

THE STORY OF BARON ANSELME DE ST. CASTIN.

Among the many distinguished officers holding rank in that famous regiment known as the Carignan Salieres, was one St. Castin, a most unique and picturesque character. When that regiment disbanded, he with many others of the French noblesse took up settlement in old Acadia, and soon by trading acquired a great fortune and became very influential among the savage Algonquins. He was a typical *coureur de bois*, and he ranged through the forest of Penobscot as their chief.

In his wild free life he forgot the beauty of the fair maids of France. To him nature had endowed other daughters with loveliness and charms. The black-eyed Merihaha, daughter of Modockawando the principal chief of the tribe, became the bride of the young and brave Castin.

Although exposed to peculiar dangers, and often beset by many enemies, he gathered about him his faithful Indians and bade defiance to all the intrigues that the English made against him. Under such circumstance, and of such parentage was Anselme de St. Castin born, and when his father returned to sunny France he came into possession of all his wealth and led the Indian warriors as his father did of old.

We first see him appearing amidst the struggle for supremacy between the French and English at the old fort Port Royal. He had not yet reached the prime of his manhood, yet his physique and bearing was that of a noble. His hair fell in wavy profusion upon his broad shoulders; his dark eyes flashed lightning; his brawny arms were strong as oak; his step was that of a deer. Although he felt affection for his savage half-brothers, there might be seen in his mein a haughtiness of spirit that raised him above the rude Micmac warriors among whom he lived; a spirit to which the Indians unconsciously submitted; a spirit of daring which would brave all dangers before surrendering to the mercy of a foe; a spirit of honour which eventually turned his life into a happy romance.

In the spring of 1707, Col. March landed a thousand men at the head of Annapolis Basin in order to capture Port Royal; but Subercerse, who was then commandant, had made every preparation within the fort, and besides had secured an alliance with the

Indians outside. Again and again did the savages break from ambushade, and as their loud war-whoop pierced the evening air, the towering form of Anselme de St. Castin was seen leading his fierce warriors upon the British ranks.

Meeting such repulse the English abandoned the endeavour for three years when they returned with renewed determination for victory. That October the sixteenth day of the month, saw the tricoloured ensign of France hauled down and the British red, white and blue wave proudly over the old fort.

Castin towards the following spring, became so hard pressed by his foes that he decided to embark for home. Once amidst the wild forest of Penobscot he would be able to bid defiance to all such. A fellow leader L'Hermite and a young Indian chief Nocawado accompanied him in his flight to the river of refuge.

On the eighteenth of June 1712, the three reached the mouth of the river, and the month had nearly ended when the smoke of Pentagoet his headquarters came in sight curling over the high pine tree groves.

Having landed Castin sent scouts to various outstations to warn him of the approach of any enemy.

One morning as the rising sun was just gilding the eastern horizon, Castin, who was walking along the shore, caught sight of a canoe coming swiftly towards him. As it drew neare, he saw that it had but one occupant, a gentilhomme rover by the name of St. Aubin. "Ho!" cried Castin, "are the huntsmen after the moose." "Aye," answered St. Aubin, "the troops of the English led by Col. Waldren, are by this time at the mouth of the river. Unless the moose strikes for his forest covert the huntsmen will track him down." "Well said and well it shall be done." "L'Hermite is a good fellow, Nocawado is faithful. If you and your Indian guide will join us, there will be five to start to-morrow through the wilderness for Quebec; are you agreed?" "St. Aubin and Castin were always good friends—we will go."

Early next morning two canoes were launched into the Penobscot, with two or three days provisions, carrying the five fugitives. Out each canoe struck from the shore into the main stream, the paddles keeping time with gentle plash in slow and measured rythme. The light came faint from the east. To the eye of Anselme de St. Castin, the river never seemed more grand and beautiful. Presently he spoke up,