

anced by the application of paint, still so little was there of life and motion in the group, that you might have imagined them carved out of solid wood. Whatever passions existed in the breasts of the hundreds there,—and they were many and unquenchable—all outward manifestation was prohibited by the indomitable self-possession of the Indian character. But the most conspicuous personage was a young warrior in the prime and graceful dignity of early manhood, who leaned against a tall post in the centre of the ring—from which dangled a number of half-dried scalps—with assumed carelessness, in which might be detected a mixture of pride and joyful anticipation, or his proud glance belied the impulse of the owner's heart. His height was rather above that of his brethren, and to proportions of faultless symmetry were joined a degree of strength and agility which excited the wonder and admiration of the warlike tribes. Of his mental qualities little is related, in the simple manner of his people—“that he was never known to quail before the face of man, or to falter upon a trail; that he walked straight forward without looking another way, and carried an open palm; and, moreover, that he never let the grass grow over the memory of a good deed, but, with the unrelenting constancy of his race, an injury was never forgotten.”

And now he awaits the moment of installation to that rank which for years it has been his sole object to attain; at last, the hope which had filled his dreams by night, and nerved his soul in battle to the accomplishment of the boldest deeds, was to be rewarded;—for he had been proclaimed victor by an overwhelming majority of votes over his competitors, and when he left the spot where he then stood it would be with the proud distinction of Grand Sachem of the Micmac nation.

'Ere long a stir is perceptible in the direction of the tent, and an old man with long silvery hair, so heavy with accumulated years that he is obliged to be supported by a chief on either side, advanced within the thronged circle, followed by the other elders and influential persons composing the council, each bearing some portion of the insignia appertaining to the chieftainship, which, after the young warrior had been invested with a dress of costly material, heavy with minute embroidery, and leggings of scarlet cloth, beaded and fringed, were in succession delivered into the keeping of Argimou;—for such was his name, with a brief but impressive oration from the father of the tribe. There were the *wampum belts* of wo-

ven cylindrical shells from the country of the great lakes; the symbolic pledges of alliance with the neighbouring tribes; the ornamented *to-ma-gan*, or pipe, of cemented friendship; the bright *to-ma-hawk*, or hatchet, signifying active war; and lastly, the beaded fillet, with its eagle plume—the distinguishing badge of a Bashaba. Then came forward a French officer of rank, and presented to the chief, in the name of Onanthio,* a scarf of brilliant colours together with a medallion of silver, on which was embossed a likeness of the Sovereign, and many other articles of value and esteem among the natives; which part of the ceremony concluded with a long speech from the aged warrior, pronounced with a voice clear and powerful for his years, in which he inculcated upon the mind of Argimou an imitation of the wisdom and bravery of his ancestors—their prowess in battle—their justice in peace, with the necessity of preserving the closest amity and co-operation with the generous *Wennooch*† whose king, their great father, had sent such choice gifts as a pledge of his good intentions to the nation. When the old man concluded his address he was so exhausted that they were obliged to carry him away as helpless as a child; and then might be seen harsh features to relax with an involuntary feeling of sympathy and affection, and a low murmur rose from the multitude whose iron hearts would have defied the utmost torture to wring one groan of weakness from the body's agony, though they were torn limb from limb;—for even the unrelenting savage acknowledges the potency of that spell which links in one bright chain every created thing with the heaven from whence it came to purify and bliss! The love which they bore to that hoary patriarch was not as the fickle bond which a breath might sever, a passion that consumes itself away—they had listened to his eloquence in their earliest years, and even then his hair was grey; they revered the voice which preserved the deeds of their fathers like a chronicle of the past, and regarded him with that awe which sanctifies the attributes of extreme age; for to their superstitious minds he appeared a spirit from that country of blessed influences to which he was so quickly hastening.

The crowd now broke away from the circle and gathered within the banquet hall, a large shed open in front, behind the council tent,

* The name by which the French king was known among the native tribes.

† Frenchman.