

THE MICMAC'S BRIDE;

A TALE OF NEW BRUNSWICK.
From Fraser's Magazine, published in 1850.

PART II.—Continued.

The Indian's face brightened like the forest leaves when the sun emerges from the midst of Acadia. He leaned towards the gentle fountling of the Milicete; he kissed her hand. It was the mute expression of his tenderness, the seal of his plighted faith—mute, but eloquent to her. How long they remained in this blissful reverie they could not afterwards tell, nor does it matter. The hunter wood and won his beautiful bride in the greenwood shade, and—we repeat it—he was worthy of her.

In another moon they were united by the marriage ritual of the French Church, in accordance with the mode then prevalent among the tribes of Acadia, who had been converted to Christianity by the Jesuit fathers long before the arrival of the English, and wore its symbol in the form of a silver crucifix, which may still be seen on many an Indian breast in that northern land.

The happiness of the young couple was not interrupted by the designs of the perfidious Saccapies, for he never recovered fully from the hug of the wounded bear, and they were told subsequently that he was hung at Quebec for the murder of a brother-trader, whom he had waylaid, shot, and robbed of his stock of peltries.

Three summers after their union A-moos-took and his wife chanced to pass through the country by the head waters of the Miramichi, when, some miles from the grave of Sau-pa-lose, they picked up a seal-skin capot, which Little Moon, after a close inspection, affirmed to be the same her Milicete father had worn when he set out upon that hunting excursion from which he never returned. A little further on, also, they came to his blanket, rolled up and fastened still at the ends, with the bass-wood tump line. Continuing on, they searched narrowly as they went, and their sad forebodings soon proved true; for in a lonely place, by the edge of a little stream, they found a skeleton, bleached and bent in a sitting posture on a dead tree. The snow-shoes were still upon the feet and a bow in the hand.

A-moos-took examined the former, and on the cross piece of each were rudely engraved a beaver and a star.

"These are the marks of Ma-dux-kees," said Little Moon; and she turned her face away and wept.

It was as they supposed. The poor hunter had thrown off his outer clothes during the heat of the chase, and being benighted on the trail of a moose had frozen to death before he could recover them.

"He looks like an ancient warrior," said A-moos-took, in a low and solemn voice; "they sit sleeping like him, with their shoes on their feet and their bows in their hands. Ma-dux-kees was a Milicete of the old kind, and kept to his father's ways. He is in the hunting-grounds of the just."

Little Moon was now doubly orphaned, her Indian parents being both dead. Yet she did not repine. Another guardian had been given unto her, and him she followed along the path of life cheerfully, and with a confiding trust that failed not to its close.

PART III.

The scene was purely American. The undulating hills were covered with a small growth of fir and white birch, which had replaced the ancient forest devastated by fire many years before; for the surrounding country had been once wrapped in conflagration by the first settlers, the French, who, by thus destroying the timber and consuming the soil, assuaged the violence of their regret, and avenged themselves somewhat upon their enemies, the English, when the latter took possession of Acadia.

But sweeping down from the rugged uplands were many sunny slopes, cleared and teeming with grain, while beeches and maples of an unusual girth fringed the skirts, and mingled their rich foliage with groves of oak whose infancy no white man had seen. And below these, on the alluvial meadows that bordered a winding river, clumps of magnificent elms were scattered in the wildest and most fantastic grouping imaginable; some feathered with leaves from root to crown, and spreading their limbs in a grand canopy overhead, and some dividing near the ground and curving outward like a triple plume. There were others, too, that shot up an airy, tapering stem, and bent over their heavily-laden branches in many a graceful spray-tree, drooping almost to the grass; a peculiarity from whence the species derives its name—the weeping elm.

Over the deep velvet of the meadows the rice-bird, or bobolink, fluttered to and fro, warbling its flute-like song on the wing; and by a thicket of wild roses the tiny humming-bird was seen occasionally, as it rushed up, poised itself, and shot from flower to flower, like a winged emerald, to sip their sweets.

It was a quiet place; no sound louder than a bird's call, or the low tinkle of a cow-bell, broke the drowsy silence of the fields, except at stated intervals during the day, when from the different farm-houses in the avenues and glades pealed the long notes of the conch-horn, calling the men

to their meals; or when, once a week, the bell of the village church speak far and near throughout the valley the summons to prayer.

It was one of the most favored and fertile spots in the province of New Brunswick, and had amply repaid the toil of the hardy pioneers who first erected their huts in its deep recesses and woke the forest echoes with the sound of the English axe.

One of the principal dwellings of the straggling settlement was situated upon a small mound that rose from the interval near the river, half shaded by large butternut trees, the remains of an original grove; and in a spacious apartment within, which served as a general resort, and was furnished with plain deal tables, a dresser, several cupboards, and a tall Dutch clock, a middle-aged female was seated beside a cradle, which she rocked with her foot as she plied her knitting-needles. A French Acadian girl, in the capacity of a servant, bustled about in the neighborhood of the capacious fireplace, intent upon some culinary process, and about the porch that led out into the rear of the building several chubby-faced children were at play.

All at once the distant notes of a bugle caught the good dame's ear and caused her to drop her work in her lap, and rest her head upon her hand in a thoughtful attitude. The air was one wellknown to the settlers of the valley, who had most of them shared in the rigors of the war of independence, and associated itself with many a stirring recollection in the minds of the British loyalists, for such they were.

But the strain awoke no pleasant emotions in the listener, for her lips contracted with a painful expression, and she shed a few silent tears. Wafted away by the sweet music which fluctuated with the summer air, her thoughts carried her back to an early period of her life. She was a gay young bride once more, and at her side stood one to whom she had given her troth with the fervor of her girl's heart, that never dreamt of sorrow then, or gave a serious thought to anything beyond the happiness of the hour. They had gone hand-in-hand into the wilderness, those two, they had struggled through many hardships, and they had prospered:—but he was not with her now!

Again the scene was changed. A fair babe blessed the heart of the young mother, against which it lay; it unfolded day by day; its little face was a sunbeam in their home, its voice the sweetest music they had ever heard. Once again the scene changed. There was wild agony and alarm, the going and coming of men in haste, a glare of torches in the woods, and random shots, and a mournful bugle-call breaking the stillness of the night with a foreboding wail—where was the child then?

Both partner and off-spring had passed away from her like a dream, and these were only memories. They had no connection with the present, belonging as they did to an earlier and fresher time; yet still she loved them, even for their sadness. Other faces and voices were around her, and they were grateful to her bereaved heart; but they were not those of former days, therefore she wept.

The retrospection of the matron was interrupted by the entrance of the children before mentioned, who flocked in a body to the place where she sat, and crouched timidly behind her chair; when, looking to discover the cause, she saw an Indian woman standing in the open doorway.

"Come in, sister," she said kindly, using the term of address customary with the natives, for she saw that the stranger hesitated. "Come here and speak to me. Claudine, bring a chair for the child."

The domestic obeyed, and the squaw seated herself near the mistress of the mansion.

She was a young creature, slender and beautifully formed, and dressed after the fashion of the Micmacs, in a short mantellet a long gown of blue cloth, embroidered on the skirt with ribbons and beads, and scarlet leggings similarly adorned. Her small feet were clothed in skin moccasins, and on her head she wore the pointed cloth cap peculiar to her tribe, which was covered with delicate riband-work, in minute lines, and edged below with a broad scroll-pattern in white beads. Upon her lap lay an infant, laced in a small wooden frame in which the Indian women carry their offspring, and on the floor by her side were several boxes made of bark, and wrought with figures in the colored quills of the porcupine, which she had just put down.

The English woman gazed with no little curiosity at this interesting girl of the forest, and strove to enter into conversation with her; but this she found somewhat difficult, as the squaw, though she appeared to understand what was said, halted frequently in her replies, and she was obliged to call Claudine to her assistance, who, in Acadian French, succeeded much better with the embarrassed stranger.

Now, while she answered the numerous interrogatories of the whites, and smiled gently when they caressed her babe, the thoughts of the young mother seemed to wander strangely, and she would often stop suddenly, and gaze about the apartment with a startled and perplexed look. The low, measured beat of the old clock attracted her attention, and twice she turned her head towards the corner in

which it stood; at length with a quick gesture, pointing in that direction, she inquired,—

"Que est-ce que ça?"

"Une horloge, ma sœur," said Claudine.

"Est-ce que tu n'aurais vue une horloge?"

"May be so, may be not. Certain, je ne sais pas," was the dubious reply.

At this moment the child in the cradle became restive, and the good dame commenced rocking it again with her foot, saying,—

"Go to sleep, Annie dear—go to sleep my baby Annie."

The squaw passed her hand across her brow, and opened her eyes wide upon the speaker, who then observed that they were of a bright blue, instead of the dark hazel or black common to the aboriginal race. "An-nie," she repeated with a soft and lingering cadence. "You call that little pappoose Annie?"

"Yes, sister, that's its name. Don't you think it a good one! But you people of the woods have different names for your little ones, eh?"

"What do you call your *petit enfant*, sister?" asked the French girl. "See, mistress, what a pretty cap it has. Does it ever cry?"

But the squaw, strange to say, paid no attention to the lively questioner, and turning to the elder with a plaintive expression, she exclaimed,—

"I find that name very good, sister. I was call An-nie too, you see. But long time, good many moon past. Certain, that name sound very good to Tep-ca-nu-set-sis." (Little Moon.)

The one addressed rested her busy hands on her knees with an impulse, and appealed abruptly to the servant.

"What does the child say, Claudine? Ask her what she says. Her name Annie! There is some mistake—she could not mean that."

Upon inquiry, however, the Indian woman still persisted in affirming that she had once borne the same appellation as the sleeding child; adding, moreover, that it had not been given her by the Indians, but by some parents from whom she had been separated at a very early period, before she knew them. This, together with the girl's features, and the remarkable color of her eyes, excited a violent emotion in the elder. She stared wistfully into the strange face before her; she perused with anxious care each line of the smooth but embrowned features; she smiled for a time; but, with a deep sigh, and shaking her head mournfully, she seemed to relinquish the conjecture, whatever it was, muttering to herself at the same time,—

"No, no; it was a foolish thought. She was bright and fair as a water-lily. The girl is well-favored, but tawny-skinned and less sprightly-like than she would have been had the Lord spared her until now. No, no, it is a silly mistake; she is some half caste of the borders. It never can be little Annie."

"Tell me," said the squaw, putting her child down against the wall and approaching the matron with wild earnestness, "tell me, sister, what for you call that pappoose child 'Annie?' Tep-ca-nu-set-sis have trouble very much. She feel like somebody what you call wrong here." And as she spoke she put her finger significantly to her forehead, while large tears rolled down her cheeks, and her lip trembled.

The spectators were amazed at this display, so unusual in one of her race, for the Indians ever conceal their feelings from a stranger's eye, and are endowed with rare faculty of suppressing outward emotion at will.

"Claudine," said the mistress, in a loud agitated voice, "run over to Leonard's, and tell Grace to come home quickly; there is something strange about this business." The servant departed on her errand, and the white woman buried her face in her hands.

"I will tell you why," she suddenly resumed, raising her head with a perturbed look and speaking with an effort. "I had a little girl once—do you understand me? Well, she was called Annie, and we lost her. She strayed into the woods one day and from that time we have never heard anything of her. But that is a long time ago, when this was only a small clearing, and there were few settlers in the vale. But we never forgot our poor lost darling and my step-daughter, who lives with me now, called her last little one after her. Now, in the name of the blessed Redeemer, Indian girl, why do you ask me this, and why do you weep?"

"Tep-ca-nu-set-sis can't tell," replied the squaw; "only she think she live one time in a place all same like this. She remember a *horloge*, what you call, like yonder, what speak the time. She no have strong memory, you see, but she certain she not say wrong. She think, maybe, she all same as little Annie; it make her heart sorry, sister, very sorry."

"Heaven grant me thy support in this hour!" ejaculated her companion in broken accents, as she turned pale and sank back in her seat. "Grace! Grace!" she added, as the individual so named hastily entered the house, "look into this child's face, and tell me what you think. She says her name is Annie, and that—she is our lost girl!"

"You are my sister, Grace; I know you very well," said the Indian; and with an assured and serious air she went directly up and confronted the new-comer.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S Real Estate Sale

There will be sold by public auction on the premises, near Weldford Station, Harcourt, County of Kent, pursuant to a license for that purpose granted by the Probate Court for the said county on Saturday the 31st day of October next at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon, the following described lands and premises: On the north by lands owned by Thomas Ingram, on the south by a reserved street and lands owned by J. Dorothy, on the east by lands owned by said Thomas Ingram and on the west by the highway road or main street running from the Weldford Station to the Beckwith road, containing sixty feet by one hundred and fifty feet, or one-quarter of an acre more or less. Terms—10 per cent. of purchase money at the time of sale and the balance to be paid on execution and delivery of deed. Harcourt, 1st October A. D. 1891.

B. S. BAILEY,
Administrator of the estate of George R. Bailey.

NEW BRUNSWICK, ss.

To the Sheriff of the County of Kent or any Constable within the said County—

Greeting—
Whereas, Isaac B. Humphrey and Matthew T. Glenn, executors of the last will and testament of Duncan McDonald, late of the Parish of Harcourt, in the said County of Kent, deceased, hath prayed that the heirs and all parties interested in said estate, may appear before me to attend the passing of the final accounts of the said estate,

You are therefore required to cite the said heirs and all others interested to appear before me at a Court of Probate to be holden at Buctouche within and for the said County on Thursday, the 10th day of September next at 11 o'clock in the forenoon at my office in Buctouche to attend the passing and allowing of said accounts.

Given under my hand, and the seal of the said Court, the eighth day of August, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) HENRY H. JAMES,
Judge of Probate County of Kent.
C. RICHARDSON,
Registrar of Probate for Kent County.
PHINNEY & CARTER, PROCTORS.

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