

## EARLY DAYS OF WOODSTOCK.

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No. 4.

The French had made some attempt to form settlements on the St. John river in the latter portion of the seventeenth century. This was notably the case during the years that Governor Villebon held the reins of government in Acadia and fixed his headquarters at Fort Nachouac. We find the brothers d'Amours and a number of other settlers established under the protection of the Nachouac garrison at various points on the river in the vicinity, and there was quite an extensive trade carried on with the Indians at Medoctec. But a retrograde movement took place during the closing years of the century. About 1698 Villebon retired to Menagoeche at the mouth of the St. John, where he rebuilt the old fort on the west side of the harbour. He died there on the 5th July, 1700, and was buried near the fort. His successor, Brouillon, removed the seat of government to Port Royal. The French inhabitants on the St. John, being left without protection, seem to have abandoned their lands very soon after, and thus the valley of the noblest river of all Acadia became as desolate as in the days of de Monts and Champlain. The Indians might wander at will among the ruins of the white man's forts and dwellings and wonder why he had departed. The St. John river however, was still regarded as a valuable means of communication between the widely separated parts of New France. Messengers traversed its waters repeatedly, carrying official dispatches from the Governor General at Quebec to his subordinates at Port Royal, and no way station was better known or deemed of greater importance than the Maliseet village of Medoctec. At the time of Villebon's occupation of Fort Nachouac in 1693, Cadillac wrote enthusiastically of his visit to the River St. John. "It must be conceded," he says, "that this is the most beautiful, the most navigable and the richest in its natural resources of all the rivers of Acadia." He describes the size and variety of trees that grow in the woods that bordered it, the abundance of the fish that frequented its waters, the variety of fur-bearing animals, the fertility of the soil, especially of the low lying meadows, or intervalles, and the extent and depth of its waters. Cadillac ascended the river, he tells us, nearly one hundred and fifty leagues in a bark canoe. He describes the Maliseets as a fairly warlike nation. "They are well made and good hunters. They attend to the cultivation of the soil and have some fine fields of Indian corn and pumpkins. Their fort is at Medoctek." Cadillac also speaks of an Indian fort situated on the banks of the Madawaska, where the country was excellent for moose hunting.

The Jesuit mission to the Indians at Medoctec was considered of importance by the authorities in charge of the affairs of France in America. Jean Baptiste Loyard was one of the best known of the early French priests. He succeeded Joseph Aubery about the year 1708 and remained at Medoctec until his death in 1731. His position was a difficult one, for the letters of the Governor at Quebec, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, show that in addition to his duties as

continent of Canada" and that the name of Acadia must be confined to the Nova Scotia peninsula. This question was warmly disputed for years after the treaty of Utrecht was signed and was not finally settled until the occupation of the St. John river by General Robert Monckton in 1758.

We catch occasional glimpses of Father Loyard at his mission of Medoctec in the political correspondence of the day. In 1715 Governor Caulfield of Nova Scotia endeavored to effect a good understanding with him, assuring him that he would not be molested in his mission, and promising to send an English trading vessel up the river with such supplies as the Indians were in need of. But other and more potent influences were soon at work. The next summer the French minister wrote the Marquis de Vaudreuil that the King of France had granted 1,200 livres, as recommended by the lieutenant governor at Quebec, to assist in building a church for the Indians of Medoctec and also for the Kennebec Indians. This pleased the Indians greatly and they agreed to furnish a quantity of beaver skins as their contribution in aid of the work. Two additional grants of 1,200 livres each on the part of the King, served to complete the work, and in 1720 the Marquis de Vaudreuil reported to his royal master that the churches were at length finished; that they were well built and would prove a great inducement to the Indians to be loyal to France.

We know, in all probability, the exact site of the Indian chapel of St. Jean Baptiste. It is as shown in the plan of the old Medoctec village printed in the last issue of THE DISPATCH—at the point marked B., near the north west corner of the old Indian graveyard. A small stone tablet was found at this spot in June, 1890, by Archie R. Hay. The tablet is of black slate, in length 14 inches by 7 in width, and about 1 inch in thickness. It was found quite near the surface, just as it might naturally have fallen in the decay of the building. The inscription is in an excellent state of preservation and without abbreviation) reads as follows:—

DEO

Optimo Maximo

In honorem Divi Ioannis Baptistae  
Hoc Templum posuerunt Anno Domini  
(MDCCXVII).

Malecitate

Missionis Procurator Ioanne Loyard Soci-  
etatis Iesu Sacerdote.

The translation will read:

"To God, most excellent, most high, in honor of St. John Baptist, the Maliseets erected this church A. D., 1717, while Jean Loyard, a priest of the Society of Jesus, was superintendent of the mission."

The inscription, as stated in a former contribution to THE DISPATCH, is clearly cut, but not with sufficient skill to suggest the hand of a practised engraver. It was in all probability the hand of the missionary that executed the work. The Indian chapel at Medoctec was the first on the River St. John—the first, probably within the confines of the province. It received, among other royal gifts, a small bell which used to hang in the belfry of the Indian chapel at Central Kingslear, a few miles above Fredericton. This much prized historic relic was very unfortunately destroyed by fire when the Indian chapel was burned in March, 1904. The accompanying illustration is from a photograph taken by the writer a few years ago.



a missionary he was regarded as the political agent of the French on the River St. John.

By the treaty of Utrecht, in the days of Queen Anne (A. D. 1713), "all Nova Scotia, or Acadia, comprehended within its ancient boundaries," was ceded to Great Britain. But the question immediately arose as to what were the ancient boundaries? The British claimed (as indeed the French had formerly done) that the country bordering the St. John river was unquestionably a part of Acadia; but the French now insisted that the St. John was a river situate on "the

The bounty of the King of France enabled the missionary, Loyard, to build a more pretentious church than might have been supposed. At any rate the edifice was described by one of the Jesuit writers as a beautiful church (une belle eglise), properly adorned, and furnished abundantly with sacred vessels and ornaments of suitable character. The chapel stood for fifty years, and its clear toned bell rang out the call to prayer in the depths of the forest; but by and by priest and people passed away, and in 1767 the missionary Bailly states that the Indians,

having for the time being abandoned the village of Medoctec, he had caused the ornaments and furnishings of the chapel, together with the bell, to be removed to Aukpaque, and had demolished the building since it served merely as a shelter for the voyageurs and was put to the most profane uses.

Jean Loyard seems to have been a man of ability and kindly nature, esteemed and beloved both by the French and the Indians and his death on the 24th June, 1731, was universally lamented. "He devoted nearly twenty-four of the best years of his life to the conversion of the Indians, and when summoned to Quebec for the benefit of his health, which had become impaired by toil and exposure, he had hardly recovered from the fatigue of the journey when he requested to be allowed to return to his mission, where his presence was needed. It was while in the active discharge of his duty among the sick that he contracted the disease of which he died in the midst of his people, who were well nigh inconsolable for their loss. The obituary letter, announcing his death to the Jesuit missionaries, contains a glowing eulogy of the man and his work. His disposition had nothing of sternness, yet he was equally beloved and revered; to untiring zeal he joined exemplary modesty, sweetness of disposition, never failing charity and an evenness of temper which made him superior to all annoyances; busy as he was he had the art of economising the moments, and he gave all the prescribed time to his own spiritual exercises; over his flock he watched incessantly as a good shepherd with the happy consolation of gathering abundant fruit of his care and toil; he was fitted for everything and ready for everything, and his superiors could dispose of him as they would."

## The Regulation Size.

Lady—"I want some collars for my husband, but I am afraid I've forgotten the size."

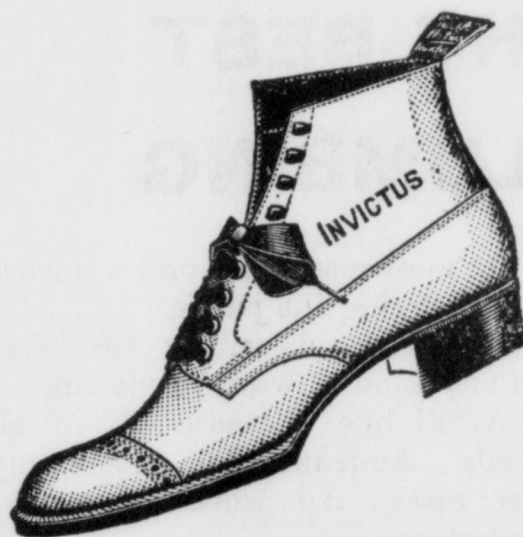
Shopman—"Thirteen and a half, mum!"

Lady—"That's it. How did you guess?"

Shopman—"Gentlemen who let their wives buy their collars for them are always about that size, mum."—Ally Sloper.

In 1904 there were killed in India by snakes and wild beasts 24,034 persons—21,880 by snakes, 796 by tigers, 399 by leopards and the rest by other animals. The number of cattle killed was 98,582.

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