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THE BARON DE ST. CASTIN

Among the numerous titled European adventurers who, during the two centuries immediately succeeding the discovery of America by Columbus, impressed their names or personality upon the scattered settlements of the New World, was Jean Vincent, Baron of St. Castin. The family seat of this nobleman was near the town of Oléron, District of Béarn, in the lower Pyrenees. While yet a very young man, St. Castin had joined the regiment Carignan Salières, a famous corps which took part in the war of the Fronde, and was afterward incorporated into the military contingent furnished by Louis XIV. to Leopold, Emperor of Germany, in his campaign against the Turks, who, having overrun Transylvania, threatened to carry fire and the sword into the valley of the Rhine. In 1665, the Carignans were transferred to Canada, where the warlike Iroquois were proposing the extermination of the feeble French colony on the St. Lawrence. The gallant gentlemen who composed the staff of the Carignans must have been struck with the sharp contrast betwixt their old battle-fields and the new. They were marched into what was then a howling wilderness, and were sent to fight a foe not more merciless than the unspeakable Turk, but more alert, elusive and difficult to draw into pitched battle.

When peace with the Iroquois was finally established, the dusky savages reduced to submission, and the regiment had been disbanded, the condition of the officers and gentlemen attached to the expedition became somewhat mortifying and uncomfortable. They were accustomed to feats of arms, military adventure and the chase. They were left in a foreign and barbarous land, without occupation, and without any means being offered for their speedy return homeward. Did they would not, and to beg they were ashamed. They spent their time in hunting and fishing, and their children, born of Indian mothers, were brought up in idleness and ignorance. The scanty chronicles of the time furnish a deplorable picture of these wasted fragments of a high European civilization grafted on pagan stock in the wilds of the New World.

St. Castin, however, was too romantic and too adventurous to bury himself in one of the remote seigniories of Canada, and he soon made his way to the French settlements on Penobscot Bay, establishing himself on that promontory at the confluence of the Biguyduce and Penobscot Rivers which now bears his name. It is not certain how St. Castin was led to