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The Gaspereaux.

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(Concluded.)

Twice six-score years their web sublime,
Have woven in the loom of Time,
Since in thy wild-wood canopied,
His dance the kilted Norman led,
When, by thy bright and beauteous shore,
The Abenagein dwelt of yore.
Not less in wonder viewed, I ween,
De Monts and Pontrincourt the scene;
When belted by his leaf-clad hills,
Fair Minas drink his tribute rills,
And those twin islands far away,
Skirt the green margin of the bay,
When the primeval pine on high,
Points his dark cone against the sky;
While Blomidon in stately pride
Heaves his huge form above the tide;
And king-like o'er the main afar,
To royal Henry of Navarre
Sent largesse of each princely gem
To grace his royal diadem.
Then thronged that stranger back to view,
Thy dusky subject Mamberton!
And saw yon waters' blue expanse
Give back the lily flag of France;
And then in pledge of friendly league,
Devoid of guile or base intrigue,
In leafy hills beneath the trees,
Thy warriors smoked the pipe of peace,
In pledge unto the pale-faced brave
The beaded belt of wampum gave,
And spread before the stranger's eyes
Their stores of fury merchandise;
Skins of spring beaver, spread to view,
Spoils of the moose and caribou,
Of silver fox and ermine too.

Then by the birchen hut began
From Normandy and fair Bretagne,
The peasant Frank his thatch to rear,
Where glide their amber waters near;
And where the wild deer came to lave
His hot flank in thy cooling wave,
Reared on the fair and verdant sod,
His altars and each household god;
And still thy borders to adorn,
With memory of his native Orme,
The branching willow fondly gave,
To tremble on thy lucid wave;
And when the sea with fitful sound,
Beats vainly on the clay-built mound,
With laboured mole and toil severe,
Won his fat marshes from the mere.

O, were it mine to fitly tell
Whate'er that simple race befel!
The sweet contentment of their lot;
How frequent from embowered cot
Like grateful incesse seen to rise,
The smoke curled upward to the skies;
And how the peasant loved to twine
Tendrils of his ancestral vine,
And in the opening glade to view
The ripening apples' ruddy hue;
Or scattered widely o'er the lea,
Rejoiced his flock and herds to see.
How grew beneath the maiden's hand
The flowerets of her native land,
Herself as pure, as blushing fair,
As any flower that blossomed there;
Or saw beside the golden grain,
The slender flax adorn the plain,
With flowerets blue of purple stain,
Rejoicing saw it blooming there,
To claim her own peculiar care.

But ah! to paint the rural skill,
The happiness unmixed with ill,
That filled thy vales—the artless life,
Its tenor all unmixed with strife,
Or emulation, save with good,—
That blessed, that peaceful brotherhood;
Their fealty to their king and God,
Their love for their own native sod,
Till fate consigned to their embrace
The miseries of a banished race,
Whose weal or woe, sweet stream 'twas thine
To know,—claim other hand than mine.
But though my reed unskilled may be
To grace with fitting minstrelsy
So fair a theme, or give thy name
And story to the breath of fame;
Yet linked by art and genius still,
And pencil of supremest skill,
Depicted by no common hand,
The Acadian and Arcadian land;
And scenes, to latest time, shall go,
With Grand Pre and with Gaspereaux,
O'er which the lustrous names shall shine,
Of Gabriel and Evangeline.
Fair stream! thou once did'st proudly own
A native lyre of sweetest tone,
That thrilled beneath the touch of one
Who knew and loved thy haunts full well,
Could tunelessly thy legends tell.
But Elder's graceful pipe no more
Shall fill thy grottoes as of yore;
His song is hushed,—and from thy strand,
An exile in a foreign land,
The simple Norman long since gave