



PAINTING THE ROBE.

Peace River, which rises in British Columbia and flows through a pass in the Rocky Mountains into the northern plains, was named "the Unchaga," or Peace, "because" (to quote Captain W. F. Butler) "of the stubborn resistance offered by the all-conquering Crees, which induced that warlike tribe to make peace on the banks of the river, and leave at rest the beaver-hunters"—that is, the Beaver tribe—upon the river's banks. There is a sentence in La France's story that intimates a more probable and lasting reason for the name. He says that some Indians in the southern centre of Canada sent frequently to the Indians along some river near the mountains "with presents, to confirm the peace with them." The story is shadowy, of course, and yet La France, in the same narrative, gave other information which proved to be correct, and none which proved ridiculous. We know that there were "all-conquering" Crees, but there were also inferior ones called the Swampies, and there were others of only intermediate valor. As for the Beavers, Captain Butler himself offers other proof of their mettle besides their "stubborn resistance." He says that on one occasion a young Beaver chief shot the dog of

another brave in the Beaver camp. A hundred bows were instantly drawn, and ere night eighty of the best men of the tribe lay dead. There was a parley, and it was resolved that the chief who slew the dog should leave the tribe, and take his friends with him. A century later a Beaver Indian, travelling with a white man, heard his own tongue spoken by men among the Blackfeet near our border. They were the Sarcis, descendants of the exiled band of Beavers. They had become the most reckless and valorous members of the warlike Blackfeet confederacy.

La France said that the nations who "go up the river" with presents, to confirm the peace with certain Indians, were three months in going, and that the Indians in question live beyond a range of mountains beyond the Assiniboinis (a plains tribe). Then he goes on to say that still farther beyond those Indians "are nations who have not the use of fire-arms, by which many of them are made slaves and sold"—to the Assiniboinis and others. These are plainly the Pacific coast Indians. And even so long ago as that (about 1740), half a century before Mackenzie and Vancouver met on the Pacific coast, La France had told the story of an Indian who had