

OLD NEW-WORLD STORIES.

THE SAINT CASTINES.

I.

THE Treaty of Breda (1667) had just been signed, thus closing a war not noted for any great or remarkable events, between England, France, Holland and Denmark. By one of the stipulations of that Treaty the country called *Acadie*, *Acadia*, or *Nova Scotia*, which had been—nominally at least—in possession of England for the preceding thirteen years, had been formally ceded to France. It may here be remarked, parenthetically, that the name *Acadie*, Anglicized continually into *Acadia*, was not, as the early French navigators supposed, the aboriginal proper name of the country. It meant simply the common name as applied to place, locality, or country; as, for instance, *Sagaben-acadie*—now “Shubenacadie”—the *Sagaben*—an edible root—abounds. From the frequent use of this word by the natives as a noun of place, the early French navigators inferred that it meant the name of the country as a whole. In ceding *Acadie* to France, England seems to have entirely ignored the fact that, in 1656, eleven years before the signing of the Treaty of Breda, the Lord Protector, and practically the Sovereign of England, had, in due form, granted the whole of *Acadia*, or *Nova Scotia*, conjointly to Sir Thomas Temple, William Crowne and Charles Amador de la Tour. We know that Sir Thomas Temple had never made any surrender of his rights under that grant. We know that, however it may have been with his colleagues, La Tour, at least, resided in the country so granted until his death, in 1666, a year before the conclusion of the Treaty of Breda. It may have been that the Government of Charles II. scorned to recognize, as involving an obligation upon them, any pledge, or contract, of the republican monarch, Oliver Cromwell. However that may be, one of the present day cannot but feel astonished at the coolness with which the Governments of England and France—but more especially the latter—were wont, in those times past, to ignore, or utterly disregard, the claims and rights of private individuals throughout the making of these many grants and cessions.

Whoever was to suffer from the fact, *Acadie* was now the property of France; and, in 1668, Mouillon du Bourg was sent out to take formal possession of the colony for the King of that country. We hear but little further of this Du Bourg. He merely took possession of *Acadie*, and forthwith handed it over to Emmanuel Le Borgne de Belle Isle, as provisional Governor. This Le Borgne—now and henceforth “De Belle Isle”—was a son of that Emmanuel Le Borgne who, in 1654, claiming to be a creditor of D'Aulnay de Charnisè, had come across the Atlantic to levy, by his own act, upon *Acadie*, as part of the estate of D'Aulnay; and who was himself seized and made prisoner by Sedgewick, one of Cromwell's captains.

Neither Du Bourg nor Belle Isle was destined to reign long over *Acadie*. It must be noted that, about this time and for long afterwards, changes in the personnel of French officials were of remarkably frequent occurrence. Governors, Lieut.-Governors and other officials in military command, were frequently, and to them often, inexplicably surprised by finding themselves, at very short notice, superseded by rivals who, in their turn, soon found themselves dealt with in like manner. The official as well as the private correspondence, and the legends of the period, indicate much jealousy and suspicion towards their compatriots, on the part both of office-holders and of aspirants for official position. Back-biting and scandal-mongering were, among them, disagreeably prevalent. It is possible that the disposition which led to these unamiable habits may account, in a great measure, for the subsequent decline and eventual ruin of the French power in these regions. In July, 1670, Hubert d'Andigny Chevalier de Grandfontaine, then in Quebec, was formally appointed Governor of *Arcadie*; and, early in the autumn of the same year, we find him making his way down the river Penobscot to take charge of his command. Grandfontaine had been a captain in the lately disbanded Regiment de Carignan, so celebrated for its prowess in the early Canadian wars; and he was now a Major of Infantry. The new Governor's retinue, on this occasion, formed a picturesque and formidable-looking flotilla. He was accompanied by Captain Vincent Baron de Saint Castine, who had been his companion in arms in the Carignan Regiment. He was also attended by Captain de Chambly, Lieutenant de Soulanges, Ensign de Villieu, and other French officers whose names have become distinguished in the annals of Canada. With these was a small party of French soldiery. There was, too, a party of Indians, much more formidable as to numbers. These belonged mainly to the large and powerful tribe of the Abenakis. As these savages were not, strictly speaking, upon what is called the “war path,” those of the *braves* who were possessed of wives and families were, for the most part, favoured with their presence on this occasion. The whole party, French and Indian, were afloat in the symmetrically formed and gracefully gliding birch-bark canoes of the country. The above-mentioned Baron de Saint Castine was a nobleman of Bearn, and therefore belonged to a race especially noted for its fierce, erratic and adventurous character. In him it might be said that the characteristics of his countrymen were developed to a superlative degree. In him were blended the widely separate qualities of the traditional knight-errant of the age of chivalry, and the fierce North

American savage of the seventeenth century. Withal, he was, in heart and soul, a thorough Frenchman. As such, the guiding principle of his daily life—indeed, the absorbing tenet of his religion, as it would seem—presented itself in the guise of a passionate, undying hatred of England. It was a question, however, whether even this feeling had not become intensified and concentrated into a hatred of *New England*. Already, in 1670, he had become the evil genius of that country, a character which he was, for long years, to fill. In the Iroquois wars, Saint Castine had already become familiarized with the prominent characteristics and modes of warfare as practised by the native Indian tribes—both of the terrible “Five Nations” themselves and of those other native tribes who had become the habitual allies of the French. Prominent among the latter, both for their prowess and numerical strength, were the Abenakis. This tribe, or nation, occupied the Western and Midland part of what is now the State of Maine, together with New Hampshire, Vermont and the Eastern Townships of the present Province of Quebec; but, of course, being, like all the other North American aborigines, of more or less migratory habits, they sometimes, as the result of successful wars, extended beyond these boundaries, whilst, at others, they were driven far within them. No sooner had Saint Castine doffed the livery of the King of France than he boldly threw himself among the Indians as one of themselves. But amongst whatsoever people thrown, he was born to command. He was especially by Nature fashioned to rule and guide such peoples as were our North American Indians, warlike, savage tribes, in the days of their might. There is, perhaps, a savage element in the character of every civilized man, which requires only favourable circumstances under which to announce itself. However that may be, Saint Castine had enough of the savage in his nature to endear him to the savages. He had other characteristics, physical and mental, which enabled him easily to command them. As a rule, and contrary to the prevalent popular belief, the White Man is, in *physique*, the superior of the so-called Red Man. As a rule, the former notably surpasses the latter in agility, physical strength and powers of enduring fatigue. It was soon perceived that Saint Castine possessed these qualities in an eminent degree; and that he could surpass his dusky associates in their own most vaunted achievements, whether with bow or firelock, line or net, knife or tomahawk, or even in managing the crank canoe. These warrior and wild-wood accomplishments, together with his dauntless courage, instead of arousing anything like jealousy among the Indians, soon caused Saint Castine to be with them the most admired and trusted of men. Still more was he endeared to them through his cordial hatred of the *Anglais*—“Yanglees”—a name finally worn down into “Yankees.”

Among the most attached of St. Castine's Indian friends, and among the most cordial of his admirers, was *Madockawando*, a noted *brave* and a chief of the Abenakis. Rumour said—and rumour had many tongues among the dark people of the forest, as well as among the fairer faced gossips of town and settlement—that still another attachment already existed between the family of the woodland chieftain and the Bearnese paladin, an attachment in which the fair and favourite daughter of the former, *Melchide Pidikwamisco*, was largely both giver and receiver. The fair “Matilde”—for such was the name by which the Abenaki maiden had eventually been received into the Christian Church—was now of the party accompanying her father and acknowledged lover, in the present expedition. On swept the flotilla, down the beautiful Penobscot, by wooded shores now already gorgeous in the rainbow tints of nearly approaching autumn. Arrowy and unbroken was the flight of the graceful canoes; for, strange to say, their occupants did not even dream of encountering either ambush, or open attack, from any waylaying enemy. Rapidly and gaily, onwards they went with the stream, until that fresh-water current was changed for the meeting tide from the ocean—still on, until the majestic river gradually expanded into a wide estuary. Then the little armada gracefully rounded in to the shore, its voyage being ended for the present, and the canoes were grounded beneath the friendly walls of Fort Pentagoet. This Fort Pentagoet, at the time to which we now specially refer, consisted merely of a number of buildings, for the most part constructed of heavy squared logs, with one of hewn stone and shingle roof, and also a small chapel, severally fronting upon an open square, the whole being surrounded by a stout and lofty stockade. It was built after the prevalent fashion of the so-called forts of the period, but was in poor repair. It was defended nominally by twelve guns, which would now be considered mere toys. It afterwards became more worthy of note as a real fortification, and it was the fate of Pentagoet, in the course of its history, to submit to many changes of masters. England and France, throughout their contentions for supremacy upon this continent, never could—or, at all events, never did—agree upon the boundaries of *Acadie*. Sometimes the river Kennebeck was held to be its western limit; sometimes, the Penobscot; at other times, the St. Croix; and again the isthmus of Missiguash, thus limiting *Acadie* to the peninsular portion of the present Province of Nova Scotia. There was never any doubt that the latter was *Acadie*, or a part of *Acadie*. Each power, whilst in possession, claimed and endeavoured to hold up to the most extended of these boundaries. Thus Pentagoet was long subject to the eventualities of a border post, on the verge of territory of two powers almost constantly at war. The present visit of Chevalier Grand-

fontaine was to receive from the agent of the English Governor, a formal transfer of the post, Pentagoet still remaining in the actual possession of the English. Just at the time now under consideration, Pentagoet was considered by the Governors of both Canada and Acadie to be of great importance, as an advance post of the French in the direction of New England. The French had recently heard of England having made a direct and definite proposal to her North American Colonies, to the effect that the latter should seize Canada. They had not heard that the New Englanders had declined to acquiesce in the project, as one utterly impracticable. The French—especially those resident in Canada and Acadie—were in a painful state of suspense. They were apprehensive of a formidable attack from England and her Colonies, but they knew not with what might, nor from what quarter, the blow would come; nor, with absolute certainty, if it would come at all. Certainly, however, it was desirable to prepare to meet it, so far as that was possible. Hence the large escort of the French Governor, now come to receive the transfer of the fort. Grandfontaine and those of his French followers who, from their rank, might be properly called to his councils, with Madockawando and other of the most noted *braves* who were present, held long consultations upon the aspect of affairs. One point resolved upon without hesitation was, that Saint Castine should make Fort Pentagoet his headquarters, retaining in garrison such force as he pleased, or as volunteered to remain with him. Grandfontaine, with the remainder of his followers, proceeded on their way eastward to Port Royal, which was still regarded as the capital of Acadie, and to the other posts of which he had to take like transfers. We find that soon afterwards Soulanges was placed in charge of the posts on the river St. John. It may be observed by the way that on the 20th October, 1672, he received a “concession of land, of four leagues frontage, stretching along the east side of the river St. John, with the use of the dwelling of Fort Jemseck, so long as he shall continue commandant on said river.” For a short period previously and commencing on the 2nd of September, 1670, he had been in charge of Port Royal as Grandfontaine's lieutenant. It may be mentioned here, as fixing the local habitation of some of Saint Castine's neighbours, that, of even date with the above mentioned grant to Lieutenant Soulanges, two other concessions of land were made to two brothers of his, upon the St. John, one of them extending to the Bay of Fundy. On the 18th of October ensuing, a grant upon the same river was made to Martignon d'Apprendistiqui; and another to Jacques Potier de Saint Denys. It was this Apprendistiqui who, at a former period, had married *Jeanne*, the natural and legitimate daughter of Charles Amador St. Etienne de la Tour, and a *Milicete* squaw. These concessions of land upon the fertile and beautiful banks of the St. John, in addition to which there were many others in succeeding years, were of extensive seignories to be held upon the terms of the feudal law; but the Seignors were like the Baronets of Nova Scotia, to whom England had made similar extensive concessions; they failed in their engagements and neglected their privileges, and their lands continued to be wilderness.

To return to Fort Pentagoet. Years have elapsed. Another large, and varied, and gay canoe party has arrived at that fort, now escorting Saint Castine and his bride; for, after a longer delay than one would have expected, and certainly after mature consideration, the fair and fascinating brunette, Matilde, *nee* Madockawando, became the Baroness de Saint Castine. All necessary rites were observed to make the marriage legally binding according to the laws of France and of the Roman Catholic Church. It may here be mentioned that throughout the French settlement in North America it was no uncommon occurrence for the men of that nationality to take to themselves wives from the aboriginal races. In this instance, Saint Castine, nobleman as he was, had set his less eminent fellow-countrymen an example by practically averring that legal marriage was preferable to illicit intercourse. In marked distinction with the French were the habits of the early English colonists, with whom it was extremely rare to marry or cohabit with Indian women. But now Saint Castine and Pentagoet soon became names of dread throughout New England. Gradually the latter, as the headquarters of the doughty and enterprising baron, was converted into a military post of respectable strength. Its garrison, too, was not a mere congregation of wild Indians. Saint Castine's reputation in partisan warfare soon became widely spread upon both sides of the Atlantic. Doubtless, as is usual in such cases, the versions of his daring exploits lost nothing in the frequent telling of them. Other gallant young gentlemen were fired by his example. France, religion, glory—alike lured them on; and to these motives were added the novel fascinations of a wild-wood life. They eagerly placed themselves under the leadership of Saint Castine. Besides the common class of adventurers accustomed to the wild life of the native savages, the autocratic chieftain soon found himself surrounded by a band of hardy young representatives of the nobility and gentry of France. He was, in a manner, a New-World, wild-woods “Arthur,” surrounded by his knights. Or Pentagoet had become, in effect, a sort of feudal Castle of the European Middle Ages, where Saint Castine held rude court in the midst of his retainers of most diverse origin. Meanwhile this Baron de Saint Castine became to the people of New England a chronic terror—an unceasing torment. He seemed to have the gift of ubiquity, was “restless as the hat of a Frank,” and intangible as a Will o' the Wisp. He was heard of here, there, almost every-