

THE CLOUD.

A NEW-BORN cloud arose from out the west
 All but invisible and on its way,
 In morning robe of diaphanic gray,
 Like some sweet dream, when love disturbs our rest,
 Sped straight to land; at evening it was drest
 In gold and crimson and in wondrous play
 Of chasing colours fell, like aerial spray,
 Around a hoary mountain's sun-kissed crest.
 When rose the moon in all her glory bright,
 'Twas clothed in silver, like a form divine
 Holding a chalice at the sacred shrine
 For sacrifice—and in the dead of night
 Its love dissolved in sweet refreshing showers
 And shed its blessing on a thousand flowers.

SAREPTA.

EARLY PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN CAPE BRETON.

EVERY one familiar with Nova Scotian history as told in the pages of Hali-burton, Murdock, Campbell, and Hannay has learned that the first settlement of Europeans in Nova Scotia was made by the French under De Monts at Port Royal in 1604-5. Brief notices of some former efforts at colonization or discovery by English and French navigators are given. The Cabots, father and son, are spoken of; so are Baron de Lery and the Marquis de la Roche; but one searches in vain for any fitting allusion to those early Portuguese explorers who, in point of time, came between the Cabots and Baron de Lery, or for accounts of the settlements they undoubtedly made more than half a century before De Monts feasted his eyes on the kingly beauty of Port Royal. Yet they are deserving of mention, if we read the records of their voyages aright, and in what follows an attempt is made to show the part they played in Nova Scotia's history.

In the opening years of the sixteenth century two voyages were made under the auspices of the King of Portugal, around which some mystery hangs. In 1500 Gaspar Cortoreál explored Nova Scotia and Newfoundland in search of a passage to India in northern latitudes. He made no settlement, but sailed along the coast as far north as the fiftieth parallel, where his further progress north was stopped by ice. From one of the countries he visited he carried off fifty-seven natives, resembling Micmacs, pronouncing them "admirably calculated for labour." This country he called Terra de Labrador—"land of labourers"—though that name was afterward transferred to a region farther north. If we examine a map we will see that the fiftieth parallel passes to the south of the peninsula now known as Labrador, which could not therefore have been the original "land of labourers." In Cape Breton there is another Labrador, though the spelling has been corrupted to Bras d'Or. In all the older maps and documents—from Denys' map compiled in 1672 to the census returns of 1774—the name is however spelled Labrador. Hence since Labrador cannot be of French origin, as *bras* is masculine and the corruption, if such there were, would be to *Lebrador*, and as the Labrador of to-day is too far north to have been visited by Cortoreál, we are forced to the conclusion that Cape Breton was the original Labrador—the land that Cortoreál desecrated with what Lord Brougham would call "the traffic in blood." There are beside other and perhaps stronger proofs than these: Nova Scotia (including of course Cape Breton) was sometimes known as Terras Corte Reales, and in old maps was represented with the Portuguese flag flying over it. Still further, authentic history tells us that Gaspar Cortoreál with three ships made a second voyage in the following year, but never returned. Tradition has it that this expedition was wrecked off the cape, Breton (the most easterly point in the island); that many of the men escaped to the shore; but among them the Micmacs recognized some of their betrayers of the previous year and massacred all. Even yet, in the long winter evenings, as Micmac families gather around the wigwam fires, patriarchal men may be found telling their grandchildren how their sires—if they did not slake "the ancestral thirst for vengeance"—partially repaid the heartless Southerners for their wanton cruelty.

In 1502 Gaspar's brother, Miguel Cortoreál, set sail with another expedition, and he, too, never returned. These are the only voyages made at this time of which we can with certainty speak, but the great probability is that there were many others. In some one of these the name Baya Funda—"the deep bay"—was given to that sheet of water lying between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. This name in a very slightly changed form it still retains, notwithstanding that the French settlers called it "Baie Française."

An old Spanish authority† describes the Portuguese as making in 1521 a settlement at Placentia in Newfoundland. This they were afterward compelled to abandon because of the severity of the climate. In doing so they coasted along the southern shores of that island as far as Cape Ray. Here they turned and sailed south to the first island, where, having lost their ships, they were obliged to remain. "We have had no news of them," says he, "except through the Biscayans, who are in the habit of going to that coast and procuring and exporting many things to be found there. They requested that we should be informed how they were situated, and they want priests to be sent thither; that the natives

were well-disposed and the land productive and good, as we know, and is stated by every one sailing thither." Now a glance at a map shows that, sailing south from Cape Ray, the first point where they would strike land would be Cape Breton, very near, if not exactly, at that part now called Ingonish. This name in its modified form of Niganis is familiar to every reader of De Laet*; for that author tells us that "the Portuguese place Port Niganis from eighteen to twenty leagues to the north-west of Cape Breton, and that there they once had a settlement, which they have since abandoned." In and around Ingonish even to the present day there are many mounds, which, if Micmac tradition is to be relied on, were made by white men previous to the coming of the French. Only a few years ago, in Neal's Harbour (a little fishing village close beside Ingonish) while men were at work excavating, preparatory to laying the foundation for a church, a cannon, formed of bars of iron bound round with hoops or bands of the same metal, was unearthed. Every school boy knows that cannon of so antique a make was not in use after 1540, and probably not for nearly a score of years before. The only conclusion to be drawn from this evidence is, that early in the sixteenth century, possibly we may accept De Suza's date (1521), the Portuguese had a settlement at Niganis, now Ingonish, on the island of Cape Breton. What became of this settlement we cannot discover. Perhaps the cold of a Cape Breton winter proved too much for the Portuguese, accustomed to a summer climate, and they returned home. But though this effort failed, the idea of founding a colony in these northern latitudes was not wholly abandoned. On the contrary more than once were expeditions sent out with that object.† On one of these occasions they left cattle on Sable Island.‡ "Sable," says Edward Hayes, master of the *Golden Hinde*, one of the vessels that accompanied Sir Humphrey Gilbert on his ill-fated voyage in 1583, "lieth to the seaward of Cape Breton, about twenty-five leagues, whither we were determined to go upon intelligence we had of a Portingall (during our abode in St. John's), who was himself present when the Portingalls (above thirty years past) did put into the same island both neat and swine to breed, which were since exceedingly multiplied."§ "Some sixty years before," says Champlain under date 1604, "they (the Portuguese) left some cattle on Sable Island."|| Charlevoix states emphatically that the convicts left by the Marquis de la Roche on Sable Island met with the wrecks of Spanish ships that had been sent to make settlements in Cape Breton, and while they used the wrecks to build houses for themselves, they found cattle which had escaped the wrecks and multiplied on the isle. Before this zest for colonization in the north had died away, the Portuguese succeeded in forming a settlement in Cape Breton and spent at least one winter there. We quote from Champlain:¶ "In this place (Cape Breton) there are several harbours and passages where they catch fish, viz.: English Harbour (Louisbourg), distant from the Cape Breton about two or three leagues; and the other Niganis, eighteen or twenty leagues to the north. The Portuguese at one time wished to inhabit this island, and spent one winter there, but the severity of the season made them abandon their settlement." That the Portuguese only remained one winter, we are hardly prepared, despite Champlain's authority, to admit. Anthony Parkhurst, an English navigator of some repute in a letter dated 15th November, 1578, ** writes: "I could find it in my heart to make proof whether it be true or no, that I have read and heard of Frenchmen and Portugals to be in that river (St. Lawrence) and about Cape Breton. If I had not been deceived by the vile Portugals descending from the Jews and Judas kind, I had not failed to have searched that river, and all the coast of Cape Breton, which might have been found to have benefited our country." Further on he states that the French, Portuguese, and Spaniards carried on the fisheries on the Grand Banks, and that generally there were as many as fifty Portuguese vessels thus employed. It is quite possible that these "vile" persons who deceived this Bristol merchant were the Portuguese fishermen who frequented the Banks and coast of Cape Breton during the fishing season and returned home each fall, or whenever they had obtained a sufficiently large catch, but such men would not have so much reason to deceive as men who had actually settled. And there is this other fact to be remembered. What is now known as Sydney Harbour was for many years, dating from about the middle of the sixteenth century, called Spanish River. If tradition is accurate the Portuguese (Portugal had been annexed to Spain in 1580, hence the name Spanish) had here for some years a colony, which, owing to the severe winters, they afterward sold to the English.

The conclusion from what we have written is that the Portuguese in three waves visited Cape Breton. Under the Cortoreáls they came simply as explorers, not with a view to settlement. Some twenty years later they planted a colony probably at Ingonish—this colony they subsequently, perhaps because of the severity of the climate, abandoned. About the middle of the sixteenth century they made repeated efforts at colonization, all of which eventually failed. On one occasion they succeeded in making a settlement, at what point is uncertain nor can it be fixed: and again the cold (according to Champlain), or British gold (if we accept tradition), induced them to seek new possessions elsewhere.

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* *Novus Orbis of Johannes de Laet*. Antwerp, Lugdun, Batav. apud Elzevirios A^o. 1633.

† *Novus Orbis*, etc., p. 36.

‡ 2 Hackluyt, p. 684.

§ 1 Champlain, p. 41.

|| 1 Charlevoix, p. 169. We have taken for granted that Charlevoix meant Portuguese ships; for when he wrote there was no difference, Portugal and Spain being united.

¶ Champlain, Vol. II., Chap. xvii.; Vol. IV., Chap. vii.

** 2 Hackluyt, p. 684.

* See Bryant, *Pop. Hist. of U. S.*, Vol. I., p. 140.

† De Suza, writing in 1570.