

LA PETITE ROCHELLE AND THE RIVER RESTIGOUCHE.

"And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle,
Fair city of the waters."—MACAULEY.

The spirit stirring lives of Lord Macauley's Huguenot Ballads, the product of his early poetic genius, ring in our ears when we look upon the picturesque surroundings of what was the site of a little French settlement known a hundred and thirty years ago as the "Town of La Petite Rochelle."

It is situated a little above the port of Campbellton, the head of ship navigation, on the opposite or north side of the River Restigouche;—"the river that spreads like the hand"—a name appropriately characteristic of its five large branches;—or, according to the more romantic, but equally appropriate interpretation of an old Indian chief who resided there fifty years ago,—"the River of the land of snow,"—which accords well with the six feet in depth of it that falls in winter on the mountainous region it waters.

The impression produced by the romantic scenery of the site of La Petite Rochelle is enhanced by the historical associations connected with it.—The naval action that took place at its destruction is a tragically interesting incident in the war of the conquest of Canada; and was the last conflict in arms that occurred on it, excepting the gallant defence of Fort St. Lewis, by Commandant Pouchot, against General Amherst.—Montreal capitulated to him on his arrival before it, without fighting.

The name alone of La Petite Rochelle presents a link of historical association between the beginning of French settlement in Canada and Acadia, under De Monts and Champlain, and the conclusion of the grand old days of chivalry.—Grand,—to use a borrowed simile—like wild mountains seen through the purple haze of distance, which mellows their asperities and develops the comparative elevation of their lofty summits, and the grandeur of their outlines, with a perfection that too near a view fails to afford.

Viewed across the field of Canadian history, these two great and good men,—De Monts, the devout, but liberal and patriotic Huguenot—and Champlain,—that wise, yet heroically daring "king of men," as Homer would have called him—a devoted patriot and pious Catholic—are the two most eminent figures that loom high over the horizon of the past of Canada. The enduring friendship between them, of which the most noble natures alone are capable, did much to establish that freedom from religious intolerance and persecution elsewhere too prevalent—for which liberality the French-Canadian people, to their honour, have ever been as distinguished as for their benevolence, so often manifested, in the old wars, in the ransoming of English prisoners from their Indian captors, and assisting them to return to their friends.

After King Henry the Fourth of France, had appointed him Lieutenant General of "L'Acadie" and granted him a patent of exclusive right of trade in the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence, and "Baie des Chaleurs."—De Monts associated with himself many prominent men of Rouen, and of the warlike and wealthy commercial city of Rochelle; the majority of whom were Huguenots. Among them there were, doubtless, men of rank, who had followed the "White plume of Navarre" or fought on the other side at the battle of Ivry; remarkable as being the last great victory that was won by charge of lance, by mail clad men;—men, whose external world of life, and internal world of ideas, differed as much from ours as their garb and arms.

The power and wealth of Rochelle, from its vast commerce,—like that of Venice (of the Veneti) its predecessor on that coast, in the days of Cesar — and its semi-independence, under its municipal rights—like those of the great municipalities of Spain that Charles the Fifth had to reduce by a sanguinary civil war—made it, like them, obnoxious to the authority of the crown; and aggravated by religious strife, led to its like sanguinary subjugation.

Such conditions recall the days of the territorial consolidation of France; and the assimilation in national character and sentiment of its people,—so long retarded by the feudal independence of the great vassals of the Crown; and by factional and religious commotions. They recall the days of the renaissance, under Francis the First, (notoriously as the first Christian King proclaimed in Canada,) with the rapid development of culture and civilization—maritime discovery and commerce—and of luxury, and ultimately of the royal authority which became absolute.

And what is the contemporary history of the land of La Petite Rochelle, the Restigouche country and the "Baie des Chaleurs?"

Jean Alphonse de Nancetoigne in 1544 says that Mal Baie, on the Gulf Coast of Gaspé, had long been frequented by Biscayan fishermen, but says nothing of their visiting the "Baie des Chaleurs" adjoining. In 1534, Jacques Cartier ascended the Bay, till he came in sight of the lofty range of Tragadigash, near the mouth of the Restigouche, he met a party of natives in about fifty canoes. They spoke a language which, L'Escarbot says, was not spoken by the natives there in his time, when Micmac was their language; so they were not Micmacs, and their words were not Algonquin. The three hundred natives he found and communicated with, at Paspebiac, further eastward, might have

been Micmacs, for he says they were different in nature and in language from the Indians of Gaspé. The latter, as his vocabularies shew, spoke the same language as the great nation of Huron-Iroquois race of Hochelaga, whose great chief, Jacques Cartier says, ruled over the countries of Hochelaga, Canada (Quebec), Saguenay and Hongueda (Gaspé), of whom, Donacona, the chief of Stadacona (Quebec), was a vassal.

But alas! for the men of Hochelaga when they pointed up the Ottawa from the summit of the Montreal mountain, and told him that the bad people, the Agahudas (Algonquins) their enemies, were there, their own doom was then on the wing.

Seventy years afterwards Hochelaga and its dominions had ceased to exist, and their Huron-Iroquois hundred (or Mowhawks) that Jacques Cartier found in Gaspé, had disappeared,—driven out or exterminated by their enemies, the Abenakis and Micmacs. The latter have been for upwards of two hundred years the only resident Indians of the peninsula of Gaspé, the "Baie des Chaleurs" and Restigouche.

They number a few over six hundred souls, of whom three-quarters reside at their village of Mission Point, adjoining the site of "La Petite Rochelle." Prior to the middle of the last century they had a village on the opposite side of the Restigouche a little further up, surrounded by a stockade. There they had a church—it was the Old Mission where they were first converted to Christianity—and a graveyard the bones from which have been at times exposed by the encroachment of the river. In Nova Scotia, their hereditary abode, and New Brunswick, the Micmacs number three thousand souls.

Of the history of the overthrow by the Algonquins, of the dominion of the Huron-Iroquois in Lower Canada, including Gaspé, and their expulsion, and the occupation of the peninsula of Gaspé by the Micmacs, an Algic race, we have no positive record. Tradition speaks of the massacre of a great number of Canadian Indians near Bic, on the Lower St. Lawrence, which seems confirmed by the discovery of a great quantity of human bones in a cavern there. And Jacques Cartier tells us of the bitter exasperation with which Donacona, chief of Quebec and its environs, spoke of the slaughter, about two years before, of two hundred people by their terrible enemies, who were continually making war on them; from which we may assume that the beginning of the end had then already come of Donacona's people. This was in the year 1533. Their enemies though designated Tou-damans—a term afterwards applied to the Iroquois—men of the south—were more probably the then incoming Micmacs; and Donacona's people themselves, like the men of Gaspé, if we accept of Jacques Cartier's statements, and his vocabulary of the language of the latter, were, as held by the talented and experienced "Père Lafitau" corn-growing Huron-Iroquois, in race, or by affiliation; and not the starving, miserable Adirondacs that Champlain met at Quebec. The names of the rivers and places—Restigouche, Tartigouche, Tragadigash, Rimouski and Kamouraska, in and adjoining the Peninsula of Gaspé are not pure, if at all Algic or Micmac words; as these languages have no sound, or letter "v."

We have, however, a reliable traditional account of the final conflict between the Micmacs, of the Restigouche and their hereditary enemies, of the Huron-Iroquois race, the Mohawks, which may have occurred a century later. In it the Micmacs were victorious. The first British settler learned the particulars of their tradition from them, which he communicated to Daniel Fraser, Esq., from whom that beautiful property at the junction of the River, Matapedia and the Restigouche was purchased by the present President of the United States, for occasional summer residence.

As this battle is the greatest event known in the Indian history of the Restigouche, and the tradition of it has been confirmed by the finding of the bones of the slain, the particulars of it may be worth recording:—

On that occasion the Mohawks had come down the Restigouche, in great force, for the purpose of attacking the Micmacs in their home. The battlefield was the long island, in the Restigouche, at the head of the tide that can be seen from the Micmac Village, near the site of La Petite Rochelle. The Micmacs were not taken by surprise; their warriors posted themselves in the lower end of the island. The Mohawks beached their canoes at the upper end of it, and landing, marched down towards the lower end of the island to fight the Micmacs assembled there in force, to whom their attention was exclusively directed. But the Micmacs, anticipating this movement of the Mohawks, had previous to their arrival, caused their own squaws and boys to secrete themselves among thick bushes on the side of the upper part of the island, with directions to steal up quietly and carry off the canoes of the Mohawks, as soon as they could do so undiscovered.

The stratagem was successfully executed. After hard fighting, the Mohawks were defeated; but for them there was no escape. Their canoes were gone. Those that tried to swim ashore were swiftly followed by Micmacs in their canoes and tomahawked in the water. Those who reached the shore were slain there or died of their wounds among the rocks, where they had hid. All that remained on the island, that had not fallen in the fight, were ruthlessly massacred.

Thus ended the last battle of the Micmacs with the Mohawks, who were of the same Huron-Iroquois race as the nation from whom the Micmacs had wrested the peninsula of Gaspé.

On making a road for themselves up the south bank of the Restigouche, the first British settlers found the bones of the slain that had fallen after reaching the shore, in considerable quantities, and deposited them in the hull of a little old schooner that lay aground there. The bones were very old-looking and seemed to have lain there very long.

If L'Escarbot was right in saying that the language of the natives that Jacques Cartier met at the very head of the Baie des Chaleurs, was not that spoken in his time (Micmac) they must have been of a different race, afterward expelled or exterminated by the Micmacs.

Notwithstanding the obscurity of the imperfect records and the apparently contradictory character of the earliest Indian traditions, they, when carefully studied, agree in indicating the outline of a great drama in the early history of the Indians of New France, (or more correctly Lower Canada in three distant parts.

1st. The intrusion, at a not exceedingly remote date, of a corn-growing, more advanced Huron-Iroquois race, (Agnier or Mohawk) from the west, into the valley of the St. Lawrence, which they conquered, and connectedly occupied, till about the middle of the sixteenth century, down to the Gulf, including Gaspé—countries previously inhabited by Algonquin natives.

2nd. Their utter expulsion, (in Lower Canada only,) from the Valley of the St. Lawrence, by a great wave of Adirondac Algonquins, from the north, chiefly by the river Ottawa.

3rd. And then for about sixty years, a successful Mohawk or Iroquois invasions for the reconquest of the country from which their race had been expelled; or in revenge for their expulsion or in hostility then originated.

Treading as it were, in their daily pursuits on the graves of their enemies, with the scene of this last bloody tragedy constantly in view from their cabin doors at the Mission Village, and vague traditions of mutual atrocities in their minds, it is no wonder that the "Mohawk" should long be the "Bete Noir" that haunted the imagination of the Micmacs of the Restigouche. It comes to recollection that when returning to camp in uninhabited places through the heavily wooded, deep, narrow dells, back from the Restigouche; when the sombre shadows of the high hills, aggravated the gloom of approaching nightfall, we were struck with the evident uneasiness and earnest objections of our Micmac attendants, and the furtive glances they cast around them, into the recesses of the forest, if one of the gentleman of our party, thoughtlessly began to talk about the Mohawks; which I had to forbid being done, under such circumstances, in the hearing of the Micmacs. About that time—forty years ago—some of the Micmacs left their cabins and hid themselves in the woods for three successive nights, from having heard a rumor that the Mohawks were coming back again to attack them. Even now, it is said by good authority, that some of the old people among them superstitiously cherish the tradition that the Mohawks are to come back again to revenge that last massacre, at the long island on the Restigouche.

The French Acadian village, or town, as it is called in official dispatches of La Petite Rochelle, was situated a mile and a half above Mission Point, on the north side of a beautiful expanse of the River Restigouche, three and a half miles in length by two in breadth, which is encircled by a highly picturesque amphitheatre of bold hills, from five hundred to upwards of a thousand feet in height; varying in form from lofty peaks and high swelling gorgeously wooded hills to minor eminences, that sweep steeply down in graceful slopes, skirted with rich pasture to the banks of the Restigouche, or those of a small tributary called the Little River Restigouche. Its valley up which passes the old Kempt Road, stretches up north westward from the west side of the site of La Petite Rochelle, which is sheltered on the north shore by the hills that rise rather steeply behind it.

About a mile and a quarter below Little River is Point Bourbon, and the lower boundary of the site is about three quarters of a mile further down the shore, at Officers' Brook, where the Grand Nouvelle Road, down to the head of the "Baie des Chaleurs" turns off eastward.

Looking up between the hills where their outline is broken by the valley of a small tributary stream, are seen the more remote and lofty summits of steep-faced table mountains, one of which rises to an elevation, by approximate measurement, of seventeen hundred feet.

On the other side of the Restigouche, opposite Mission Point, where the River is narrowed for a short distance to half a mile across, but widens again to two and three miles in breadth—is situated the Port and village of Campbellton.

Behind the high ground and ravine in rear of the village rises the vast, bare, precipitous face of the Peak or Sugar Loaf of Restigouche, a thousand feet in height. From its summit which is accessible only by the flank, a magnificent view is obtained of the mountainous scenery along the course of the broad and beautiful river, and far beyond it.

In the foreground on the 5th July, A. D. 1760 the river beneath was the scene of the naval action between four French ships, under Captain Danyac, and five English ones commanded by Captain Byron, and between it and the wild hills behind, extends the broad projecting plain on the upper side of which was the site of the settlement of La Petite Rochelle, which was destroyed on the same day. Events, which from their occurring in a remote, and then un-

known locality and from their insignificance, compared with the great events of the time, were all but unnoticed, but that may be thought interesting enough to justify the endeavour to aid in recording them.

(To be continued.)

PERSONAL.

THE Princess Dolgourika has published an interesting memoir of the private life of the late Czar. Her own career has a tinge of Louis XIV. romance, and she reminds one of the transcendent Montespan. It was at a drawing-room of her sister, married to an Italian nobleman, that Alexander first set his eyes upon her, and from that moment he was transformed. She was equally fascinated, in spite of the age of her imperial lover. The Czar was never truly happy except in her company, and he doated on her children. The Princess is only in the forties and still superlatively beautiful—a blonde of the Caucasus, with blue almond eyes, a skin of transparent whiteness and a matchless figure. She is now living in France, devoted to the memory of her husband and the education of her family.

A CHARMING anecdote about the Baron de Charette.

During his late visit to Canada, he called upon the former almoner of the Papal Zouaves, M. Moreau, curé of St. Bartholemi, by whom he was introduced to the nuns and pupils of the convent of that village. The presentation of the young ladies, their address, and the whole scene made such an impression upon the General that he could not retain his tears. Later on as he was about to take his leave, he turned with soldierly abruptness to the superior nun and said:

"Madam, what are you going to think of the Zouaves now after having seen them weeping?"

The nun replied with prompt tact:—

"Oh, Mons. le Baron, we know that you never weep except in the presence of children."

THE Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise are spending a very quiet vacation without show of any appreciable kind. They had a successful trial with the salmon, and are now enjoying themselves in the peaked solitude of the old Citadel of Quebec. People who imagine that loyalty is more demonstrative and obtrusive in Canada than among Englishmen, will see their mistake on looking at the last number of the London Graphic, where there are a number of amusing pictures representing the curiosity of passengers on the *Parisian* at every movement of Her Royal Highness. It was hoped that His Excellency would be able to open the Provincial Exhibition in September, but his trip to British Columbia is decided upon, and he cannot come.

MR. GOLDWIN SMITH is once more returning to Canada, after a year's sojourn abroad. May we expect that he will settle down into practical hard work for the literary and practical good of Canada?

WE stated in this column, last week, that Hon. Mr. Chapleau must, in the nature of things, exchange the Provincial for the Federal arena. In the shuffle that took place last week Mr. Chapleau's health entered as a very large factor. As Premier of Quebec he could possibly have no rest. As Secretary of State for the Dominion he need have nothing to do until the meeting of Parliament.

HON. MR. LYNCH has now attained in the Cabinet of the Province, a position commensurate with his talents, and proper to the representative of the Protestant minority. Mr. Lynch is still a young man, only 36 years of age, modest and silent, but quite equal to the responsibility which he bears. He must now assert himself more than he has previously done, and with Mr. Chapleau away, will be directly appealed to in the direction of the Departments.

THE new Premier of Quebec is a big, burly man, rotund, rubicund, clean-shaved, black-haired and handsome withal. Mr. Mousseau is only middle-aged, and his political career dates back only nine years. He is fond of journalism, having founded a couple of papers, and contributes political articles to the principal weekly papers printed in the French language.

It is a satisfaction to learn that Hon. Mr. Mackenzie has almost entirely recovered his health. The ex Premier was hardy, but never very strong, and it is his remarkable force of will that has carried him along so far. He is fortunate in being able to consecrate the rest of the summer to absolute repose.

M. LEON SAY, the prospective new Premier of France, is a thorough type of the Parisian—handsome, stylish, and worldly in the distinguished meaning of that word. He is the son of one of the founders of the French school of political economy, and is an adept in that science. A nephew of his, Henri Say, was a resident of Montreal for several months, a year or two ago. This youth was a yachtsman and dog-fancier.

THE sailing of the Duke of Connaught for the seat of war in Egypt is an act of wise policy, as it is of patriotic duty. The English people are quick to appreciate a move of that kind, and a feeling of satisfaction is general throughout the kingdom. It is to be hoped that His Royal Highness will have an opportunity to distinguish himself.