. He had ever been credited with having a philosophical turn of mind; and this was accompanied by a certain strain of impulsiveness or daring. He had been accustomed all his life to make up his mind quickly, and, because he was well enough off to bear the consequences of momentary rashness in commercial investments, he was not counted among the transgressors. He had his own fortune; he was not drawing upon a common purse. It was a different matter when he trafficked rashly in the family name, so far as to marry the daughter of Eye-of-the-Moon, the Indian chief.

He was tolerably happy when he went to the Hudson's Bay country; for Miss Julia Sherwood was his promised wife, and she, if poor, was notably beautiful

and of good family. His people had not looked quite kindly on this engagement; they had, indeed, tried in many ways to prevent it; partly because of Miss Sherwood's poverty, and also because they knew that Lady Agnes Martling had long cared for him, and was most happily endowed with wealth and good looks also. When he left for Canada they were inwardly glad (they imagined that something might occur to end the engagement)—all except Richard, the wiseacre of the family, the book-man, the drone, who preferred living at Greyhope, their Hertfordshire home, the year through, to spending half the time in Cavendish Square. Richard was very fond of Frank, admiring him immensely for his buxom strength and cleverness, and not a little, too, for that very rashness which had brought him such havoc at last.

Richard was not, as Frank used to say, "perfectly sound on his pins,"—that is, he was slightly lame,—but he was right at heart. He was an immense reader, but made little use of what he read. He had an abundant humour, and remembered

every anecdote he ever heard. He was kind to the poor, walked much, talked to himself as he walked, and was known by the humble sort as "a 'centric." But he had a wise head, and he foresaw danger to Frank's happiness when he went away. Whilst others had gossiped and manoeuvred and were busily idle, he had watched things. He saw that Frank was dear to Julia in proportion to the distance between her and young Lord Haldwell, whose father had done something remarkable in guns or torpedoes and was rewarded with a lordship and an uncommonly large fortune. He also saw that, after Frank left, the distance between Lord Haldwell and Julia became distinctly less—they were both staying at Greyhope. Julia Sherwood was a remarkably clever girl. Though he felt it his duty to speak to her for his brother,—a difficult and delicate matter,—he thought it would come better from his mother.

But when he took action it was too late. Miss Sherwood naïvely declared that she had not known her own heart, and that she did not care for Frank any more. She