

THE  
**CANADIAN PIONEERS.**

BY

**ABBÉ H. R. CASGRAIN**

*Translated from the French*

BY

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**THE  
CANADIAN PIONEERS.**

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**DETROIT.**

Do you know this smiling and fertile country, rich in historical recollections, the till then virgin soil of which was first trod by the French, our ancestors?

Do you know the verdant and undulating prairies, watered by limpid rivers, shaded by maple, plane and fig-trees and acacias, in the midst of which rises in the brilliancy of youth and futurity, the flourishing town of Detroit?

\* \* \*

If you wish to enjoy fully the enchanting spectacle which this delightful country presents, whose climate has no cause for envying

*the sun of Italy*, ascend the river Detroit, during a fresh morning of spring, when dawn has spread its humid wing over those vast plains, and the May-sun traced a luminous course through the transparent vapours of morning.

In no part is the sky clearer, or nature more delightful.

In no part are the undulating lines of the horizon delineated in the distance, with a purer azure.

You will meet with wild and poetical situations, romantic landscapes, bushy islands not unlike graceful baskets of verdure, all resounding with the mocking laughter of a multitude of birds; pretty promontories, whose round arms frame bays full of shade and sunshine, where the wave caressed by gentle breezes, leaves on the shore a fringe of silvery spray.

You will perceive valleys and hills crowned with bunches of verdure which seem to bend

so as to see themselves in the neighbouring waters.

\* \* \*

On each side the shore unfolds itself in a rugged state or covered with fine and greyish sand, bordered with lace of grass, or bustling up with tall reeds crowned with little tufts, among which hop and sway timid king-fishers which the slightest noise frightens away.

Here cool streams flow, murmuring under the florid ogives of interlaced branches; there little paths, bordered with strawberries and daisies, wind round the bow of the slope; further off, the spring breeze hugs the verdant pasturage, and perfumes the air with delicious odours.

\* \* \*

The thousand confused rustling noises of the waters and leaves, the warbling of birds and human voices, the bellowing of the

herds, the silvery and far off sounds of the bells of steamers going up and down the river, rise in the air, at intervals, and fill with an indescribable charm both the soul and senses.

From point to point, graceful villages are seen along the shore, sometimes grouped in the slope of a bay, elsewhere resting on the sides of a hill, or crowning it like a diadem.

At last you reach Detroit, whose steeples and roofs sparkle under the rays of the sun.

A thousand of small crafts stirred by its industry continually leave its quays and plough the river in every direction.

If I were a poet, I should willingly compare the graceful city to the superb swan of those countries, which awaking at morn in the midst of the reeds of the bank, flutters its white wings in taking flight and scatters around feathers and dew-drops; or still more to the splendid magnolia which grows on the banks of the river, and balanced by the perfumed breath of the morning breeze,

spreads over the water into which it looks its image, the fruitful dust of its corolla.

### THE PIONEER.

Detroit, founded in the year 1700, by M. de La Mothe-Cadillac, has been a long time a part of Canada.

The English made a conquest of it in 1760, and preserved it until the war of 1812.

Since then the United States became the fortunate possessors of all this charming country, which Father Charlebois justly called "the garden of the land."

\* \* \*

"Detroit," says the historian of Canada, "has preserved, in spite of all its vicissitudes, the character of his origin, and the French language is always in use there. Like all the cities founded by the great people from which have sprung its inhabitants

“and which has marked America with  
“monuments of its genius, Detroit is des-  
“tined to become an important place, on  
“account of its situation between Lake  
“Huron and Lake Erie.” \*

\* \* \*

Towards the year 1770 or '80, Detroit was far from presenting the flourishing aspect which it offers at the present time.

It was only a little fort, surrounded with weak ramparts and palisades, populated by few hundreds of Canadian colonists.

A veritable tent in the desert, this fort was the avanced guard of the colony, and consequently exposed continually to the incursions of the Indians.

Around the fortifications extended some fields cleaned out of the forest, which the inhabitants could only cultivate at the risk

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\* History of Canada, by M. F. X. Garneau, third edition, vol 2, page 23.



of their lives, holding the mattock with one hand, and the gun with the other; and beyond, on this side, to the right and left everywhere the desert, and the immense ocean of forest, concealing under its dark vaults, a multitude of beings, a thousand times more cruel and formidable than tigers and reptiles.

It is easy to imagine the indomitable courage of these brave pioneers, who had dared to plant the flag of civilization in the midst of these far distant solitudes, in spite of the numberless dangers.

\*  
\* \*

One of the grandest figures which the history of the new world offers after the sublime one of the missionary, is, in my opinion, that of the Canadian pioneer.

He is the father of the strongest race that has been planted on the american continent: the canadian race.

The noblest blood which has ever flown in the veins of humanity, circulates in his veins: French blood.

Everywhere on this continent is to be found the canadian pioneer, and everywhere one can follow him by the trace of his blood.

Travel all over North America, from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, from Halifax to San Francisco, you will everywhere find the print of his footsteps, on the snow of the pole as well as on the golden sands of California; on the sandy shores of the Atlantic, as well as the moss of the Rocky Mountains.

An insatiable desire of activity devours him.

He must be for ever advancing towards new discoveries, until he reaches the end of land.

But it is not the sole love of adventures, nor the eager thirst for gold which urges him; a more noble ambition a more legitimate motive directs and animates him.

One feels that he has the conscience to fulfil a veritable mission, a mysterious apostleship.

Turn over, a moment, the pages of our history, and above all, the "*Relations of the Jesuits*," and everywhere you will see the canadian pioneer, animated with an admirable zeal of the Indians, clearing, with heroic efforts, the road for the missionaries and himself on their behalf often working marvellous conversions.

I find again in him, the three greatest types of human history.

He is at the same time, priest, labourer and soldier.

Priest! his ardent piety, lively faith, and zeal for the salvation of souls, soften the hardest hearts, and gain over to the faith, entire tribes.

Was there ever a more beautiful priesthood?

Labourer! before his powerful axe the

forest falls with a crash around him and his plough traces through the overturned trunks, the furrow where the green down of the future crop will soon ruffle.

Soldier! it is by ages of combats, that he has conquered the ground which his hand cultivates.

\* \* \*

Ah! if I was a painter, I should like to draw on the canvas this noble figure, with his triple character of priest, labourer and soldier.

In the back-ground of the picture, I would paint the immense forest in all its wild majesty.

Nearer, yellow tufts of corn growing among the calcined trunks.

On the fore-ground, a portion of the great river, with its waves of emerald sparkling in the rays of the sun.

Here should be seen on one side, with its remparts and palisades, the angle of a fort,

from which should arise a modest steeple surmounted by the cross ; on the other side, a band of Indians fleeing towards the border of the wood.

In the centre of the picture, hair waving in the wind, eyes flashing, bleeding forehead ploughed by a bullet, should appear my brave pioneer near his plough, holding in his left hand the still smoking gun ; with the right, sprinkling the water of baptism on the brow of his conquered and dying enemy just now converted by him to the faith.

Oh ! how I should try to depict on this manly face, and in the attitude of this iron-muscled ploughing soldier, the calm and serene strength of the man of the fields, the invincible courage of the soldier, and the sublime enthusiasm of the priest.

Certainly, this picture would not be unworthy of the brush of Michael Angelo or Rubens.

\* \* \*

Faith, labour, courage ; priest, labourer, soldier : there is the canadian pioneer.

It is Cincinnatus, the soldier-tiller become a Christian.

It is the Spartan who has passed through the catacombs.

\* \* \*

You, canadian reader, while running through these lines, can hold up your head with a noble pride, for the blood which flows in your veins, is the blood of this hero.

He has nobly fulfilled his mission ; yours remains to be accomplished.

The people to whom Providence has given such ancestors, if faithful to the designs of God, is necessarily destined for great things.

But let us leave those teachings becoming only to white locks, and return to our story.

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## EVENING.

At the distant epoch which we are describing, there was a huge fur trade carried in Detroit.

Attracted by the facility of reaching it, the Indians came in large numbers to sell there the produce of their hunt.

There abounded, by turns, the different nations of Iroquois, Potowatomis, Illinois, Miamis, and a crowd of others.

\* \* \*

Mr. Jacques Du Perron Baby was then superintendent of the Indians of Detroit.

It may be easily imagined what must be the importance of this post, at that period. Mr. Baby had consequently realized, in a few years, a large fortune.

Almost all the land on which Detroit stands at the present time, belonged to him, in partnership with Mr. Macomb, father of

the General Macomb who commanded part of the American troops, during the war of 1812.

It was after this war that Mr. Baby, for having declared himself in favour of Canada, his country, lost all the property which he had acquired in Detroit.

\* \* \*

In the centre of the fort, rose up, like a charming oasis in the midst of a desert, an elegant house surrounded by gardens.

This was the superintendent's residence.

Loving luxury, he had lavished every care to embellish it.

The garden, raised up higher than the ground, was surrounded by a terrace of grass.

In the centre, the house, elegantly painted half hidden by a curtain of branches of maple-trees, pear-trees and acacias, which balanced their sparkling foliage above the roof, resembled a carbuncle enchased in a garland of emeralds.



A crowd of birds, sometimes hidden beneath the foliage, sometimes fluttering in the air, crowing and pursuing each other, describing a thousand tortuous courses with an admirable celerity, threw their joyous songs to the winds, whilst the little swallow hovering above the chimneys, mingled with their voices, its little sharp and jerked cries.

It was evening.

The last rays of the setting sun coloured the dome of the forest with red and saffron.

The heat had been stifling during the whole day.

The breeze of the evening purling among the rosetrees, dahlias, sweet-briars, in bloom, refreshed inflamed nature, and perfumed the air with intoxicating odours.

\* \* \*

Assembled around a table spread out in the open air in the middle of the garden, loaded with dishes and bouquets of flowers

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gathered from the flower-plot, the superintendent, and all his family were taking their evening meal.

A young English officer, who had arrived at Detroit some months ago, had been invited to join the family circle.

Some black slaves, employed in waiting at table, were standing behind the guests, attentive to their slightest signals.

\* \* \*

“What a charming evening,” exclaimed the stranger, a fine young man, with light hair, noble and expressive appearance, with high intelligent and gallant forehead, with a bright but dreamy eye, “in fact only in Italy have I seen a climate equally mild, nature so delightful, and such beautiful effects of light!”

Look down there, those flakes of clouds floating in the azure of the sky. Might not one suppose them to be a scarf with fringe of purple and gold waving in the horizon?

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“This evening is really magnificent, replied the superintendent. We enjoy here a very fine climate.”

“In no part have I ever seen a clearer sky, limpid light, grander nature; but on the other hand, we are deprived of many enjoyments accorded to the old countries.

“Exiled to the extreme limits of civilization, to how many dangers are we not exposed, on the part of the Indians!”

“You, who have only just left the civilized regions of Europe, cannot form an idea of the cruelty of the barbarous people.”

“Ah! it is indeed a hard life in this country.”

“Yes” replied the superintendent’s wife whose fine and strong physiognomy indicated a sturdy nature, only a few years ago I was obliged to act as a sentinel, gun in arm, at the door of the fort, while all the men were occupied in the environs cultivating the fields. \*

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\* An historical fact.

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The conversation was interrupted by one of the black slaves, who came to inform the superintendent and his wife that an unknown woman wished to speak to them.

All the guests then rose from the table.

\* \* \*

“ You seem to be very sad this evening,” said the officer, addressing a young girl of sixteen to eighteen years of age, whose looks easily betrayed her as the daughter of the superintendent. “ What misfortune could then cast this veil of sadness on your brow ? ”

“ Whilst all smiles around you, your heart alone is sad.”

“ Yet it appears to me that it is impossible to contemplate this serene eve, this ravishing nature without experiencing a feeling of calm and inmost serenity.”

“ Nothing beguiles me like the sight of a beautiful evening.”

“ This gracious harmony of shade and light is to me, full of mystery and rapture.”

—“ Alas ! ” replied miss Baby, “ some days ago I could have enjoyed with you this fine display of nature.”

“ But to-day, all these objects appear to me as through a mournful crape.”

“ This beautiful sky, these verdant fields, flowers, fruits, rosy groves, which charm your eyes, make me tremble, everywhere there I see blood.

—“ My God ! exclaimed the young officer, “ has some terrible misfortune happened to you ? ”

—“ Alas ! it is only a few hours ago that I was a witness to the most heart-rending scene that it is possible to imagine, and I cannot take away my thought from this soul-breaking spectacle.”

“ But why should I make you uselessly sad by this fatal recital ? Enjoy rather these hours which appear to you so delightful.”

“Continue, continue,” said the young officer, “relate to me this tragical event. “Happiness is often egotistical, but one “should learn to sympathize with the griefs “of others.”

\* \* \*

The young lady replied: “Yesterday “evening, a band of Potowatomis, half inebriated, arrived at my father’s house.

“They were bringing with them a young “girl whom they had made prisoner, some “days previously.

“Ah! if you had seen what affliction was “depicted on her countenance!

“Poor child! her garments were in tatters, “her hair in disorder, her body bruised and “covered with blood.

“She was not complaining, she did not “weep, she was there, dumb, motionless, “like a statue; her eyes fixed; one might “have supposed her to be dead, if a slight

“ winging of her lips had not betrayed a  
“ remnant of life.

“ It was sad to behold

“ I had never seen such a distress.

“ Great troubles, they say, resemble awful  
“ shocks. They dry up the tears, like those  
“ terrible and sudden happenings which stop  
“ the blood in the veins.

“ Touched with compassion, my sister and  
“ myself made her lie down in our room.

“ We could not delude ourselves as to the  
“ little chance of safety which remained for  
“ her; for we knew the character of the  
“ Indians.

“ However, we tried to raise some hope in  
“ her mind.

“ Perhaps our father might be able to  
“ persuade the Indians, and rescue her from  
“ their hands.

“ At last she appeared to recover from her  
“ stupor, and gave us a recital of her mis-  
“ fortune.”

## AGONY.

“ I had been living, said she, “ for some  
“ time ago, near Fort Waine, with my sister,  
“ when one morning, when her husband  
“ was working on his field, several Indians  
“ suddenly entered the house.

“ ‘ Where is your husband ? ’ they roughly  
“ asked my sister.

“ ‘ He is at Fort Waine, ’ she replied,  
“ frightened at their sinister aspect.

“ And they went away.

“ Full of anxiety, we followed them with  
“ our eyes, for some times.

“ My God ! my sister, I said to her,  
“ trembling all over, I am afraid, I am  
“ afraid, let us run away . . . These Indians  
“ appear to me to be meditating bad designs,  
“ they are going to return.”

“ Without listening to my words she con-  
“ tinued to watch them going towards the  
“ fort.



“ The road which they were following  
“ passed near by the place where her hus-  
“ band was working quietly, without sus-  
“ pecting the peril which menaced him.

“ Fortunately a clump of trees hid him  
“ from their view.”

\* \* \*

“ We were beginning to breathe a little.

“ They had already passed beyond where  
“ he was, and were going away peaceably,  
“ when one of them looked back for a mo-  
“ ment:

—“ They have discovered him ! they have  
“ discovered him, my sister suddenly ex-  
“ claimed, being seized with terror.

“ They had all stopped indeed and were  
“ proceeding to the place where Joseph,  
“ stooping towards the ground, was picking  
“ up the branches of a tree which he had  
“ just pulled down.

“ He had no suspicion of the danger.  
“ The Indians, hidden by some trees, were

“ at only a short distance, when there the  
“ report of a gun was heard, and Joseph fell  
“ backwards.

“ Believing him to be dead, they advanced  
“ triumphantly, to strip him; but Joseph,  
“ whom the bullet, in glancing upon his  
“ head, had only stunned, suddenly recover-  
“ ing himself, and making a rampart of the  
“ tree near where he was, seized his gun, and  
“ shot two of them stone dead on the spot.

“ The others, being frightened, retreated  
“ precipitately towards the border of the  
“ wood, then a lively fusillade commenced  
“ on both sides.

\* \* \*

“ Joseph was a skilful marksman.

“ At each shot, he knocked over an enemy.

“ Three had already succumbed.

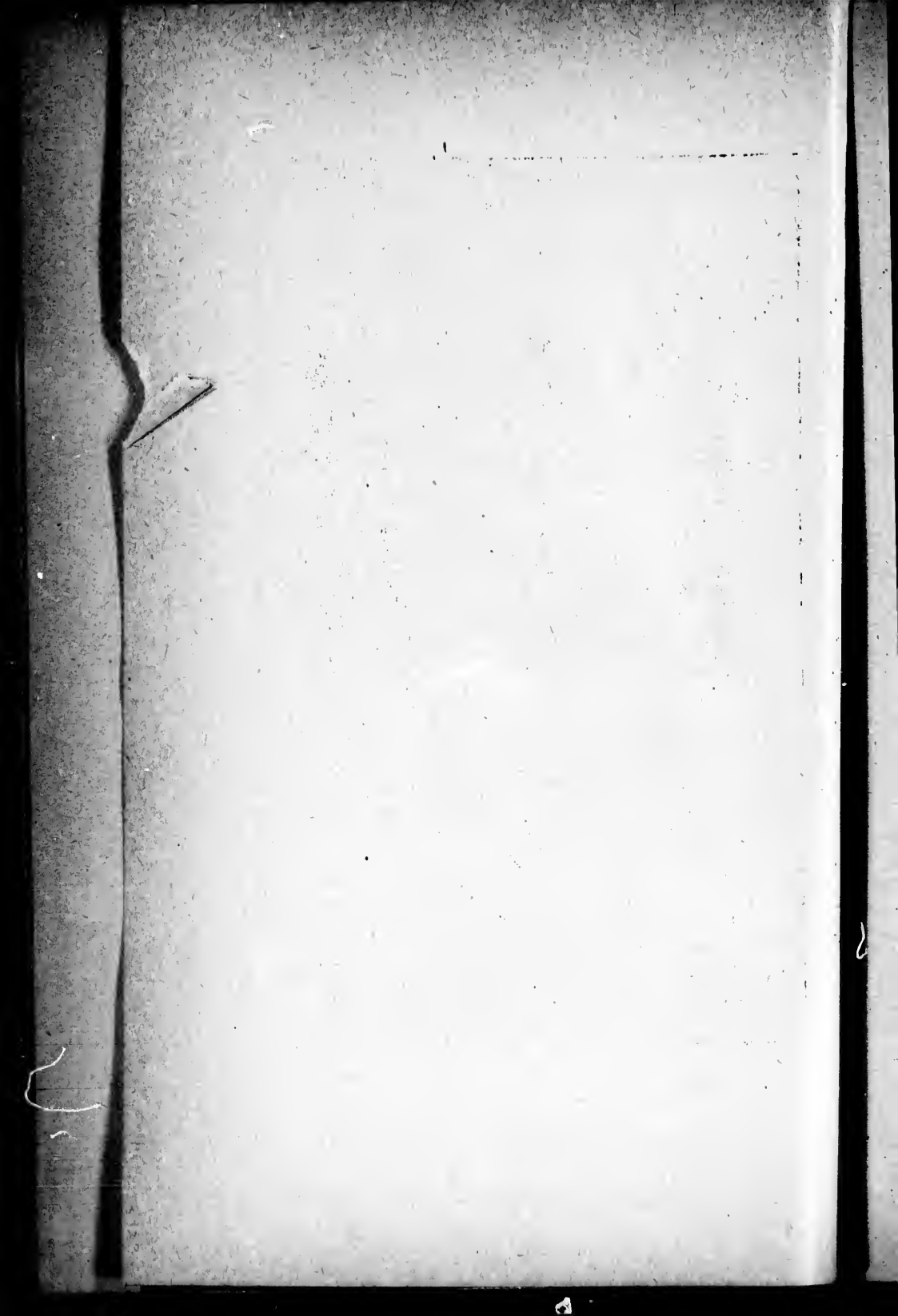
“ We waited, in the pangs of agony, the  
“ result of the fight, which would not have

Joseph... seized his gun, and shot two of them stone dead on the spot.

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Joseph... seized his gun, and shot two of them stone dead on the spot.



“ been doubtful, if the Indians had been  
“ engaged with an ordinary enemy.

“ But Joseph was a terrible adversary.

“ Crouched behind his tree, scarcely had  
“ he fired a shot, that in a second, he had  
“ re-loaded his gun.

“ Then, with admirable presence of mind  
“ while the bullets were whistling around  
“ him, and sweeping the leaves of the tree  
“ which sheltered him, he quietly was  
“ passing the barrel of his gun across the  
“ branches, and at the moment before aiming,  
“ making a great sign of the cross, then  
“ taking aim, and he pressed the trigger; the  
“ shot was fired, and we could count one  
“ enemy less.

“ Every time I saw a fresh victim fall, I  
“ could not repress an unspeakable start of  
“ excitement.

“ The lead of Joseph had just hit a fourth  
“ enemy.

“ We were beginning to have some hope,

“ when we saw one of the Indians creep up  
“ behind him.

“ The serpent does not advance towards  
“ its enemy with greater cunning and dexte-  
“ rity.

“ Without stirring or moving a leaf, he  
“ gradually approached him, at one time  
“ hiding himself behind a little elevation,  
“ another time behind a tuft of brambles,  
“ risking himself only at the moments when  
“ he could see Joseph fully occupied in  
“ taking aim.

“ At last he arrived within two steps of  
“ him, without having been discovered.

“ Then he paused, and waited until Joseph  
“ had re-loaded his weapon.

“ Without suspecting anything, the latter,  
“ a moment after, raised his gun to his  
“ shoulder, to aim; we saw him suddenly  
“ lower his weapon, and turn back.

“ He thought that he had heard a slight  
“ rustling behind him.

“ Raising up his head a little, he listens  
“ for an instant, then stoops right and left,  
“ but without perceiving anything, for the  
“ Indian was lying down flat on his belly,  
“ behind a heap of branches.

“ Entirely reassured, he turned round, and  
“ again shouldered his gun. But at the same  
“ time, the Indian, with an infernal smile,  
“ got up to his full height.

“ At the moment when Joseph was pre-  
“ paring to sacrifice another enemy, the  
“ Indian was brandishing his knife.

“ A last shot was fired, a last victim fell;  
“ but Joseph fell also, stabbed to the heart,  
“ by his cowardly enemy.

“ The Potowatomis, after having scalped  
“ him, despoiled him of his clothes, and  
“ garbed himself with them.”

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## LAMENTATION.

“ Numb with horror and fright, we did not even dream of taking flight.

“ In her despair, my sister, clasping her child in her arms, threw herself at the foot of the crucifix, and seizing it between her hands, dumb, covered it with kisses and tears.

“ Annihilated, beside myself, I fell on my knees near her, mingling my prayers and tears with hers.

“ Poor mother! she was trembling less for herself than for her child, that dear little angel which she loved so much. It was so beautiful. It was hardly eighteen months old.

“ Already it was commencing to stammer her name.

“ Oh my God! she cried out through her sobs, if it be necessary to die, I willingly offer you my life. but save my child!



“ And embracing it, covering it with tears,  
“ and pressing it to her heart, she sank down  
“ losing consciousness.

“ Although more dead than alive, I endeavored  
“ however to support her, when suddenly the assassin of Joseph entered,  
“ followed by his cruel companions.

“ Without uttering a word, he advanced  
“ towards us, and snatched violently the  
“ child from its mother's arms.

“ She had not noticed their arrival, but as  
“ soon as she felt her child released from her,  
“ she started up, and appeared to return to  
“ life.

“ Exasperated at having lost five of their  
“ companions, the Indians only breathed  
“ rage and vengeance.

“ The assassin of Joseph, raising up the  
“ child at arm's length, contemplated it an  
“ instant with that infernal look of the serpent  
“ which relishes with its eyes the  
“ victim it is going to strike.

“ An angel in the clutches of a demon.

“ The monster ! he was smiling.

“ Thus must be satan’s laugh.

“ As if to implore his pity, the child was likewise smiling with that smile of candour and innocence, capable of touching with compassion the most hardened.

“ But he, seizing it by a leg, whirled it round, for a moment, at arm’s length, and ..... oh horror ! .. he broke its skull on the corner of the stove.

“ The brains gushed out over its mother’s face.

“ Like a tiger, she bounded on the murderer of her infant, and maternal love giving to her super-human strength, seized him by the throat, her contracted fingers were thrust into his neck ; he tottered ; his eyes were injected with blood, his face became black, and he fell down heavily, suffocated by her desperate grasp.

“ She would have undoubtedly strangled

“ him, if, at that moment, an Indian had not  
“ split her head with the blow of an axe.

\* \* \*

“ Poor sister ! her's was a cruel death but  
“ her agonies lasted but a moment, her  
“ troubles are ended ; she his now happy in  
“ heaven.

“ But my God ! what will become of me ?

“ My God : my God ! have pity on me !

“ And the unfortunate girl twisting herself  
“ in the agony of despair, threw herself  
“ weeping into our arms, pressing us to her  
“ heart, and begging us to have pity on her,  
“ and not to abandon her, to rescue her from  
“ the hands of her executioners.

“ Ah how sad it is, how heartrending to  
“ be a witness of a misfortune which one is  
“ unable to alleviate !

“ We passed all the night weeping with  
“ her, seeking to encourage her and give her  
“ some hope.

“ I felt that it was a sort of cruelty to her,  
“ to inspire a confidence which I did not  
“ have; for I knew the Indians.

“ I was aware that those monsters never  
“ abandon their victims.

\* \* \*

“ The following day, my father after  
“ having shown many kindness to the In-  
“ dians, interceded with them in favour of  
“ the young captive, and offered them all  
“ sorts of presents to redeem her; but nothing  
“ would tempt them.

“ They were still half drunk.

“ He employed, by turns, prayers and  
“ menaces, for the purpose of touching them.

“ But neither presents, prayers, nor threats  
“ could rescue her from their hands.

“ The unfortunate young girl even cast  
“ herself at their feet, embraced their knees,  
“ to induce them to relent; but the monsters!

“ they responded to her supplications, with  
“ shouts of laughter.

“ And notwithstanding her prayers, tears,  
“ and entreaties, they carried her away with  
“ them. \*

—“ Alas, sir, added miss Baby in casting  
“ her eyes full of tears on the young officer,  
“ how can one have the courage to smile,  
“ and be gay, after having been a witness to  
“ such scenes?

—“ The demons! exclaimed the young  
“ man, while stamping his feet with horror  
“ and indignation, ought not one to exter-  
“ minate to the last, this infamous race,  
“ athirst only with carnage and blood?

“ Oh if I had but known this sooner!

“ Yesterday, a Potowatomis came to my  
“ house to sell me some skins.

“ As I was not in need of any, and as he  
“ wanted three times their value, I told him  
“ to go away.

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\* She has never been heard of since.

“ He dared to resist.

“ Then, my patience tired out, I got up  
“ from my chair, and kicked him out of the  
“ door. He went away threatening and show-  
“ ing me his dagger.

“ I had a stick in my hand.

“ I now regret that I did not knock him  
“ down.

\* \* \*

“ Imprudent said Miss Baby, you should  
“ never have provoked that Indian:

“ Do you not know that an Indian never  
“ forgets a wrong.

“ He will roam, a whole year, around the  
“ fort, to follow you with his eyes, observe  
“ your movements, watch your doing, scent  
“ your tracks, hide himself among the copses,  
“ amid the reeds of the river, approach you  
“ with all the deceit and cunning of the ser-  
“ pent, bound forth like a tiger, and strike

“ you to the heart at the moment when you  
“ least expect it.

“ I see you go out of the fort, every day,  
“ for the purpose of fishing on the banks of  
“ the river ; I advise you to go there no more.  
“ Misfortune will happen to you.

\*.\*

—“ Bah ! said the young man, you are too  
“ timorous.

“ I saw him set out, this morning, with a  
“ troop of warriors of his nation.

“ They went down to Quebec, to sell there  
“ the furs which they could not get rid of  
“ here.”

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### THE DREAM.

It has just struck one, by the parlour-clock.  
Seated with her daughter, Mrs Baby is  
busy sewing, in front of a small work table.

Mr Baby had set out this morning, in order to visit some properties which he had just acquired, on the other side of the river.

The streets are deserted.

Almost all the inhabitants of the fort are occupied in the environs, cultivating their lands.

The heat is stifling.

Above the peaks of the hills is seen vibrating the atmosphere heated by the rays of the sun.

Not a breath of wind agitates the trees in the garden the motionless and languid branches and leaves of which droop towards the ground, as if imploring a little moisture. a drop of dew.

A black female slave is walking along the alleys, hanging out on the bushes some white linen to dry and puts to flight, in her passage, some hens sheltering themselves from the heat, under the shade of the foliage.

The silence is complete.



Only the buzzing of insects is heard and the jerked notes of the grass hoppers, when hopping in the rays the sun.

From the outside, may be perceived, in the opening of the window, decorated with bouquets the head of the young girl who, pale, silent and full of melancholy, is bending over a flower in bloom, and seems to behold her own face in its fragrant corolla.

\* \* \*

—“Mamma,” said she, at last, gently raising up her head, “do you think that papa will be a long time on his journey?”

—“I believe that he will return in four or five days, at the latest, but why do you ask me this question?”

—“Ah! it is because I am very anxious that he should return. I shall ask him to let us go down immediately to Quebec, instead of waiting till next month.

“This journey will divert me a little.

“ Hold, since the Indians came here, the  
“ other day, with the poor child whom they  
“ had made a prisoner, I have not had a  
“ moment’s rest.

“ I have her always before my eyes.

“ I seem always to see her. She follows me  
“ everywhere.

“ I saw her again in a dream last night.

\* \* \*

“ I thought that I was seated in the midst  
“ of a dark and large forest, near an impe-  
“ tuous torrent which descended at some  
“ paces from me into a bottomless gulf.

“ On the other bank, which appeared to  
“ me all smiling, enamelled with groves of  
“ flowers, and illuminated by a soft and  
“ serene light, the young captive was stand-  
“ ing upright, pale, but calm.

“ She seemed to me to inhabit a better  
“ world.

“ Holding an open book in her hands, and  
“ turned towards me, she slowly looked over  
“ its pages.

“ She turned over thus sixteen leaves.

“ Then she stopped, cast upon me a glance  
“ full of sadness and compassion, and  
“ signalled to some one who remained on  
“ my side to cross the torrent.

“ At this signal, he trembled in all his  
“ limbs, his knees shook together, his eyes  
“ became dilated, his mouth gaped open  
“ with terror, a cold perspiration ran down  
“ his brow.

“ He endeavoured to go back, but an invin-  
“ cible power dragged him towards the abyss.

“ Turning towards me, he begged of me,  
“ with bitter lamentations, to help him.

“ I felt deep compassion for him.

“ But in vain did I attempt to hold him  
“ by the hands to assit him, overpowering  
“ fetters bound all my limbs, and prevented  
“ me from making any movement.

“ In vain did he try to cling to the rocks  
“ on the bank ; he felt himself continually  
“ pushed forward towards the abyss.

He had already advanced as far as the  
“ middle of the torrent whose deep and  
“ foaming waters bounded and roared around  
“ him, as if impatient to engulf him.

“ At each step, he tottered, and was nearly  
“ losing his equilibrium ; but he soon recover-  
“ ed himself and continued to go forward.

“ At last a more impetuous wave dashed  
“ itself against him, and made him totter  
“ afresh. His feet slipped ; he cast upon me  
“ a glance of inexpressible anguish, and fell  
“ over.

“ In an instant he was dragged to the edge  
“ of the precipice where he would have been  
“ engulfed, when his hand came in contact  
“ with the corner of the rock which rose up  
“ from the water.

“ His tightened fingers thrust themselves  
“ in the green and slimy moss on the rock ;

“ for a second he held on with all the  
“ supreme energy of despair.

“ His body arrested suddenly in its sud-  
“ den fall, appeared for a moment above the  
“ waves.

“ The foam and vapour of the water enve-  
“ loped him as in a cloud, and the wind  
“ caused by the fall violently agitated his  
“ humid hair.

“ His dilated eyes were fixed on the rock,  
“ from which his convulsive grasp was  
“ already giving way.

“ At last, a terrible cry resounded, and he  
“ disappeared in the gulf.

“ Transfixed with anguish and horror, I  
“ looked at the young captive.

“ But she, wiping away away a tear,  
“ showed to me, without speaking a word,  
“ the last page of the book, which appeared  
“ all streaming with blood.

“ I uttered a cry of horror, and started

“suddenly out of my sleep..... My God!  
“ would this be a page of my life.

---

### BLOOD.

Scarcely had Miss Baby finished speaking, than there was heard at the door, a noise of hasty footsteps, and a man entered running, quite scared, and all covered with blood.

It was the young officer.

His arm was broken, and hanging down.

“ Quick ! quick ! he exclaimed, hide me !

“ I am pursued by the Indians.

—“ Go up into the granary,” said Mrs Baby to him, “ and do not stir, otherwise  
“ you are a dead man.”

\* \* \*

Directly after, the Indians entered. Before they had spoken a word, Mrs Baby pointed to them with her finger the adjoining street.

So they went away immediately, being persuaded that he had escaped on that side.

The admirable presence of mind of Mrs. Baby had completely deceived them. In fact not a muscle of her face betrayed her emotion.

And fortunately they did not have time to notice the deadly pallor imprinted on the countenance of the young miss, who, her elbow resting on the window, her figure half hidden behind bouquets of flowers, felt ready to faint.

Then there was one of those moments of inexpressible anguish, when suddenly the chill of death strikes the heart.

Mrs Baby had earnestly hoped that the Indians, for fear of the superintendent, would not dare to intrude, in spite of her, into the house; but who could foresee when these savages would stop when once allured by the scent of blood?

She hoped that, being soon wearied by their useless search, they would abandon

their enemy, or that she would have time to obtain help, to drive them off, if they should dare to return.

Making a sign to the slave who was working in the garden, she ordered him to run, in all haste, to warn the fort of the danger which threatened them.

\* \* \*

Some minutes, full of alarms and anxiety, passed and the Indians were not re-appearing.

—“Do you think that they have gone away?” murmured in an undertone, the young girl whose countenance was beginning to brighten with a ray of hope.

—“Even should they return, replied Mrs Baby, they would not dare”.....

She had not finished.

Stooping towards the window she listened, and tried to distinguish a noise of human voices which made itself heard in the distance.



Was this the aid she had asked for ?

Was it the voices of the Indians who had come back ?

She could not distinguish.

However, the voices were continually approaching, and became more and more distinct.

—"They are our men," exclaimed Miss Baby; "do you hear the barking of our dog?"

And she breathed more freely, as if relieved from an immense weight.

Mrs Baby made no answer.

A faint smile passed over her lips.

She had indeed understood the barking of the dog; but another noise, which she knew too well, made itself heard by her.

The voices soon became so distinct, that it was impossible to delude oneself.

"There they are! there they are!" suddenly cried out the young girl, pale as death, gliding on to a seat near the window.

Indeed, one could see, undulating among the trees, plumes of divers colours, which the Indians are accustomed to wear on the top of their heads.

—“Do not tremble thus,” Mrs Baby said to her daughter; you will betray us. Turn towards the window, and take care that the Indians do not perceive your emotion.

\* \* \*

Courage and presence of mind in a critical moment, is always admirable; but with a woman, it is sublime.

Calm, impassible, without even rising from her seat, Mrs Baby continued quietly her work.

The most experienced eye could not have observed the slightest trace of emotion or feverish agitation on this brave and courageous physiognomy.

In the breast of this woman the heart of a heroine was beating.

---

In this manner, she awaited the arrival of the Indians.

\* \* \*

—“Tell us where you have hidden the “white warrior!” exclaimed the first one who penetrated into the apartment.

This was the Potowatomis whom the young officer had the imprudence to provoke.

Still panting from the race just ended, his face was streaming with perspiration.

On his knitted brow, in his fierce and threatening looks, in all his features quaking with feverish agitation, one read rage, and the exasperation of disappointment.

—“Comrade” replied Mrs Baby, in a severe tone of voice, “you know the superintendent.

“If you have the audacity to behave yourself badly in his house you know with whom you will have to settle the matter.

The Indian seemed to hesitate for a moment, and in a voice which he tried to soften:

—“ My sister well knows that the Potowatomis loves peace, and that he is never the first to attack.

“ The white warrior has gone on the war path against the Potowatomis, otherwise the Potowatomis would not pursue him.

—“ I have not concealed the white warrior, replied Mrs Baby · you are wasting your time in seeking for him here.

“ Make haste, and run after him, if you do not wish him to escape from you.”

The Potowatomis did not reply ; but looking at Mrs Baby with a smile, he pointed out to her with his finger, a little stain on the floor, which no other than an Indian would ever have noticed. But the subtle eye of the Indian had just discovered there the track of his enemy.

It was a drop of blood which Mrs Baby had however taken the precaution to wipe carefully.

\*  
\* \*

—“ My sister speaks truly, replied the Indian in an ironical tone of voice, the white warrior has not passed by here.

“ This mark of blood, has been put there by her to make the Indian believe that she has concealed the white warrior.”

Then, again speaking in a more serious tone of voice:

—“ Only let my sister show us where he is, and we will immediately retire.

“ My sister well knows that the Potowatomis only desires to make him a prisoner.

Suddenly he stopped, inclined his head a little to look through the open window, at the end of the room, and uttering a hoarse and guttural cry, he bounded to the other end of the apartment, and jumped out of the opened window into the garden.

His ferocious companions followed him, howling like a troop of demons.

\* \* \*

Without seeing anything, Mrs Baby understood it all.

The young officer, on again hearing the Indians, thought that he was lost, and had been imprudent enough to jump out of one of the windows into the garden. He was directing his course towards a sheltered cistern hollowed in the midst of the parterre, to hide himself there, when the Indians perceived him.

I give up recalling to mind the atrocious scene which then took place.

The pen falls from my hands.

In two bounds they reached him and one of them with a terrible blow of the fist knocked him down.

He fell on his broken arm and heaved a long sigh caused by the pain.

They then seized him, and tied his hands and feet.

Poor young man ! what resistance could he make against his enemies, weakened by loss of blood and unarmed.

He called for help with lamentable cries.

And the echoes of the garden repeating his groans, doubled the horror of this scene.

Miss Baby, mad with terror precipitated herself at the feet of her mother, hiding her face on her knees, and closing her ears with her hands, so as not to see or hear this shocking tragedy.

Whilst the other Indians were holding their victim, the Potowatomis seized his knife, and quietly sharpened it on a stone.

His countenance then betrayed no emotion, not even the horrible pleasure of vengeance which made his heart throb with infernal joy.

\* \* \*

“ My brother, the white warrior,” said he, while continuing to sharpen his knife with feigned indifference, “ well knows that he can “ insult with impunity the Potowatomis; “ the Potowatomis is a coward who prefers “ to flee from rather than attack his enemy. “ Would my brother now like to make “ peace with his friend the Potowatomis? He “ can speak and impose conditions, for he is “ free.....”

Then, reassuming all of a sudden his ferocious manner, he stood up, and fixing his inflamed eye on the young officer :

—“ My brother the white warrior, he “ exclaimed, may sing his death-song, for “ he is going to die.”

And brandishing his knife, he stabbed him in the throat, while another of these monsters in human form, received the blood in a small kettle.



Two or three other Indians stamped on the corpse, with contorsions and hellish cries.

The death rattles of agony of the wretched victim, mixed with these howlings, reached the ears of the young girl, and a convulsive trembling caused her to start every time with horror.

At last these cries and yells ceased.

The victim had been sacrificed.

Then, kicking the inert dead body, the Potowatomis, followed by his companions proceeded again towards the house.

\* \* \*

—“ Ah! you did not wish to tell us where the white warrior was,” the Potowatomis exclaimed, on entering.

“ Very well! now, since you love him so much you shall drink his blood.

“ Mrs Baby, pale as a statue of marble, boldly drew herself up:

—“ You may kill me, she exclaimed, but  
“ you shall not make me drink it.”

The young girl having fainted, was lying  
“ on the ground at her feet.

They then seized Mrs Baby, and tried to  
open her mouth, but not succeeding, they  
daubed her face with blood, and abandoned  
her in that state. \*

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### THE SNAKE.

Several months have elapsed since the  
events happened which we have just related.

It was night.

..... “ Night whose vast wings cause  
millions of stars to shine in the azure: which  
reviving the sky like a dim mirror, permits

---

\* However horrible this scene may have been, I  
can, notwithstanding, affirm that it is perfectly  
true, even as to its minutest details.

the charmed eye to sound its infinity ; night,  
when the cloudless firmament opens all the  
pages of that book of fire !

.....

The harmonious ether in its waves of azure,  
envelops the mountains with a purer fluid ;  
their softened surroundings and effaced sum-  
mits seem to float in the air and flutter in  
space as, in the depth of a tranquil sea, is  
seen the shadow of its shore undulating  
under the waves. Beneath such a rayless day,  
serener than aurora, the earth seems to spring  
before the contemplative eye. It unfolds afar  
off its changing horizons where played that  
hand which sculptured the universe. There,  
like the wave, rolls a hill ; there, hillock  
pursues the receding hillock ; and the valley  
veiled with verdant curtains, becomes a  
couch for the shade and waters ; here, ex-  
tends the plain where, as on the sandy shore,  
ebbs and flows the wave of stalks ; there,  
like the snake whose folds are broken, the

river resuming its interrupted waves, marking its silver course with numberless windings, loses itself beneath the hill, and reappears in the shade.

.....

How divine is the sojourn of man, when noise is thus stifled by night! That sleep which descends from above with the dew, and slackens the cause of exhausted life, seems likewise to act on all the elements, and calm the throbbings of all that lives. A pious silence extends over nature: the river has its splendour, but no longer its murmur; the roads are deserted, the cottages voiceless; no leaf trembles in the vault of the woods; and the sea itself, expiring on its shore, hardly brings to the beach a plaintive wave. Seeing this world without echoes, where the ear enjoys a beautiful repose, where all its majesty, twilight, silence, and whose existence the eyes only can attest, it might be said that one contemplates in a dream,

throughout the past, the phantom of an expired world! Only in the trunks of the large topped pine-trees, whose scattered groups grow over those abysses, the breath of night which sometimes breaks forth, spreads now and then harmonious voices, as if to attest in their sonorous summits, that this lulled world palpitates, and still exists."

.....

In the middle of the garden, at the same place where the unfortunate young man had been murdered, stands a simple black cross without any ornaments.

No inscription reveals to the passing traveller, the name of the victim, nor the fatal history.

Alas! it is written for ever, in bloody characters, in the hearts of the family.

\* \* \*

Every evening the superintendent, attended by his wife, children and slaves, goes to

recite at the foot of this cross, a prayer for the repose of his friend's soul.

\* \* \*

That night, all the family had just retired.

Alone, a young girl clothed in black, was still praying on her knees, at the foot of the funereal monument.

She was very pale, her countenance had an expression of ineffable sadness.

The dew of the evening had lengthened the curls of her hair, which fell down in disorder on her cheeks.

One would have thought her a statue of melancholy.

\* \* \*

At the summits of the heavens, the full moon was shedding from its urn of alabaster, waves of its limpid and melancholy light.

The dreaming ray was touching the grass at the foot of the cross, and rose up to the

eyelid of the young girl, like a silent and grateful sigh from the innocent victim, the remembrance of whom had left in her mind an impression full of charm and poignant bitterness.

Her lips muttered an ardent prayer.

Prayer! oh! for the painful heart, it is the celestial balm, it is the smile of angels through earthly tears.

For a long time she conversed with her God, breathing forth her prayer with sighs and tears, having knelt down at the foot of this cross, on the grass, still humid with the blood of the innocent victim.

At last, at the moment when she was about to get up and go away, she looked up for an instant, and thought that she perceived something like a shadow moving about in the opening of a air hole pierced in the wall of a sort of little shed standing at some paces in front of her.

A cloud just then passed over the moon,

and prevented her from being able to discover what this object could be.

She waited some instants, and when the cloud had passed, the ray illuminated a human face.

This can only be a robber, she said to herself. However the door is certainly well fastened.

He will find himself mistaken, since the servant has just locked it.

\* \* \*

However this head was gradually issuing from the hole, getting more and more distinct from the darkness.

At one moment, the rays of the moon fell full on this figure.

The young girl trembled.

She had just recognized the face.

It was impossible for her not to know it.

It was him indeed !



She perfectly remembered him by his copper-colour, his harsh and ferocious features and his wicked eyes rolling in their orbits.

It was..... it was..... the Potowatomis, the murderer of the young officer! \*

Her first thought was to take to flight; but an unconquerable curiosity restrained her.

All the time the Indian was continually moving about in the opening.

One of his arms had issued from the air-hole. His hand held an object which the young girl could not distinguish.

For a long time he tried to make through the entrance, which was too small to allow him to pass.

At last, at the moment when he was making a final effort to get out, he suddenly

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\* Those who understand the character of Indians, well know that they are always inclined to steal.

turned his head and in an anxious manner, fixed his looks towards a little bush adjacent.

He appeared then to hesitate; at last letting go the object which he held, he pressed his hand against the ground, and forced himself back; but his shoulders, squeezed on every side by the wall, held him confined in the opening.

Then his anxiety seemed to augment; and he cast another glance towards the bush.

A slight rustling of leaves was heard, and from the shade of the bush, a little head emerged, which directed its course slowly towards the Indian.

It was the head of a rattlesnake. \*

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\* It is not many years ago that these reptiles were so numerous, that it was very dangerous to leave the windows open in the evening. My mother related to me that when she lived at Sandwich, with her father, one of the servants had the imprudence to leave the windows open. During the evening some person pulled back, by chance, a side-

---

Immoveable, his eyes dilated, the Indian observed the slightest movements of the reptile which was advancing very quietly, and with precaution, as if he was aware of the strength and skill of his formidable adversary.

When it reached to within few steps of the Indian it stopped, and then mouth opened, it darted to his face.

But before the snake was able to touch him, with the hand which remained free he gave it a violent blow, and sent him falling down several paces from him.

Soon after, he made a fresh effort to disengage himself; but it was in vain.

The ferocious reptile advanced a second time, and recommenced the attack; but this time, with still more precaution.

---

board adjoining the wall, and perceived, lying behind, an enormous snake asleep.

An other day when she was going to school with her companions, a snake threw itself on her, and bit her in the waist. Fortunately its teeth were entangled in her garments. While she was running away, distracted, her companions cried out to her to unfasten her apron. And that saved her life.

After having approached nearer to his enemy than previously, he darted forward with renewed fury; but without more success, for the Indian's hand sent him rebounding back again further than before.

The Potowatomis then made a supreme effort to free himself, but it was again useless.

He remained fixed in the opening of the hole.

Quick as lightning, the reptile foaming at the lips, its eyes on fire, mouth expanded by rage, and projecting a bifurcated and bloody tongue; returned afresh, creeping towards its pray.

The scales of its skin, which anger caused to sparkle with the most lively colours, were reflected under the silver rays of the moon, and the slight noise of the rattles of its tail resembling the noise of parchment being crumpled, alone troubled, the silence of nature.

This noiseless struggle, in the midst of the silence of night, between a snake and an Indian, still more subtle than a serpent, had something so fantastic, that one might have said that they were two evil genii disputing in the dark about some unfortunate victim.

\* \* \*

The snake came so near to the Indian, that the latter could almost have seized it.

It rose for the last time, and drawing back its head, made a spring.

The Indian was waiting for it with his hand, following with his eyes, the slightest oscillations of its body.

It was easy to see that the final struggle was going to commence, and would soon end, by the death of one of the two adversaries.

At the instant when the snake precipitated itself like a dart, on its enemy, the Indian again raised up his hand, but this time, the snake's spring was so rapid and instant-

neous, that he was unable to catch it, and the reptile bit him in the cheek.

A hoarse cry died away in the Indian's throat, who seized with his open hand, the snake, before it could escape, and putting his mouth to it, in his rage, he tore it with his teeth, and left it in tatters.

Vain reprisals; for the blow was given.

Some minutes after, horrible convulsions, and frightful cries, announced that the deadly venom had produced its effect.

The victim twirled himself about, in despair, a prey to terrible sufferings.

\* \* \*

It seemed, at first, that he had succeeded to escape, but subsequently his body was found, enormously swollen, still held in the aperture of the hole.

His eyes inflated with blood were out from the sockets; his face was as black as coal, and his half-opened mouth exposed to view,

two rows of white teeth, whence still hung some shreds of the reptile, and flakes of foam mingled with blood.

Providence itself had taken care to have a vengeance for the murder of the young officer.

### EPILOGUE.

Here are some details of the family who had been witness to the tragic history which we have just related, and which will be a fresh proof of the veracity of our recital.

Mr. Perron Baby yet lived for many years after these events.

The following is an extract from the inventory of his goods :

Mr. James DuPerron Baby died at Detroit about the 2nd August, 1789."

" In the year 1796, Mrs Susan Du Perron  
"Baby went down with several of her chil-  
"dren, to reside at Quebec, leaving Mr. James

“ Du Perron Baby, her eldest son, to manage  
“ the business and lands, mills and other  
“ affairs in Detroit.”

This last commanded for a long time the Canadian militia of Upper Canada, and was elected subsequently speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Mrs. S. Du Perron Baby died at Quebec, in 1813, at a very advanced age.

\* \* \*

As for Miss Theresa Du Perron Baby, she ended her days at Québec, in 1839, at Mr. de Gaspé's.

She could never forget the sanguinary tragedy which so cruelly ended her first dream.

The wound once opened, never closed again.

This funereal remembrance was constantly impressed on her brow, and her soul always full with everlasting sadness.



The ray died out, and its expiring flame ascended towards heaven, to never again return.

Her smile, like that of Andromache, was always mingled with tears.

And when her friends sought to make this disenchanted soul to again blossom.

—“ Ah ! ” she would exclaim sadly, “ let me weep in silence my vanished dreams.”

“ Tears are the ecstasy of misfortune.

“ The past has been for me, too full of bitterness for me to make a smiling face to the future.

“ The flower of illusion does not grow on the ruins of the heart.”

Quebec, March, 1860.

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