

town of Montmagny, 'twas then the pastoral parish of St. Thomas; imagination can yet lend it, through the enchanting prism of years, its rosiest tints. 'Twas, in verity, a hotbed of political agitation in 1837-8, though my Scotch grandparent, inaccessible to surrounding disaffection, never swerved an inch from his allegiance to his sovereign. Not even the fierce, gushing speeches of his esteemed friend and trusted medical adviser, Dr. E. P. Taché, the village Esculapius and moving spirit of the place, could prevail against the deep-rooted loyalty of my aged relative and protector, Daniel McPherson, J.P. A United Empire Loyalist, he had bid adieu to Philadelphia, and went in exile in 1783; settled and prospered in Canada; and died at St. Thomas in 1840, at the ripe age of 87 years, through his long, blameless career, true to the teachings of his younger days."

"Kindly can I recall the wild meetings of its young men, the inflammatory addresses of its self-elected leaders at this momentous crisis in Canadian history. But disloyalty was more than once rebuked. Methinks I see the genial, portly Laird of the Seigniorial Manor, William Randal Patton, bustling round—eager to throw oil on the troubled waters—a splendid type of the sturdy Briton, as well as an enterprising exporter of Canadian timber, admired even by his French Canadian *consulaires* and retainers, though occasionally there cropped out, to my regret, in his discourse, a dash of franco-phobia, hard for me to forgive, in spite of my partiality towards him."

"Had he not been to me a tried, a revered friend, ever since my most tender years? Did he not allow me—and how I prized the privilege—to roam unheeded through his woods and plantations, to scan every rock, every tree, in quest of birds' nests, which, however, I was not to disturb. The owner himself of a large aviary and lover of song birds, had he not taught me the first lessons in ornithology—a study which has so agreeably filled so many spare hours in after life?"

"Later on, on my admission, as a Barrister, to the Quebec Bar, had he not entrusted me with his lucrative seigniorial business—the recovery of the arrears of seigniorial rents?"

"Did I not, at all times, meet with a cordial welcome at the hospitable board of the Manor—among his five handsome, manly boys—alas! now cut down by the scythe of the destroyer to one single representative?"

"Commodore, forgive me for rendering this tardy tribute to my dear old friend—so suddenly, so mournfully, snatched away from a true-hearted wife and disconsolate family, on the 19th August, 1853."

"I fancy I can still catch a glimpse—as he hurries past my happy home—a long white house, with green blinds, hid among Lombardy poplars, amidst a plum orchard and flower garden, dear to a beloved sister—of Baron Jacques Oliva, the St. Thomas Nimrod *par excellence*. I see protruding from the mouth of his game-bag a Canada goose (*autarde*), shot by him at Dupuis Point, and which his inseparable sporting companion—his Newfoundland dog, "Gaspe"—swam out for and retrieved in the basin of St. Thomas."

"Why do you style him Baron?" asked Mac of the Isles.

"It was a *soubriquet*, bestowed on him on account of his grandiloquent style of speaking and pompous deportment."

"The scene changes, but let me continue: Here comes, erect, with a jaunty military swagger, a former Lieutenant of the Canadian Voltigeurs, in the American war of 1812—brave Doctor Taché."

"Little does he dream, in 1837—when discanting with such vigour on the misrule of England and her dead ear to colonial grievances—that the time will come, when a

belted knight, he will, as Sir E. P. Taché, be honoured with the rank of Aide-de-Camp to the Queen."

"Dr. Taché, during the eventful year of 1837, was a daily attendant on his aged patient—I may add, his respected friend, Daniel McPherson, my grandfather; right well can I still recall, after more than a half century, the dialogue exchanged between the physician and his patient, on a memorable incident of the insurrection."

"Tidings of the death of heroic Dr. Chenier, at St. Eustache, had just reached us. A version, much exaggerated, was the universal theme of comment—Chenier, mortally wounded, had fallen to the ground. His remaining strength enabled him to raise himself on one knee, and, though wracked with pain, he succeeded in taking aim and shot down an English trooper, when a thrust from a British bayonet ended his career. Tradition says a British corporal—out of revenge—tore out and eat his heart; but this is one of the many legends to which Chenier's death gave rise."

"The Doctor, as usual, made his professional morning call to his octogenarian patient. Pains and aches having been discussed, Mr. McPherson enquired about the news of the day, when Dr. Taché, with flashing eyes, sprang from his seat, and after succinctly relating the particulars of the disastrous engagement at St. Eustache, added in French—"Le Dr. Chenier, M. McPherson, est mort comme un héros de l'ancienne Grèce!" (Dr. Chenier died like a hero of ancient Greece). To which Mr. McPherson emphatically replied—

"No, no! Doctor! Chenier was a rebel—a rebel to his king and country!"

"The good Doctor was beside himself with excitement. All this I heard and saw with my own ears and eyes."

"Commodore, the old U. E. Loyalist of 1783, for all that, never ceased to esteem his trusted physician and friend of 1837."

"Here he comes, the plucky Voltigeur officer of 1812, walking arm-in-arm, past the grand parish church, with his friend and neighbour notary, Jean Charles Letourneau, the member for the county—to whom he will shortly succeed; both are hurrying to greet the irrepressible, eloquent agitator—rebel, perhaps, some will say—Louis Joseph Papineau, as he drives past in his soft-cushioned carriage (no railroads in those days) to Kamouraska, stopping a minute to receive a welcome at Mr. Mercier's village school, where I was then the biggest boy of the class."

"There goes, in his black cassock, the worthy parish priest, Rev'd Curé Beaubien—still in the heyday of his usefulness! How many more familiar faces of the period could I recall?"

"Those were, doubtless, Mr. Oldbuck, living and stirring actors in that period of the exciting drama of 1837, rehearsed at St. Thomas," observed the Commodore; "but, as once a sportsman and still a lover of the feathered race, has not the author of *Les oiseaux du Canada* some specially remembered souvenir of bird-life—some memorable *partie de chasse*, to tell about in connection with such a famous resort for game, as the *battures* of St. Thomas were in olden times?"

"Right well, Commodore," retorted J. O., "could I gratify your wish, and describe some sporting episodes of the past; for, be it remembered, there were several mighty hunters to be found, each September, ensconced on the reedy shores of the *Ruisseau de la Caille*, on the watch for ducks or snipe, or hunting for grouse on the wooded heights of the mountains to the south. One bird memory, I think, will never vanish from my remembrance:

A DAY DREAM."