

THE CREEK.

Meduxnake or Meduxnakeag? Which Shall we Call it? How Shall we Spell it?

(No. 1.)

The stream upon whose banks the town of Woodstock is built has always been familiarly known both by the citizens of the town and the people of the surrounding country as "The Creek." Now there are rivers many and creeks many, and among the many noble tributaries of the St. John it may be deemed a bit of arrogance to claim for our small river the distinction of being emphatically the creek. Nevertheless the distinction is not without advantage since it obviates the necessity of pronouncing or spelling the Indian name of the stream which has always been a matter of some uncertainty.

In the early days of Woodstock great rivalry prevailed between the villages known as "the Creek," the Lower Corner and Hardscrabble. But the situation of the first named gave it such advantages that its rivals were soon distanced in the race, and ere long "the Creek" came to be considered "the town." The old time rivalry has not yet entirely passed away although it has changed ground, resolving itself for the most part into a foolish and unreasonable jealousy between town and country.

How the old phrases linger in the mind! A very good example of this occurred a few years ago in the Carleton County Council, when upon a proposition being made to remove the court house from Upper Woodstock to the town, one of the senior members of the council strongly objected to the proposal, alleging that he did not want to travel to "the Creek" for justice.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago the town was almost universally spoken of as "the Creek." If a man had business in town who lived in Northampton he must "go over to the Creek;" if he lived in Richmond he must "go in to the creek;" if he lived along the river he must go up or down to "the Creek" according as he lived above or below the town.

The writer when quite a small boy, visiting some relatives who lived near Fredericton, greatly amused one of the family who was harnessing his horse to drive in to Fredericton by asking in all innocence "are you going up to the Creek?" It required some explanation to convince him that going to town was not always going to the Creek.

But now to answer the question at the head of this article: What is the proper name of Woodstock's little river, and how shall the name be written? There is apparently no standard authority to guide us. The writer turned to the pages of Colonel Baird's "Seventy Years of New Brunswick Life" only to find that the local historian does not commit himself in the matter, and in this we think he has shown commendable prudence. True, the colonel gives the preference to the older form, Meduxnake, which he generally employs, but as if to show he holds no bigoted opinion on the point, he, in at least two instances, (pp. 137, 138) adopts the modern form, Meduxnakeag.

The writer next had recourse to public documents, old maps and historic records, but they did not solve the problem, for the only point in which they appeared to agree was to differ. The variations in the spelling were found to be truly wonderful; rarely, indeed, did the name of the creek appear twice in precisely the same form. The investigation, however, showed conclusively that the termination *keag* is of comparatively recent origin although now the one commonly adopted.

The earliest notice of the Meduxnake is that contained in the narrative of John Gyles, published at Boston nearly two hundred years ago. During six years captivity among the St. John river Indians, Gyles lived chiefly at the old Meductic fort. In his narrative he states that in the autumn of the year 1689, soon after his arrival at the Meductic village: "We went up the St. John river about ten miles to a branch called Medockseeneecasis where was one wigwam. At our arrival an old squaw saluted me with a yell, seizing me by the hair and one hand, but I was so rude as to break her hold and free myself. She gave me a vile grin and the Indians set up a laugh, and so it passed over."

The form of the word Medockseeneecasis as given by Gyles, is worthy of consideration as being the oldest on record and likely, for that reason, to be the original form. It seems probable that Gyles has preserved the proper pronunciation of the word in the form he gives, as he acquired a pretty thorough knowledge of the Indian language during his captivity and was afterwards frequently employed as an interpreter in negotiations between the whites and the Indians.

The termination *asis* is a diminutive and it is possible Medockseeneecasis is merely a form of Medoctec-asis or "little Meductic" (Meductic being the old French and Indian name of Eel river). It may be urged in opposition to this idea that the creek at Woodstock would scarcely be spoken of as "little Eel river" since the volume of its waters is not, except perhaps in the dry season, much, if any less, than that of Eel river itself. To this it may be replied that the river Medoctic would appear of much greater importance in the estimation of the Indians as forming the great highway for inland travel from the valley of the St. John to the westward connecting by short and well worn trails or portages with the St. Croix lakes and the head waters of the Mattawamkeag or eastern branch of the Penobscot.

The usual interpretation of the word Meduxnake is "rocky at its mouth." Professor W. F. Ganong and Edward Jack, two of the leading authorities, agree that this is the probable meaning of the word. It is equally appropriate to the creek at Woodstock, or to Eel river.

The names of rivers and streams emptying into the St. John are all of Micmac origin. But the Micmacs either abandoned or were driven from their hunting grounds on the upper St. John more than two hundred years ago. The Indians now living on the river are all Maliseets, and their dialect differs so widely from the Micmac tongue that

they are of little service in the interpretation of Indian place names.

The next mention of the creek at Woodstock which the writer has at hand occurs in the description of the St. John river written in the year 1783 by Captain John Munro, a loyalist. Alluding to the river "Medoctick," (Eel river) he writes:

"This stream has excellent falls and fine timber for boards; here is a fine piece of intervalle where two or three Indian families live; about the centre of this intervalle are the remains of an old breast work sufficient to contain 200 men. The next river on the west side is Madochengick; here the Indians lived formerly; their church is still standing and kept in good repair. On both sides this river is good land and some of the islands opposite are very good."

Our next authorities are the older maps or plans in the Crown land office at Fredericton. On one of these, made by Isaac Hedden, Esq., in 1790, the creek is marked "River Meducticnicook," and the island opposite Meducticnicook Island. In a plan made a few years later by George Sproule, surveyor general, the creek is marked Meducticnicick and in two other plans of similar date we have respectively Meducticnicick and Meducticnick. In a plan made by John Bedell, Esq., in 1804, we find the form Madushnakeek. Still another form occurs in the journal kept by Wm. F. Odell, Esq., in which were recorded his surveying operations during the year 1818 by direction of the boundary commissioners. Mr. Odell says, "On my return from Mars Hill homeward, I halted the party on the 12th October, at the mouth of the Maducticnicick river."

Peter Fisher (father of the ex-mayor of Woodstock) adopts another and a simpler form of spelling in his little work "Sketches of New Brunswick" (published in 1825). Speaking of the parish of Woodstock, he says: "The river Maduxnake passes through this parish to its exit into the Saint John and adds to its importance as several settlements are making along its banks."

The journals of the house of assembly make frequent references to the Meduxnake in connection with appropriations for roads and bridges. But there is still the same lack of uniformity of spelling; road commissioners, supervisors, legislators, all seemed to have agreed that it was better never to write the word twice alike. Witness the following:

Meducticnicick (journal of 1793).
Meducticnicick (journal of 1816).
Maduxnawick (journal of 1817).
Meducticnicick (journal of 1818).
Madishnackick (journal of 1820).
Maduxnekeek (journal of 1823).
Meduxnakeek, Meduxnackick (journal of 1827).

Maduxsnick, Maduxsnick, Maduxsnick (1828).

But with all these variations we note there is as yet no sign of the termination *keag*. The form Meduxnakeag apparently came into existence about the time of the negotiations in 1840 which led to the settlement of the boundary between Maine and New Brunswick under the Ashburton treaty. Dr. Gesner adopted the spelling in his history of New Brunswick, our provincial map makers did the same, and now it is difficult to convince the public that the name of Woodstock's own little river was ever anything else than the Meduxnakeag. Nevertheless Meduxnake is certainly older and probably the more accurate form.

W. O. RAYMOND.

The Religion of Gotama Buddha.

One of the special characteristics of Buddhism in its primitive form is that it makes no distinctive recognition of an Essential Being, or of any power, deity or divinity outside of the individual mind. The soul has no outlook, but lives in and for itself. It does not discern any connection with the universe, nor is it a part of anything external to itself. The religion is a purely agnostic one; and perhaps that is the reason why its negative tenets have a special attraction for those to whom the higher vision of the soul's essential unity with the Infinite Being is wanting or does not commend itself. It asks no question, it looks nowhither out of itself, but seeks to sit, with closed eyes, controlled thinking and crushed imagination, in utter inactivity and impassivity, striving to reach a condition in which all active or energizing faculties are suppressed to annihilation, and even moving or conscious thought itself is lulled to sleep in the unbroken peace of a dumb and motionless eternity. But while the attainment of this end is its final aim and object, it must not be understood to offer inducements to the idle and vicious to resign themselves to a life of indifference and self-indulgence; on the contrary, it enforces the most strenuous efforts on the part of its votaries to free themselves from the ease and blandishments of the lower or earthly life, in order to raise themselves, by the destruction of all wants and desires, into the higher realms of spiritual freedom and moral purity. Indeed, one cannot but be impressed with the robust energy of mind and the vigorous activity it calculates for the attainment of its object in crushing out of all forms of want or desire, spiritual or material, so that there may remain no least tie to existence. If we make a comparison of Buddhism with Christianity, however great a similarity may appear in some of the elements of its teaching, its distinct inferiority in scope, purpose and adaptability will become apparent. The religion of the Buddha could never be brought to combine with the advancement and progressive amelioration of society. It works by abandonment, leaving the world every way as it finds it. It lacks the helpful and actively loving spirit of Christianity, that noble altruism which gains by bestowing, and counts its wealth from the benefit and welfare of others, and not from an egotistical consideration of its own advantage. It is a high testimony to the superiority of Chris-

tianity that even in its lowest and least emphatic form it stimulates noble enterprise, and fosters the forward movements of social amendment and elevation, and even contributes in a subsidiary manner to the development of the arts and sciences. Its spirit is based upon the universal law of evolution, and, rightly understood, never stands still either in its spiritual or natural manifestations. This cannot certainly be said of Buddhism, which does not hold any close spiritual connection with universal religious growth which is so marked a characteristic of the profounder and larger teaching of the Vedanta. There is a want of that dignity and nobility, also, in the personal traits and actions of Gotama which distinguished the Author of Christianity. The miracles attributed to the Buddha have neither the impressive character nor the touching significance of those narrated by the Evangelists of the New Testament. We may search in vain among Buddhist writings for such instances of moral sublimity as the answer given to the persecutors of the sinning woman, or the fine and silencing retort to the cavaliers concerning the tribute money.—William Davies, in the Atlantic Monthly for September.

Lord Rosebery's Policy.

LONDON, Sept. 22.—There is a high authority for announcing that Lord Rosebery is thoroughly alarmed over the Liberal outlook, and that, on a day soon to be set, he will deliver a carefully prepared speech on the House of Lords. The occasion is to be made memorable in his Premiership and in the history of the Liberal party. American campaign methods will be introduced to some extent to emphasize it. There is no hall in Edinburgh, where the address will be made, large enough for a genuine mass meeting, and an auditorium will be built to contain 10,000 persons. The contract has been quietly let, and the work will be completed by the end of the month, the date being put off to accommodate the contractor. Lord Rosebery proposes taking the reins firmly in his hands now and conducting his party himself. Sir William Vernon Harcourt is in Switzerland under an oculist's care, and it is not generally believed he will be seen again at the Treasury table. He is understood to be perfectly satisfied with the honour he has won as a budget maker. It is true that he has engrafted upon the State entirely novel principles of revenue, and has done more than any preceding head of the Exchequer to realize for the taxpayers in one way at least, Mill's "unearned increment." He has made wealth pay more than it has ever paid heretofore toward Imperial expenses. Lord Rosebery realizes that although Sir William Harcourt was not the most tactful leader the House of Commons has had in this generation he can ill be spared, and that in losing him the Premier must appear more frequently before the electorate, since he cannot appear in the Commons. The projected speech on the House of Lords will be, it is understood, plain and practical. It will not be Radical, at least to the extent of promising an immediate serious effort for abolition. But it will be menacing enough to make the chamber understand that unless it shows more docility in approving measures passed in conformity with the expressed mandate of the electorate, the country will be distinctly asked to instruct the Ministry to deprive it of the veto power, or at least to make a Board of Reference, whose decisions shall be binding. The Premier is also expected to square himself upon Home Rule and on disestablishment in Scotland and Wales. This is the more necessary because of the demoralization of the McCarthy faction in consequence of the dissensions about accepting or at least soliciting English money to carry on the Home Rule party.

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