

[Registered according to Act of Parliament in the Office of the Minister of Agriculture.]

## OUR CENTENNIAL STORY.

## THE BASTONNAIS:

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA IN 1775-76.

By JOHN LESPERANCE.

## BOOK I.

## THE GATHERING OF THE STORM.

## XI.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE WATERFALL.

Batoche gave a single moment to deliberation. He stood silently holding the latch of the closed door. Then he walked slowly across the room and entered behind the chintz curtains of the little alcove. What he did there is unknown, but when he issued forth his face was hard set, every lineament bearing the stamp of resolution. He took up the silver casket which had been left in his charge and balanced it in his hands. It was heavy, but heavier still appeared to him the responsibility which it entailed, if one might judge from the deep sigh which escaped him. He glanced at little Blanche, but she still slumbered quietly, with her head resting on the wall and bent over her shoulder. Velours was more wakeful, looking furtively at her master from the corners of her eyes but, knowing his habits well, she did not deem it prudent to stir from her nest or make any noise.

"There is a place of all others," murmured Batoche, "where I may hide this beyond all fear of detection. There neither the birds of the air, nor the beasts of the forests, nor the eye of man will ever discover it. Blanche only will know, but I will not tell her now. She sleeps and it is well."

He then placed the casket under his arm and stole out of the house. He took a footpath leading from his cabin to the Falls, and having reached their summit, turned to the right, descending from one rock to another, until he reached the depths of the basin. There he paused a moment, looking up, as if to ascertain his bearings. An instant later, he had disappeared under the Fall itself. Grasping the casket more tightly under his right arm, he used his left to grope his way along the cold wet, wall of granite. The rocks underneath his feet, some round, some angular, some flat, were slippery with the ooze of the earth fissures above and the reflux foam of the cascade. Beside these dangers, there was the additional peril of darkness, the immense volume of descending waters effectually curtaining out the light of heaven. When he had attained about the middle of the distance between the two banks of the river, Batoche paused and stooped at the mouth of an aperture which would admit only his bent body. Without faltering, and as if sure of his locality, he thus entered into the subterranean cavity. He was gone for fully half an hour, but when he issued forth, he straightened himself up with ease, and by the assistance of his two hands, rapidly retraced his steps to the foot of the Falls. There he stopped, looking above and around him, to assure himself that he was really alone with his secret.

But no, he was not alone. Upon the brow of the waterfall, along the perilous ridge, where the torrent plunges sheer into the chasm below, a fragile figure in white glided slowly with face turned towards him. Her yellow hair, bound with a fillet about her forehead, fell loose upon her shoulders, there was the light of love in her eyes and a sweet smile irradiated her lips. Her white hands hung at her sides, and from under the hem of her flowing garb, a tiny, snowy foot appeared barely touching the surface of the water.

What was it—a phantom or a reality? A mockery of the vapor and the night, or a spirit of God truly walking over the waters? We cannot say, or rather we shall not stop to inquire. Enough that the poor old hermit saw it, and seeing was transported into ecstasy. His whole being appeared transfused into the ethereal vision which shone before him. The gross outlines of old age and shabby costume were melted into the beautiful forms of exultation and reverence. Under the misty moon, under the faint light of the stars, he fell upon his knees, stretched out his arms, and his face turned eagerly upwards in the absorption of prayer.

"Once more, O Clara! Once more, O my daughter! It is long since I have seen you, and my days have passed sadly in the loneliness of solitude. You come once more to smile upon your old father, and bring a blessing upon your orphan child. She sleeps sweetly yonder near the hearth. Protect her from the harm which I know must be impending and of which your visitation is the warning. You are the guardian angel of my cabin, shielding it from all the dangers which have threatened it these many years. Give me a sign of your assistance and I shall be content."

These were the words the old man uttered as he knelt upon the wet rocks. Let no man smile as he reads them, for even the ravings of a diseased brain are beautiful when they have a spiritual significance.

Batoche rose and advanced nearer, with arms still outstretched, as if he would clasp the Spirit

of the Waterfall, and seize the token which he implored. But in this he was disappointed.

Not a word her lips did utter, and without a start or flutter, She crossed her hands upon her bosom in the attitude of prayer; And his stricken soul beguiling with the sweetness of her smiling, Raised her bright eyes up to heaven, and slowly melted into air.

A thick bank of cloud floated in the sky, veiling the moon. The stars paled, and it was very dark. The great Falls thundered with a sullen roar. The wind beat against the forest trees with a moan. The hermit knelt once more and engaged for a long time in silent prayer; then rising, returned directly to his hut. He found little Blanche standing in the middle of the room and in the full light of the hearth, with a scared look in her brilliant, black eyes. He stooped to kiss her, and noticing the supper still untasted on the table, said:

"You have eaten nothing, my dear."

"I cannot eat, grandpapa."

"Then go to sleep. It is late."

"I cannot sleep."

The old man understood. The white wings of the mother's spirit had hovered over the child. "Then pray," he said.

And dropping on her knees, little Blanche repeated all the prayers which her godmother, Pauline Belmont, had taught her.

## XII.

## THREE RIVERS.

Roderick Hardinge's mission to Three Rivers was completely successful. He found that town and the surrounding country in a state of alarm and excitement consequent on the march of events in the upper part of the province. The whole Richelieu peninsula was overrun with Continental troops and the Montreal district was virtually in their power. The only chance was that the British army might make a stand at Sorel, which commanded the Richelieu and the St. Lawrence, at the confluence of these two rivers, and accordingly around that point concentrated the interest of the war in the first week of November. It was only natural, therefore, that the people of Three Rivers should be in a turmoil of excitement, for if the British were unable to hold their own at Sorel, the whole of the St. Lawrence would be swept by the Americans, and Three Rivers would be the very next place which they would occupy.

The arrival of Hardinge was not calculated to allay the excitement, and the tidings which he brought were spread through the town that very night notwithstanding all attempts at official secrecy. The Governor of the town was considerably alarmed.

"The news from above was bad enough," he said to his principal secretary, after reading Hardinge's despatches, "but the intelligence from below is not more reassuring. Three Rivers thus finds itself between two fires. Montgomery from the west and now Arnold from the east. I am very much afraid that we shall have to succumb. And the worst of all is that being masters of the intervening country, with emissaries in all the villages along their route, they improve their opportunity by tampering with our simple-minded farmers. Here in Three Rivers the disaffection among our own people is already quite marked and I very much fear that this new source of danger will only increase it."

The secretary was a very old man who listened attentively to his superior, biting the feathers of his pen and giving other signs of nervous excitement.

"I am certain, sir, that you do not exaggerate the situation," he said, speaking slowly, but with emphasis. "We are on the eve of a crisis, and I suspect that this time next week the town of Three Rivers will be in the hands of the Bastonnais. We have no means of resistance, and even if we had, there is too much dissension in our midst to attempt it with any hope of success. The next question which arises is whether it were best for you to provide for your own safety as well as that of the archives and registers of the town."

"I will do neither," replied the Governor with dignity. "As for myself the duty of my office is to remain in charge until I am dispossessed by force. Personal violence I do not fear, but should I be subjected to such, I will endure it. Remember that you and I know what war is. We both passed through the terrible years of the Conquest. With respect to the archives, you will see that they are properly guarded, but they must not be removed. The enemy are not barbarians. On the contrary it is their policy to conciliate us as much as possible. Besides they will only pass through Three Rivers."

"They will do more than that, sir. As they intend to march upon Quebec around whose walls they will more than probably spend the winter, it will be a matter of military necessity for them to occupy all the little towns and vil-

lages on their route between Quebec and Montreal, both for the sake of their commissariat and as recruiting stations."

"Recruiting stations? Don't use those hateful words."

"They are hateful words, sir. But they express a fact which we must face. Unless we are very careful, this war will be aggravated by the circumstance of many of our countrymen turning their arms against us."

This conversation which we have briefly introduced in order to afford the reader glimpses of the situation, relieved as much as possible from the dryness of mere historical detail, was interrupted by the arrival of a messenger who delivered a letter to the Governor.

"This is from Sorel," exclaimed the official. "It comes just in time to throw light upon our affairs and will enable Lieutenant Hardinge, who returns to-morrow, to bring the latest news to Quebec."

Saying which he read the despatch.

(To be continued.)

Owing to the hurry and pressure of removing our offices from one part of the city to the other, we are obliged to cut the story short at this point for the present, but in the next number we shall give a double instalment.

## CONVERSATION WITH NAPOLEON AT LONGWOOD.

Before leaving the Briars, Napoleon went to Mr. Balcombe's apartments, and invited the young ladies to Longwood, where he said he would always be happy to see them. We reached Longwood in safety, Napoleon evincing no feeling of any kind that night respecting the change. Next day, however, he seemed irritable, and it was some days before he could reconcile himself to the place. By degrees his irritability wore off; but his anger was aroused when he learned that an order had been given forbidding any person to enter Longwood gates without a pass signed by the Admiral; that sentinels were posted all around Longwood; and that Lieutenant (? Captain) Poppleton was to live in the house as his orderly officer. Sir George Cockburn treated him with marked kindness; allowed him to go to a certain distance from Longwood alone, and permitted him to visit any part of the island he thought proper, provided that if he went beyond certain bounds the orderly officer was to attend him. Much about this time a ship came from England with despatches, and informed us that the 66th Regiment had embarked for St. Helena. Sir George came to Longwood with the orders he had received from England, and read them to Napoleon and his generals. He also informed Napoleon that General Sir Hudson Lowe was appointed Governor of the island, and had taken his passage on board of H.M.'s frigate *Phaeton*, which was expected to arrive in about a month's time. At this news Napoleon was greatly chagrined, as he appeared to know Sir Hudson Lowe well. Napoleon remarked to the Admiral, "I hope Sir Hudson Lowe will act in the same manner as you have done, then I shall be comfortable."

Sir George bowed, and remained silent. Mr. Jones having a standing pass from Sir George, often came to Longwood. In a conversation about the war with Bonaparte, the latter spoke very highly of some of his own generals, saying that none could exceed them in their art. Mr. Jones replied, "You were very lucky to fall in with such clever men." "Not at all," said Napoleon. "My maxim was never to promote any man unless he deserved it. No matter how humble a man's origin might be, if he possessed merit or any good qualities I always encouraged him, and by experience he promoted himself. To make a thoroughly good general a man should go regularly through all grades in the army—that is, he should rise from the ranks. If a man had talent, I developed it. Now the practice in the English army is always to promote persons of high birth—money easily purchasing the commission of a Lieutenant-Colonel for a man with little or no military experience; the sons of noblemen can be captains and majors without ever having had a day's march with a regiment, while good soldiers who have fought for their country and experienced the fatigues and hardships of war, if they happen to be of obscure birth, in low circumstances, and to lack wealthy or influential friends, are totally and most unjustly neglected." Mr. Jones then asked Napoleon what he thought of Lord Wellington. "Why," said Napoleon, "Wellington is a good soldier and a brave man; but he does not possess that experience which is requisite in a Field-Marshal. Sir Rowland Hill should have been your Commander-in-Chief. He is far superior to Wellington, and so was General Picton. During the latter part of the war I am convinced that Wellington only followed General Hill's directions. Poor old Hill is a general who fought hard and well for his country, and he ought to have had the honours that have been given to Wellington. The English had several officers more experienced in the field, and who were better commanders than Wellington. I had read an account of Waterloo written by an Englishman, from which it appears that Wellington did the sole business himself; but let any man read a true account of the battle, and then he will see who was really the conqueror. I do not wish to disparage Wellington—far from it—but what would have become of him and his army if Blucher had not come to his assistance so soon?" Mr. Jones remarked that the action must have been dreadful, from

the accounts he had read of it. "Yes," replied Napoleon, "it was sharp; but if I had had taken the advice of Marshal Bertrand and Marshal Ney, I could have destroyed the English army, and afterwards have attacked the Prussians. I was deceived. I thought the Prussians were Grouchy coming to my assistance. Had he come as I expected, the allied army would have been annihilated—we should have taken it *en flagrant délit*; but Providence turned the scale against me."

## HOW A FRENCHMAN DRINKS COFFEE.

He leans forward and picks three lumps of sugar from the bowl with his chubby fingers. Then he carefully piles them like cotton bales in the hollow of his spoon, which is poised across the top of his cup of black coffee. Then he pours over the sugar a tiny glass of cognac, which costs him ten cents extra. The liquor fills the spoon and runs over into the coffee. The sugar is now touched with a lighted match, and the brandy burns with a blue flame which runs all over the spoon and leaps down to the liquor which is floating on the top of the coffee. This is the closing scene of that dramatic entertainment which constitutes every true Frenchman's dinner. While the brandy is burning he takes out a little book of cigarette paper and paws with his finger and thumb in his left breast pocket for a pinch of tobacco. The cigarette is made with a skill which is his natural inheritance, and which is made perfect by the practice of years. It is lighted in the blue flame, and then the burning sugar and brandy are unceremoniously tipped into the coffee, which is now ready to be slowly sipped as the cigarette is smoked. During all this time he has been talking vociferously with the field-marshal already described.

## LITERARY.

THE report is that Mr. Disraeli has flung off a new novel during his "hours of idleness."

IT is stated that Miss Braddon will shortly go to the United States on a reading tour.

AN appeal is made for the relief of the widow and children of the last remaining son of Theodore Hook, who died in poor circumstances.

MR. GLADSTONE'S *Italy and Her Church* has just been published in an Italian dress by the Marchese Carlo Guerrieri-Gonzaga.

COLONEL VALENTINE BAKER, who was sent to the Perso-Turkoman frontier in the spring of 1873, has a volume in the press, under the title of *Coming Events in the Spring: Travels on the Perso-Turkoman Frontier*.

PROF. CROOM ROBINSON, of University College, London, is to edit a review, of which the first number will appear in January, under the title of "Mind." Mr. Herbert Spencer, Mr. Venn, the rector of Lincoln College, Mr. Shadworth Hodgson, and Mr. Henry Sedgwick, as well as the editor, are to contribute to the first number.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S new volume, which is entitled "Social Aims," comprises much new matter, and includes his essays on "Poetry and Imagination," "Eloquence," "Quotation and Originality," "Progress of Culture," "Persian Poetry," "Inspiration," and other articles never before collected.

IN examining the papers of the late George Grote, his widow has discovered a remarkable essay exhibiting the historian's opinions of Aristotle as a moral teacher. This precious paper, so interesting to the philosophical world, is printed among a group of posthumous papers, which will be published in a few weeks.

HERBERT SPENCER is passionately fond of the society of children. He attends the Christmas pantomimes in London regularly, and is a warm friend of all the harlequins of the day. He is on excellent terms also with the various species of clowns, regarding them as a necessary outcome of nature. He is 55, and unmarried.

JOAQUIN MILLER calls Walt Whitman the Milton of America, and declares that he will live when "the dome of the Washington Capitol no longer lifts its rounded shoulders against the cycles of Time." Walt is fearfully worked up about it, and is labouring day and night to say as much for Joaquin, but he's afraid his imagination will require a Jacob's ladder to reach anything to match that "rounded shoulders against the cycles of Time."

A RARE and valuable book was sold at the Hôtel Drouot lately, being a missal, on vellum, of Flemish origin, which had been in the family of M. de Gauvain, of Nancy, for more than 100 years. It is enriched with twenty-three miniatures, five small and eighteen large. The former represents the four Evangelists, and Jesus taken from the tomb by angels. The eighteen others, with their borders, fill the whole page, and some of them have numerous figures, one as many as fourteen. This precious manuscript was put up at 10,000*fr.*, and in a few minutes was bought for 20,000*fr.* by M. Labitte, who was said to be acting for the Duc d'Aumale. It has many points of resemblance with the *Book of Hours of King René*, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, MSS., No. 547.

THE following is the substance of a letter from Mr. Carlyle to one of the subscribers to the address:—"This of the medal and formal address of friends was an altogether unexpected event, to be received as a conspicuous and peculiar honour, without example hitherto anywhere in my life. . . . To you . . . I address my thankful acknowledgments, which surely are deep and sincere; and will beg you to convey the same to all the kind friends so beautifully concerned in it. Let no one of you be other than assured that the beautiful transaction in result, management and intention was altogether gratifying, welcome, and honourable to me, and that I cordially thank one and all of you for what you have been pleased to do. Your fine and noble gift shall remain among my precious possessions, and be the symbol to me of something still more golden than itself, on the part of my, many dear and too generous friends so long as I continue in this world.—Yours and theirs, from the heart, T. CARLYLE."

## ARTISTIC.

THE statue of Burns will be erected in Central Park this year during the Centennial festivities.

A statue of Metellus, the Roman conqueror of Crete, has been found during excavations of that island.