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THE INDIAN.

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Where are our Chiefs of old? Where our Heroes of mighty name?
The fields of their battles are silent—scarce their mossy tombs remain!—OSSIAN.

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THE YORK PIONEERS.

GATHERING OF EARLY SETTLERS AT THE EXHIBITION PARK.

Interesting Address by the Rev. Dr. Scadding—The Historic Past of Fort Toronto—Memorable Events and Incidents.

The York Pioneers and kindred associations held a meeting on Tuesday afternoon in the Exhibition park near the side of Fort Rouille. A platform had been erected near the spot, and shortly after two o'clock a meeting was organized. Mr. Withrow, president of the association, occupied the chair. There were present veteran pioneers from various parts of the province, and the veterans spent a pleasant time in exchanging recollections of the past.

The Chairman after expressing his pleasure at the attendance of so many pioneers at the Exhibition, called upon the Rev. Dr. Scadding, President of the York Pioneers.

REV. DR. SCADDING'S ADDRESS.

Rev. Dr. Scadding, who was enthusiastically received, after a few felicitous remarks by way of welcome and introduction, said:—To meet and welcome you here to-day has been especially pleasing to many of us on account of the associations connection with the spot on which we are gathered together. Allow me for a few moments to direct your attention to them. It is curious that it should so happen that this Exhibition park should contain within its bounds a spot whose old associations harmonize so well with the objects to which the park is devoted, and at the same time are of such great interest to the people of the country at large in an historical point view. This park contains within its bounds the scene of the first operations of traffic and commerce which ever took place on the shores of this bay on any important scale. It thus contains within its bounds the cradle spot of the past and present trade of Toronto. The cradle spot of Toronto itself. And we are standing upon the very spot to which I allude, for it was precisely here that the old French trading post of Toronto stood, from which our city has taken its name. The immediate object of the old trading post of Toronto, when it was first established here, by order of Louis the Fifteenth, of France, now one hundred and thirty years ago, was to check a certain current of Indian trade which was perceptibly beginning to set in towards a new post which had been established by the British on the opposite side of the lake at Choueguen, Ochoeguen or Oswego, as we now speak. The Toronto trading post was to intercept at this point the traffic which came down this way along by the valleys of the Holland river and the Humber from the North and North West. The post here was styled a fort;

but not in a military sense. It was simply a cluster of store houses for goods, surrounded by palisades, just like one of the ordinary Hudson's Bay posts still to be seen in the North-West. A deep furrow in the soil just here plainly showed the lines of the palisades only a few years since. Such posts, to be sure, were wont very soon to turn into real forts, as witness the three other posts, which, with Toronto, formed a quadrilateral on the shores of Lake Ontario—Fort Frontenac on the French side, Fort Oswego on the opposite or Iroquis side, in the British interest, as we have heard, and Fort Niagara, also on the Iroquis side, but in the French interest and intrusively so, as the British maintained. These three posts began ostensibly as simple depots for goods to be used in the Indian trade, but were soon transformed into military strongholds. The Toronto post itself, we find, had, in addition to a caretaker's dwelling, quarters for fifteen soldiers.

On the green sward just here, then, inside the spacious area enclosed by the palisades, the products of humanity industry were spread out for the first time in these parts, for the purpose of inspection and mutual traffic and interchange. In the mind's eye you can see on the one side fabrics and manufactures, brought laborously hither from the old world across the sea; on the other side, also brought laboriously hither, often from great distances, products of the labour and toil of the untutored handwork and ingenuity, rude it may be in aspect, but worthy of all respect, as shewing the possession of the same instincts, the same tendencies, the same capacities in germ, as those that actuated the more favoured members of the human family with whom they were here confronted. On the one side, you have the Frenchman, all activity, and fluent of speech, exhibiting to the best advantage, cheap articles in wool, in cotton, in flax, and it may be, to a limited extent, in silk, from the looms of old France, rolls of scarlet and blue cloth, calicoes, linens, ribbons, braids, showy in colour and pattern, to please the fancy of the expected customer; cutlery of a certain class, hatchets, knives, simple tools, implements and utensils; powder and shot and ball; kettles of brass and iron; beads, toys, mirrors, trinkets. On the other side you have the red man of the North, taciturn, sedate in manner and movement, but keen-sighted and shrewd, opening out his packages of peltry of various kinds and in various forms, bundles of beaver, otter, fox, marten, deer, bear, wolf and buffalo skins; moccasins and shoepacks of well-cured buckskin and buffalo hide; birch bark mokocks full of pemmican or maize; basswood baskets, chequered blue, red and white; bows and arrows, carved war clubs and stone pipes; pouches, belts and leggings tastily fringed, and adorned with

stained quills of the porcupine. As to the fascinating, fatal firewater, it was not perhaps openly offered for traffic, but kegs and flasks of it were not far off. We have it on record in the annals of this very fort, Toronto, that on one occasion it was on the point of being sacked and pillaged by a strong band of passing Otchibway Indians for the sake of the brandy that was known to be stowed away therein. That good wine was to be had there we learn from the journal of the French Abbe Picquet, who visited the place in 1752. For ten years, from 1749 to 1759, season after season, a busy interchange went on just where we stand, in such wares and commodities as those which have been enumerated, the earnest, so to speak, and foreshadowing of the trade and traffic on the grander scale now represented by the stores on King street and Yonge street, the warehouses on Front street, the freight depots, elevators, steamers, trains, crowded platforms and wharves of the Esplanade, and last, but not least, by the multifarious buildings and their contents, animate and inanimate, of this park.

The spot on which we stand has associations too of another kind. Along the edge of this bank ran a well-travelled trail leading down to a point towards the east end of the bay, opposite to what used familiarly to be called, even in my day, the Carrying place; that is to say, the narrow isthmus of neck of sand across which boats bound from the east or to the west were lifted. This trail was of course a continuation of the Indian road, still so happily traceable and so carefully preserved and marked by Mr. Howard, in High park, which led out to Lake Huron by the valleys of the Humber and Holland rivers. Along this path—on a section of which many of you are now standing—how many good and enterprising men connected with the early history of our country, have passed and repassed! La Salle, for one, certainly camped hereabouts in 1680, as we gather from one of his letters when on his second expedition to the Mississippi. Father Hennepin, the Franciscan, also rested here, as we learn from his book of travels: and possibly Charlevoix, who gives the spot the name of Teiaigon, equivalent to a grand portage or carrying place. Father Picquet, of Oswegatchie, lodged within the palisades of the fort here, and made a note, as we have already heard, of its good wine. Alexander Henry, famous explorer of the North-West in 1760-76, was here, and Major Rodgers, distinguished in the old French war, the hero of the well-known Rodgers' Slide, opposite Anthony's Nose, down on Lake George. The Major remarks, in his account of his visit, that there was a space of about three hundred acres cleared of woods round the site of Fort Toronto. The distinguished military engineer Gother Mann, was here in