

LOUIS OLIVIER GAMACHE.

THE PIRATE ORBESOR OF ANTICOSTI.

A True Story Translated from the French of M. M. Fabbe J. B. Farland.

BY G. C. G. QUEBEC.

[CONCLUDED.]

This open admission satisfied every one in Rimouski,—none could now deny that the sorcerer of Anticosti was on intimate terms with his Satanic Majesty.

From time to time Gamache was in the habit of visiting the Mountaineer Indians of the North Shore, for the purposes of trade. As will be seen this traffic was by no means free from danger. The company occupying the King's Posts pretended to the exclusive privilege of the fur-trade on that side of the river, and in their treatment of intruders on their usurped domain, they exercised their authority with a high hand. Gamache brought up under English colors, declared himself opposed to every thing like monopoly and in his trim and fast sailing craft, he soon became the champion of Free Trade; scouting subterfuge he made no secret of his doings, offering his effects for sale, under the very noses of the officials of the company, laughing at their menaces, and when their strength was not double his own, setting their threats at defiance. In this line of conduct he was always certain of finding defenders amongst the various Indian tribes inhabiting that portion of the country.

On one occasion his schooner lay in the port of Mingan, surrounded by a circle of Mountaineer canoes, briskly engaged in traffic, when a distant sail appeared to be rapidly approaching. The keen eye of the old sea-wolf, recognized it in a moment to be an armed vessel, one that he had evaded on several former occasions, so turning to the Indians he said, "My friends, to-morrow at an early hour we will resume our business, at present I see I must give yonder gentlemen a lesson in sailing,—good bye,—but do not go too far out of the way."

The anchor is weighed, and whilst the enemy speeds rapidly towards him the fleet of canoes disappear and Gamache's schooner glides swiftly out of port, with every stitch of canvas set. On comes the cruiser sanguine of success, but she had reckoned without the skilled pilot before her, one who knew well how to preserve the advantage of a start.

Night came on, more and more indistinct became the vessels, till at last they appeared like shadows upon the water. "Now is the time" said Gamache to his companion, "stir up the fire in the galley, that the scoundrels may see our whereabouts,"—"good,"—"now then to give them a jack o' lantern run." Fastening together several ends of deal in form of a raft he plunged the lighted brands from the fire into a barrel of tar, which he fixed firmly to the raft and lowered into the water.

"Now then, hand in the rope boy, and let her drift." "Whilst they amuse themselves running after it, we'll take a tack or two and get back to Mingan,"—"with all their craft they'll never think of looking for us there."

Great was the disappointment of the officers of the cruiser, when after a long chase, they only came upon a fire, nourished apparently by the surrounding waters. Still they continued their search, tacking to the south, but with the only result of persuading the sailors that the pursued had escaped under the guise of a jack o'lantern.

Great also was the surprise of the officials at Mingan, when the following morning they perceived Gamache's schooner, anchored quietly in the place it had occupied a few hours previous, and around it a triple ring of Mountaineer canoes.

But whilst Gamache, thus threw himself on the generosity of the Indians, in general, there were nevertheless occasions on which he was obliged to be on his guard concerning individuals of the tribe.

One day he was alone, quite alone in his establishment, when a canoe, hitherto hidden by the rocks, made its appearance upon the beach. An enormous and powerfully made Indian, armed to the teeth got out of it, and proceeded with a firm step towards the house; by his side hung an empty bottle and as the man was evidently under the influence of liquor it was probable he intended using physical means to get it replenished.

Gamache saw this, but as he was past the age of combat, his safety necessarily consisted in securing himself against attack. The plan was soon taken,—the enemy had to be kept from the premises, he accordingly stationed himself on the threshold, a carbine in hand and two or three guns beside him. In a loud and imperative tone of voice he called out, "Stop!—I command you,"—but the stranger continued advancing in apparent unconcern,—one step more and you're a dead man," roared Gamache. The step was taken, but before the Indian had time to make a second ball had been sent through his leg and he fell to the ground. Gamache was instantly beside him, and having taken away his arms, he lifted him upon his back, carried him into his house, washed and bandaged the wound and laid him upon a mattress. When the servants, who had been absent during this scene returned, they were surprised to find their master waiting most assiduously on a sick man.

As soon as the Mountaineer's wound had healed and he was able to return to his people, his host informed him that it was time to depart; he accordingly led him to the beach,— "There," said he, "is your canoe and there are some provisions for you, but take a word with you, rum bottle that you are, if ever you let it be known that Gamache lives alone, never show your face here again, for rest assured if you do I'll send a ball through your head with the same certainty that I did through your hide."

The lesson had effect not only upon him, but also upon other ramblers of his tribe.

The rough reception given to this Indian was, however, an exceptional case; for generally speaking Gamache was most hospitable in his entertainment of strangers, especially where he had no reason to suspect them of ill intentions. Sometimes said he, "I have had hearty laughs at the expense of those who allowed themselves to be frightened by the reputation I had acquired." The following may serve as an instance.

During a fearful tempest, when the waters raged furiously in the gulf, a young pilot unable to sustain their violence was compelled to seek shelter in Gamache Bay. He had heard the reports in circulation concerning this redoubtable individual and despair alone prompted him to venture near

the tiger's den. Gamache then upon the beach perceiving his perilous situation, called to him to approach. This display of confidence was more to his advantage than any show of fear could have been.

The pilot having placed his boat in safety, advanced trembling towards the house. "You are welcome," said Gamache, extending his hand, "I am glad to see you for I have not heard any news for some time,"—"Come in, let's have a chat while the good woman gets supper ready."

On entering the young man perceived that the walls of the habitation were garnished with fire arms, and the sight chilled him to the very heart. Oh! how he longed to be back in his boat; tossed and buffeted by ever so tremendous a sea, but alas, every possibility of return had vanished.

Supper over, he told the funniest stories he could think of, and the evening passed as pleasantly as could be under the existing circumstances. Having received the thanks of the host, he arose to depart, intending to pass the remainder of the night in his boat. "No! no, my friend," said Gamache, "you shall not leave this, the sea is yet too heavy without and the night is cold and damp, you cannot leave the bay and most certainly you shall not sleep in your boat, I've a snug little corner up stairs for you and to-morrow morning, if you are alive, you will be able to leave in comfort."

It was impossible to reject this offer without giving offence to the man who had received him with so much hospitality; there was nothing for it, but to remain; accordingly they ascended to the attics by means of a steep flight of steps on the outside of the house. Gamache pointing to a bed, said, "there, sleep as soundly and as long as you can, the bed is soft with the down and plumage of game, for I've a sure hand and never miss a shot." On retiring he closed the outside door securely, so that escape by this means was out of the question. The traveller alarmed by this precaution tried to keep awake till the moment of danger should arrive,—his prayers were much longer this night than usual,—alas! to die so young and so suddenly. Who would take care of his poor mother, now that age and feebleness was upon her.

Without undressing he threw himself upon the bed, resolved not to close an eye that night, but at last he succumbed to the fatigue and weariness he had experienced during the day, and in a few moments he was sound asleep.

But even in his sleep did terror haunt him. He dreamed that he was surrounded by a thousand perils. At one time he thought he had escaped from the cave of a tremendous giant, but oh! he was followed,—followed with fearful rapidity; still he managed to out-strip his tormentor,—at last he reached his boat, his sails were set and he was safe. At that moment a thundering blow on the partition, aroused him to the reality of his position,—before him stood Gamache, with lantern in one hand and a loaded fire-arm in the other. The tales he had heard were true then, too true. "What, awake already, but what makes you so pale," said Gamache. "Ah, I'll warrant me you've been told that Gamache kills all his guests, prepare then for the moment is at hand; he raised the gun and hung it upon two nails in the partition, then drawing from his pocket a flask of spirits and a tumbler, he drained a glass to the health of the affrighted man and invited him to return the compliment. "Come take a good pull at it you'll sleep the better for it, and if Gamache comes to attack you defend yourself,—see there's a gun I have brought you." "Well, well, comrade," said the master of the house to his guest the following morning "You were a little frightened last night," "I saw this and thought I might as well give you a good start at once." "You know me now and should you ever hear the timid say that Gamache kills his visitors, tell them they lie. The Devil is never as black as he is painted."

We had arrived at the same conclusion on leaving Gamache to return to our vessel. Since then I have never seen the sorcerer of Anticosti. In the month of September, alone unattended and unseen. For several weeks nobody had visited his establishment and when they did, before them lay the corpse of the once brave and independent Louis Olivier Gamache.

CANADIAN RAILWAYS.

In a review of the commerce of Toronto during 1863, by the conductors of the *Globe* newspaper, we find the following relating to Railways:—We freely accept what is said of the Managers of the Great Western, and of the Northern, but dissent from the strictures on the Grand Trunk and on through traffic. Without the through traffic none of those roads, certainly neither the Grand Trunk nor Great Western, could be kept open. If closed, what would become of local traffic?

The year has been a moderately prosperous one for Canadian Railways, and especially for those centering in Toronto. The increase in earnings which we have noted in each successive review continues, and though the progress is slow the roads are gradually developing a traffic which must eventually yield a good return, with economy in management. The through freight business, though no doubt largely increasing the receipts, has yielded no profit. The rates were ruinously low, and their division between other roads or lake craft, has left those of our roads engaged in the business but a very small proportion. The year has been remarkable for a great reduction in rates of fare for passenger traffic, from all competing points, but unlike the freight business the policy has been attended with the best results. The low rates have induced increased travel, and better profits have unquestionably been made out of this source of revenue than ever before. The local traffic along all the lines has continued to increase, and would grow still more rapidly did the roads generally adopt a system tending to develop and encourage it. There is no source of revenue more profitable or satisfactory, and none which demands more attention, both on the score of policy and because the public money of the Province is largely invested in these roads.

These remarks apply with great force to the Grand Trunk, which, though essentially a Provincial undertaking, has, during the year, been so conducted as to seriously interfere with the internal commerce of the country.

Those who had closely watched the management of the Great Western road, by Mr. Brydges were under the impression that he, of all men, would encourage the de-

velopment of local business, and that he would so frame his freight tariff that a show of fairness would be evinced to all sections of the Province. Perhaps such may be his eventual intention, so soon as he succeeds in getting competing routes under his own control—for it is said he is still aiming at the amalgamation attempted in 1862—but in the meantime a great public work is prostituted either to public ambition, or to a policy destructive of one of its own and the country's interests. We hope that another year will show some improvement in this respect; at any rate, that the road will not have another such year of hard usage without some return.

We append a statement of the monthly receipts of the Grand Trunk road, by which it will be seen that a very considerable addition has been made. We fear that the working expenses, though no doubt reduced to the lowest practicable point, are still very large in proportion to the earnings, and from a knowledge of the rates at which a great bulk of the traffic was carried, we are persuaded that the per centage of expense to receipts is larger than ever before on this or any other Canadian or even American road.

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| January        | \$ 412,796.44  |
| February       | 338,080.99     |
| March          | 346,381.55     |
| April          | 324,114.18     |
| May            | 344,953.68     |
| June           | 363,151.10     |
| July           | 341,605.04     |
| August         | 320,484.64     |
| September      | 385,471.48     |
| October        | 412,577.54     |
| November       | 436,513.76     |
| December       | 434,014.42     |
| Total          | \$4,453,147.72 |
| Total for 1862 | 3,975,071.00   |

Increase last year. . . . . \$ 478,076.72

The Great Western Railway has been forced into a competing business, and the year's profits are no doubt materially lessened thereby. The table which we present below indicates a fair increase in receipts, which we hope is not overbalanced in losses by low rates and American currency. The road has been managed with very general satisfaction to the people along its line, and the local traffic has been well provided for. Mr. Swinyard is constant in his endeavours to increase the efficiency and lessen the expenses of the Company; and for a stranger in the country, his management for the year reflects much credit on him.

The following is a return of the monthly traffic receipts by the Great Western Railway for the year just closed:—

| MONTHS.   | 1863.       | 1862.       |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| January   | \$ 283,561  | \$ 250,130  |
| February  | 282,026     | 204,635     |
| March     | 308,069     | 228,948     |
| April     | 254,382     | 221,235     |
| May       | 206,668     | 193,652     |
| June      | 195,695     | 176,233     |
| July      | 187,489     | 181,950     |
| August    | 176,876     | 176,245     |
| September | 254,517     | 240,049     |
| October   | 288,681     | 280,354     |
| November  | 256,813     | 274,866     |
| December  | 268,268     | 257,759     |
| Total     | \$2,953,051 | \$2,686,060 |

This shows a gain of \$266,990 in the year. There was an increase every month except November, when the loss was \$18,000. The largest gain was in March, when the excess over the same month in the previous year was \$79,000.

The figures which we present below in relation to the Northern Railway do not indicate much increase in extent of traffic, but we are quite certain that there is a greater proportion of profit in the amount earned than in the other roads. Indeed, the Northern has reached a point in the economy of its expenditure which we believe is not attained by any other road on the continent. We are informed that the average working expenses last year was only some 52½ per cent on the receipts, a proportion that is far below any return ever yet made by an American Railway. The expenses in 1862 were 75 1-5 per cent, showing the marked decrease of 22 7-10 per cent. This is a most gratifying result, far more so than a large increase in the receipts, with a still larger proportion of expenses. Mr. McGrath and Mr. Cumberland have accomplished this too without impairing in the slightest degree the efficiency of the road; nay, it has never been more useful and popular amongst its customers than it is now, and we think its Superintendents are entitled to more than usual credit for their management. It is a significant fact that this increased profit is the direct result of a decrease in through business, and an increase in the local traffic, as the following will show:—

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Tons of local freight carried in 1863   | 145,994 |
| " " " " " " " " " " " "                 | 109,337 |
| Increase, local, 1863                   | 36,657  |
| Tons of through freight carried in 1862 | 65,008  |
| " " " " " " " " " " " "                 | 11,313  |
| Decrease, through, 1863                 | 43,694  |

The number of passengers carried in 1863 was 107,832 against 95,303, in 1862, showing a gain of 12,529.

The following is a return of the monthly traffic receipts of the Northern Railway for the year 1863:—

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| January              | \$ 23,173.55 |
| February             | 37,281.23    |
| March                | 35,593.33    |
| April                | 38,318.06    |
| May                  | 49,530.96    |
| June                 | 45,048.25    |
| July                 | 37,729.29    |
| August               | 25,003.99    |
| September            | 31,026.22    |
| October              | 39,041.89    |
| November             | 29,164.47    |
| December             | 24,725.25    |
| Total                | \$406,616.45 |
| Gross earnings, 1862 | 406,238.02   |
| Increase, 1862       | \$ 378.43    |