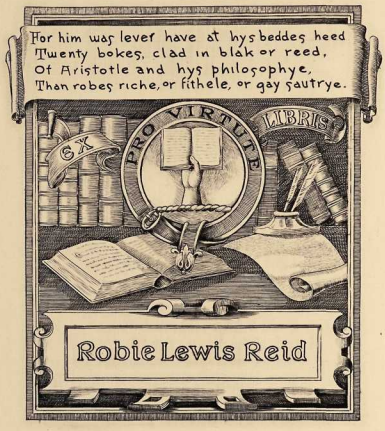
# Canadian Houses of Romance

by

Katherine Hale

with Drawings by

Dorothy Stevens

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# Canadian Houses of Romance

KATHERINE HALE has also written:

*Canadian Cities of Romance*
*Morning in the West*
*Legends of the St. Lawrence*

The Château Papineau at Monte Bello.

# Canadian Houses of Romance

by

Katherine Hale

with Drawings by

Dorothy Stevens

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To John W. Garvin, my ruthless chauffeur and best companion of the road; to Mr. and Mrs. Gaspard Le Moine, whose family name, so distinguished in French Canada, frequently occurs on these pages; and to my good friends, Dr. John D. Logan, of Halifax, and Mr. J. Murray Gibbon, of Montreal,

I gratefully inscribe this book.

*IT is possible that people may ask what Canada has to do with old houses, that have been called the ghosts of old races. For it is said there is little to be found here but the mark of the present; a hard mark, like a self-complacent rubber stamp. To this I can only answer that I have tried to reach and record the little. In doing so I have heard stories so interesting, and at times so strange, that their telling might place Canada among fantastic countries, as well as those of vast natural resources. But they are still too near our time; for while descendants linger they spoil true stories. Yet the fact remains that had my publishers allowed this book to grow stouter there might easily have been more than the sixty houses recorded here that played a significant part in the courageous days of early Canada.*

Among those who gave me generous assistance, and whose names do not appear in these stories are: Dr. W. D. Lighthall and Miss F. Evelyn Currie, of Montreal; Mr. Lawrence J. Burpee, of Ottawa; Dr. William MacIntoch, of Saint John; Mrs. Arthur Cree, of the Archives Department, at Victoria; Miss Muriel Kinnear, of the Archives, Halifax; Mr. E. R. Greig, of the Art Gallery of Toronto, Grange Park; and Miss Charlotte Whitton, of Ottawa. Also Mrs. J. W. F. Harrison (Seranus), of Toronto, for use of excerpts from her villanelle "Château Papineau."

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*The illustration on the wrapper of this volume is a reproduction of the etching of "The Admiralty House, Halifax," by Dorothy Stevens.*

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Old Peoples' Places! Not for you
  For whom To-day was made,
But here's a land where friends are few
  And life's a lonesome trade,
And modern man is, first and last,
  An alien distant thing,
And so one wanders to the past
  And finds it comforting.

* * * * *

And the years are lifted like a sheet
  And the stricken stone is free . . .
Old Peoples' Places! Might one meet
  Old People there? Maybe.

H. B.

With permission from *Punch*, London, England.

# *Canadian Houses of Romance*

# I

# ANGELIC PATRONAGE

## I

AT the Château Frontenac the maître d'hôtel handed us to François, the head waiter, who suggested an admirable dinner. It was a splendid summer night and after the meal we went out on the Terrace as everyone delights to do.... Here was the wide, crowded walk, twittering with French and English voices, the lighted kiosks and bandstand, the dark Citadel looming above, the dark river singing below and smiling to itself in a thousand reflected lights from Levis and Quebec.

Leaning over the balustrade to look down on a labyrinth of little streets, we were joined by a friend from Quebec, whom some tourists had just singled out to inquire where they could find a guide for the Lower Town.

"That is unnecessary, madame," he had replied, "for everyone knows the way."

"They are not energetic, these travellers," he said. "Do you know, they hardly venture as far as the Island!" He glanced back to the left where Isle d'Orléans lay asleep in the moonlight. "The Citadel, the Lower Town, St. Anne de Beaupré are very popular, but how few people know the spots that contain a little mystery—a little romance, one might

say! These still lie hidden. There is our small Sillery, for example, an ancient village, a handful of houses on an almost deserted road. It lies there in the old Cove just four miles to our right as we stand here. Do any of you, for instance, know this village?"

Yes, we knew that the village of Sillery existed, and near at hand.

"Nevertheless, my friends," said the gentleman from Quebec, "if you will accompany me to a small table just under the awning there I shall order, with your permission, a bottle of *Dubonnet,* and while we drink it I shall have the pleasure of telling you something of the history of this ancient place of which, without doubt, you are unaware."

But by the time that we had made the length of the Terrace we found that the little tables under the awning were occupied, and the band was approaching its patriotic climax before we were served:

> O Canada! Terre de nos aieux
> Ton front est ceint de fluerons glorieux!
> Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
> Il sait porter la croix.

*"Il sait porter la croix!* How true of Sillery! Do you realize, mes chéres amies, that this place, so near us, of which I speak, is a mystic spot and was, nearly three hundred years ago, placed under the protection of Saint Michael the Archangel as a religious penance for the worldly deeds of a young Frenchman of whom I shall presently tell you?"

He waited for our confession of ignorance and went on.

"Today it is a half forgotten story, even in France where Nöel Brulart de Sillery, a member of the Military Order of the Knights of Malta, and who had

"True type of the hardy French pioneer."

experienced a notoriously gay career, suddenly entered Holy Orders. That was in the year 1634. He had still before him a long life and immense wealth to devote to the expiation of his mad youth. The truth is he had come under the influence of the saintly Vincent de Paul, who was full of zeal for

the cause of mission work among the savage tribes of the new world, and de Paul had encouraged Nöel to leave France for America."

The moon was sailing towards us now across the southern path of the midsummer sky, and only isolated groups were scattered about the great Terrace. We drank the ruddy mild *Dubonnet* out of thick little glasses, and the story of Nöel Brulart de Sillery went on.

"And so, close under this little Canadian fortress, there grew a mission, a tiny settlement; one might say the religious pet of military Quebec. It was a place of strange contrasts. The nuns of the Hôtel Dieu opened a hospital, and a parish church was erected. But the thick woods which surrounded the clearing were full of Indian camps. It was known that they were not always friendly, and anxiety was felt by the people of Quebec for the safety of the good nuns. One Reverend Father used to visit the Sisters each evening during the winter when, in the prevalence of snow storms that silenced the world, so many treacherous deeds were committed. He would make the journey of four miles from Quebec on foot, picking his way through the forest, his lantern in his hand, and sometimes, losing his foothold, would come rolling down the hill, and so arrive, breathless without doubt, but still faithful to his charge."

"The parish church and the hospital, founded by the Knight of Sillery, were in time augmented by a

fort, and then by the Manor House of the Jesuits. This is the first stone manor house ever erected in North America. With its heavy walls of grey stone, more than three feet thick, it stands on the village street to this day."

"Do you think, then," he suggested, with that eagerness for its memory which a devoted friend might show for a companion long gone, "do you think that the little history I have related is of sufficient interest to lead you to visit this quiet settlement, where awaits much of which I have not yet spoken? . . . Well, then, together, perhaps, we may explore these green glades so famous in days of old!"

2

And so the next morning we drove through Sillery's modern Upper Town and descended, precipitously, a rocky road that runs straight to the river. There, on a quiet little street, we found our manor house; of simple Norman structure and, except for a modern roof (made after the type of the first roof, steep and gabled to resist the pressure of snow), quite strong of wind and limb, a true type of the hardy French pioneer.

Everything else of the earliest days is gone. On the site of the one-time church there is a monument to the first missionary in Canada, Father Ennemond Massé who was buried here in 1646. A great elm tree rises over the spot where the nuns had their

hospital, and along the curving road that was once the main street little semi-modern houses have arisen, some of them additions to "original" houses: country places where Quebec families used to fly from the "heat of the city" two hundred years ago. Here came Madame de Maisonneuve, who tried, perhaps pathetically, to make a French villa look happy in rude surroundings. And Madame Manse came too, and that austere aristocrat, the venerable Madame de Monceau, the mother-in-law of General Ruette d'Auteur.

There are stories of how the gallants of the day, riding down from Quebec to pay their devoirs to these and other French ladies, were vastly interested in the surrounding woods, full of Indian wigwams where also summered beautiful black-eyed Montagnais and Algonquins.

Those were Sillery's brief days of splendour. Who, I wonder, holds the key to its subsequent obscurity? Not our kind host of this morning who possessed no inferiority complex whatever. "'Twas in the green glades of Sillery that the earliest lady novelist in Canada penned the first feminine romance," he said, and quoted Sir James LeMoine who calls this spot the cradle of the English novel in the new world.

"An empty cradle!" we thought, as we stood in the silent, mournful little street.

"The lady who wrote this Canadian novel," went

on our friend, "was none other than the well-known English writer Frances Brooke. Her husband received the appointment of Military Chaplain to the Garrison at Quebec, and she had secured, apparently, before she set sail, a commission from a London publisher for a book about her adventures in a savage land.

Everything that we afterwards learned, through praiseworthy research, relating to this far-sighted lady was extremely piquant. The Quebec Herald, sometime in 1790, contains this anecdote:

> The evening before this distinguished author departed with her husband for Canada, she had a party at her apartments who met for the purpose of bidding her farewell. Miss Hannah Moore, Miss Seward, Mr. Keats, Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell were among the visitors. As Dr. Johnson was obliged to take his leave early, he rose, and, wishing her health and happiness, went seemingly away. In a few moments a servant came to acquaint Mrs. Brooke that a gentleman in the parlor wished to speak to her. She accordingly went downstairs and who should it be but Dr. Johnson. "Madame," says the doctor, "I sent for you downstairs that I might kiss you, which I did not choose to do before so much company."

I wonder if they were curious for intimate details in Quebec about Dr. Johnson, and his friend and subsequent biographer, Mr. Boswell—"that noisy, ugly, foolish drunken Scotish laird?" Had news of them and of other literati come languidly by sailing ship, from London drawing-rooms, and, by way of critics, half caustic, half friendly, to small

Canadian settlements at this time? At any rate Mrs. Brooke had interesting news to tell, and a fashionable lady novelist was in itself a daring innovation.

One can imagine the flutter which the advent of such a being caused. It is said that she "danced divinely" and was ever ready to aid and abet all gaiety on foot in the fortress. Quebec hospitality even in those days was famous, and in "Emily Montague; her Life and Works" it was reported with a nimble and witty pen. Further, we are told that the author was "irresistibly attracted, pending the leafy months, to one of the cool Sillery retreats where, with her husband, she occupied an extremely pretty farm at the foot of the heights."

Of course we looked for that farm, but no one could give us a clue as to its whereabouts.

And then, days after, a sentence in an old copy of one of LeMoine's "Maple Leaves" suddenly arrested us. "It is generally supposed that the Brooke farm lay in the neighbourhood of Beauvoir, the Hon. R. R. Dobell's picturesque manor."

But why should we return to find it? . . . Like the quaint village itself, the author of "Emily Montague; her Life and Works" has passed along the dim street of oblivion—ghost of a street, where lights only appear to be lit, in windows that sometimes look almost as though they were real.

On that summer day in Sillery, the caretaker who took us over the echoing barn-like manor house of

the Jesuits had said: "There are few people who would be interested now in a lot of empty rooms when there are real sights to be seen close by in Quebec. Indeed the manor is already private property. It was bought by a gentleman in the Upper Town. And if they ever grade the hill and put an asphalt pavement on the road they say that he will refurnish the house and rent it out."

And that saying made one pray that oblivion may indeed descend upon the place for good and all, for in the day of bathrooms and asphalt and Ford cars and tourists its Angelic Patronage will certainly be withdrawn.... One can only hope that Nöel Brulart has had time to work out his salvation, with no need of a modernized Sillery hanging about his soul as a penance for youthful worldly deeds.

## II

## THE HOUSE THAT WAS NOT THERE

### I

IT was nearly two years after we had found the old Jesuit house at Sillery that we came again to the valley of the St. Lawrence. The roads were more fascinating than ever, and the song of the river more beautiful and deep. Driving along its shores day after day the river seemed often to awaken strange echoes that were like memories, cadences of life older than ours, known intimately to the river. Its song in one's ears makes the record of early Canadian life along its banks a very recent tale. It is easy to relate the story of villages, set like beads at regular intervals upon the road, but something more ancient than frontier life lies behind them.

One summer day we drove from Montreal to Verchères. It takes some time to get out of Montreal, over the long bridge and through an epidemic of villas, with the river on the right hand making beautiful broad curves before it begins its long straight path to the sea. In midsummer there are effects of vibrant, clear-washed colour: the blue of the river, the yellow-green of fields, and thrown upon the fields, like mauve-pink rugs, great patches of

a swamp flower called by the French Canadians rupé or rat's tail.

Suddenly you are on the village street of Longueuil. The straight spire of the Parish Church of St. Antoine rears up. It stands on the site of the old turreted castle of the Le Moynes, Barons of Longueuil in its feudal days. We tried to picture its ancient grandeur as we drove through the streets of the sunny modern town. Visible echoes of those times appeared in wayside cottages of the simplest rubble construction, in a few stone mills, set in the shining summer fields, and a bake-oven here and there, with its rather sinister coffin-like construction.

Out on the country roads, as though to give an illusion of the past, there came jogging many little carts, and old-fashioned one-horse phaetons and even venerable calèches. We had left Longueuil behind us, and were quite near Varennes when it became apparent that a festival of some sort was in progress. Not otherwise these unthrifty boiled shirts and gay muslins on a week-day of excellent haying weather! Suddenly, we remembered that it was the 25th of July, the feast day of Sainte Anne, who is the patroness of Quebec. And as we neared Varennes the blue flags of the Sainte appeared in delicate waving lines across the sleepy street. The little town was crowded with visitors, many shops were closed and the *Place* in front of the Cathedral was

full of cars, and such quaint vehicles as those we had been passing. Within the Cathedral a mass was progressing. The doors stood wide open, as though to take in a great congregation for whom there was no room. We struggled through the crowd and managed at last to get within the church. As we stood, tightly wedged in between worshipping French-Canadian families, we were enveloped in the majestic music of an eighteenth century mass. Mozart might have written it. A magnificent baritone voice rose and fell in the long and varied text of the gloria. The altar, seen through the far mist of its gleaming candles, made a vague but glorious blur. It seemed to us, as it rose serenely at the end of the long crowded aisle, like the mystical flower of an old faith still blooming in this provincial village. By the merest chance we had come upon a moment of ceremonial that had been each year renewed for over two hundred years. . . The solemn service, the devout throngs, the simple earnest faces, even the long, softly-waving petals of the blue flags of the Sainte made religion in this place a living poem of colour, music and delight.

In the rue Principale de Verchères we found one or two open shops, in spite of the holiday, and at a down-at-the-heel, and fly-specked one we bought a beautiful compote of amber glass for next to nothing.

This rue Principale is typically French-Canadian; small shops, and stone houses of the old type, with blue or green shutters, are interspersed with modern houses to which "galleries" have been added.

A stranger might easily pass through the quaint streets and find no hint of its dramatic story, but not a passenger on a St. Lawrence steamer, for the river takes a sharp curve just here and the harbour is plainly to be seen, also the lighthouse, an old windmill, and the life-sized figure of a young girl, animated in pose and gesture—Madeleine de Verchères.

In spite of school histories it would be interesting to know just how many people are quite sure of her story. With peaceful fields stretching on all sides we remembered a time when they were often deserted because the call to arms was forever issued from Quebec or Montreal. In the villages people would gather and work together, and while they worked, sentinels were on guard to give warning of the first sign of danger. Everywhere there was terror of the Iroquois. The habitant on his homestead, the courier in the depths of the forest, the trader paddling down stream with his furs,—none were secure.

We went to the water's edge to look more closely at the fine statue of Madeleine. A deaf but inquisitive old lady who had been following us about, came forward.

In a whining voice she asked us, "Est-ce que vous avez arriver pour la fête?"

"Non madame, pour visiter la maison de Verchères."

Her face expressed surprise but also satisfaction, and she pointed with elaborate gesture to "la Statue."

"The old fort, does it still exist?" we asked in our careful, school-book French.

She did not or would not comprehend.

How toy-like the stone windmill! How calm the small arena! It was a pretty stage-setting for this very appropriate peasant.

2

In 1692, through a thick autumn-crimsoned forest, Indians were stealing to seize an unprotected post. The settlers of Verchères were harvesting, miles away from the fort; and its commander, Madeleine's father, had gone to Montreal with his staff. An old man, some children, and two soldiers were left in charge with the girl of fourteen. Suddenly there came a cry, "The Indians are upon us!"

With shots singing and whistling about her the child somehow got herself and her brothers back, and closed and barred the gate. Within were the trembling old man, and the soldiers with matches lighted ready to blow them all up rather than endure Indian tortures.

It is at this point that Madeleine becomes so interesting. She turned upon the coward soldiers, tore off her white muslin bonnet and had on a steel cap of her father's in a moment, and a gun in her hand. She was, indeed, no longer Madeleine, but the Joan who must always have been stirring in her veins. "To arms!" she cried, "everyone of us! Let us fight to the death for God and the King!"

She invented a splendid fraud, so well sustained that the enemy actually believed the fort to be strongly garrisoned. There was a volley of shots at intervals from the loop-holes, a tread of sentinels at night, cries of "All's well!" and hour by hour the steel cap marching around the tiny quarters; ordering, inciting, cheering.

There was the incredible adventure of the cattle when, at early dawn, the sentry nearest the gates called suddenly: "Lady, there are advancing feet!"

She peered anxiously out. Yes—there, in the eerie light, against the whiteness of new fallen snow, black moving figures could be seen coming closer and closer. There was a moment of panic. Then soft lowing and snuffing was heard. . . These were no Indians but cattle, the last of the fort herd, faithful cattle finding their way home through the snow.

"Let them in," begged the children, "we have had no milk for days."

"God forbid!" replied Madeleine, "the Indians are behind them, wrapped in skins, ready to rush in should we open the gate."

Yet they risked it, for fear of starvation. The little boys stood on each side of the gate ready to fire. The gate was carefully opened. One by one the cattle marched slowly in and the gate was closed. On the seventh night she was asleep at last in the guard room. Suddenly she started, wide-awake, to hear the tramp of men about the house. Springing up she seized her gun, "Who goes there?" she called into the darkness.

"The French," came the reply. "It is La Monnerie come to help you!" . . .

And wanting to write about it we decided that there must be some trace left of the Fort which was also the maison de Verchères, and so we went to the Presbytery, to find out if a kindly priest could or would discover or invent for us a little ruin. But it was hopeless for he was, of course, at the Mass. We asked a few ancients on the street, themselves interesting relics, if anything was known of the whereabouts of the Fort.

"Mais non, madame, rien!"

So we had evidently come to see a house that was not there. Nevertheless, returning once more to the water's edge we vowed that there could be no more fascinating village in America than this.

"C'est unique!" volunteered the chauffeur, with a hearty gesture.

"the beautiful Calvaire . . . on the road between Verchères and Varennes."

3

Our old lady waved us farewell, after assisting in repacking the compote and plucking the inevitable bunch of wild flowers (*pour souvenir*) which as inevitably perished miserably within an hour.

We drove back to Montreal through a heavenly twilight. . . People with happy voices were talking and singing through the gloaming, and the inns and hotels were doing a lively business.

Yet, at the beautiful *Calvaire* that stands on the road between Verchères and Varennes we saw an old man praying in the dusty grass before its closed doors, as though the festival of the beloved Sainte Anne had failed to bring him all that he desired.

## III

## A FUR TRADER'S HOUSE

### (*And Others in Montreal*)

1

MONTREAL is strangely beautiful in winter, etched against a white background, her great churches and old houses looming lantern-like through the snow. On such a day I set forth to tea in the Prince of Wales Terrace, one of those formerly aristocratic rows whose gray stone fronts look so venerable. In the midst of talk, something in the small white marble mantelpiece, set in a design of stern iron grapes, seemed to me faintly, even oppressively, familiar. I remembered then a stately, century-old Ontario house, whose inmates were never known to light a fire, even on chilly days. Not often in Ontario, however, these impressive winding staircases which contain niches originally intended to hold oil lamps or candelabra.

2

It was behind McGill's great stadium that I saw a lovely deserted house of grey stone with iron railings. It stands, detached and dignified, looking mournfully over the magnificent amphitheatre towards the site of Burnside, the modest country residence of the founder of McGill who dreamed a

splendid dream, and fulfilled it in the University which bears his name.

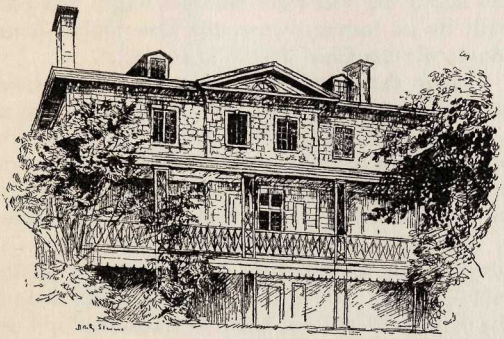
The house above the stadium was owned and occupied by members of the Molson family, also great citizens of Montreal. I do not know why they have left the house alone, but something, perhaps the moment of closing day when I saw it, left a rather sombre impression. With the old house I looked down over McGill's beginning and far, far behind that to the ancient vanished Indian town of Hochelaga on whose site, centuries later, a benevolent and shrewd Scottish gentleman was to cultivate the grounds of Burnside.

3

The Molson house looked more cheerful as we passed it again in the glitter of mid-winter sun. A carnival was in progress. The sky was a hard keen blue, like a painted ceiling, and the high world was white, with violet shadows sometimes cast across it. The air was broken by the jingle of sleigh bells. There were sightseers abroad in the land, and ski-ers and boys and girls trailing toboggans; small red sleighs piled with fur rugs; a few gorgeous turnouts with coachmen and footmen in those splendid wolfskin capes, and fur busbies that have not yet vanished. Everybody on the way to the summit. And such a way; winding and glittering and sometimes roofed by trees, frozen into brilliant lines or

broken columns, or forming a white lacework of branches through which the domes and towers of the city were seen far below.

But at the old Côte St. Antoine Road we left this gay throng, and passed frozen orchards that in autumn are fragrant with the scent of *fameuse* apples,



"a lovely deserted house."

and turning up a long avenue of tall gray trees we jingled up importantly to a faded red door.

As the door was opened a drift of organ music floated out. A Sister of the Ville Marie Convent came across a marble passage to meet us in the drawing room. Calm as a lily seemed Monklands, which was such a turbulent house!

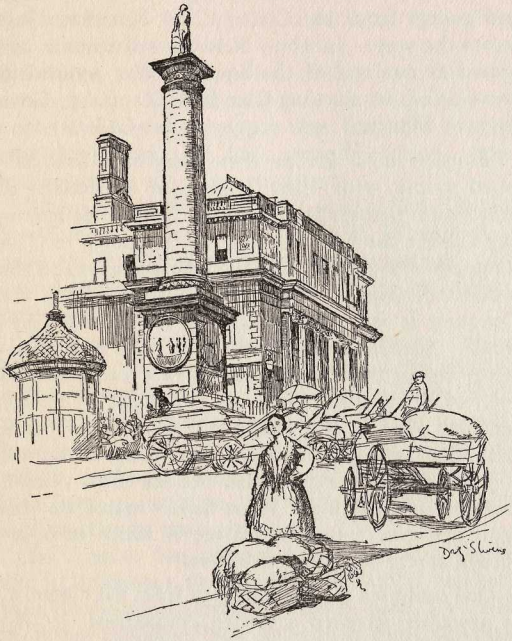
Lord Elgin, who lived here as Governor during and after the affair of the Rebellion Losses Bill, used to drive up this avenue accompanied, at times, by a little miniature rioting which naturally annoyed him, and made the coachman extremely nervous. But with all the harassing events and details of his troublous régime, he took time to beautify and adorn the Vice-regal residence which had been built by its former owner, the Honourable James Monk, the first Chief Justice of Montreal.

Here in the early-Victorian drawing-room, hung with great crystal chandeliers, the Sisters showed us a charming Romanesque medallion over the fireplace, and mouldings and wainscotting of wood overlaid with a raised design in plaster-of-paris of jolly little Cupids. The woodwork of the doors is delicately disguised in a pastel shade of silver or blue or rose that exactly tones with the colour of the various rooms, and on each door is the monogram of Lord Elgin in a beautiful old design. The original house is cunningly set, woven as it were, between the gray stone wings of the Ville Marie Convent, of which it is now a part.

4

But one must go into the French town to find early Montreal. It is fascinating to make one's way, by streets with old Saints' names, to Jacques Cartier Square. Here, when spring comes, you can

# A FUR TRADER'S HOUSE



"In 1809 Nelson's tall column appeared at one end of the square."

see, in imagination, the flowers of the garden that the Jesuits planted a century ago, and the comings and goings from the Château de Ramezay just across the way. In 1809 Nelson's tall column appeared at one end of the Square. But a hundred years before its erection Claude de Ramezay, Governor of Montreal, was occupying his Château.

Tourists now invade these rambling, low-ceilinged rooms with their wonderful collection of prints and pictures and furniture. After de Ramezay's death the house became the property of "La Campagnie des Indes" and the Indians came and the couriers de bois to exchange their furs. After the Conquest it was the residence of the British Governor. Montgomery issued from here his manifesto, urging the Canadian people to throw off the yoke of Britain, and Benjamin Franklin set up his printing press in the vaults. Indeed, these vaults with their splendid masonry and massive beams, and the kitchen below stairs, are the most human remains of the house. What flames roared up this great fireplace, what famous meals must have ascended to the banquet hall above!

One could see the town pillory from the Château. It probably afforded a certain amusement to the gentry. Bitter punishments were enacted there. In this square it is related with merciless brevity: "Four Iroquois suffered death by fire in 1696." . . Charlevoix, the historian, lived in the Square. A tablet

of true entente reads: "The Pere Charlevoix, Historian of La Nouvelle France, 1725."

Close beside the Château crowds the Open Market, where twice a week the farmers come to sell their wares. How pink their cheeks shine, like winter apples in the cold, and how gay their caps and scarlet homespun shawls. One feels like buying everything, even the little wooden-legged, rush-bottom chairs that they sit upon!

Then deeper into the oldest streets; Ste. Therese, St. Vincent, St. Amable, St. Gabriel, St. Jean Baptiste, St. Paul; full of low stone buildings, with outside stairs, narrow iron balconies, and iron shutters rusted red with age.

St. Paul was once the Fifth Avenue of ancient Montreal. The ships that unloaded at the wharves just below brought the latest designs from Paris, and the French *grandes dames* wore crimson and deep blue velvets against the snowy streets. How the coaches of that day passed one another in these lanes it is hard to imagine; but if the streets were narrow the houses were generous.

St. Amable for instance—tiny, tattered lane—and its neighbour, St. Gabriel. Explore, if you have time or the constitution to endure such icy cold, the bleak chambers that lie beneath these blind old places,—underground basements of everlasting stone. They seem to be filled with centuries of rubbish. In reality they are the vaulted and tunnelled houses of the first fur traders: the old fur cellars.

When Astor came to Montreal these cellars were already famous.

Sometimes a worthy, or unworthy, merchant prince lived in apartments above his precious stores. Simon MacTavish, the great fur-trader did. His house on St. Jean Baptiste was renowned for splendour and hospitality. It was hard to find, packed away among the warehouses. . . Use Maple Leaf Alcohol for Anti-Freeze. . . . By that sign we were told we should know it, and also because on the right of the gateway there is still to be seen a curious little iron door and window screen used by the trader. It is now a packing plant for the National Drug Company, and every inch of space counts. Hard to pick one's way through great bales and boxes to the stone archway of the courtyard. We looked at wainscotting, a mantelpiece, soon to be carted away to a museum, and a steel grate. But it was too cold to stay long underground.

As we stepped into the street there was noise of combat. Out of a dingy courtyard between two grimy buildings rushed a small crowd of youths, one in belligerent fashion squaring up to a taller boy. A torrent of French was let loose. I turned to my companion who laughingly translated: "This boy has been throwing chunks of ice about, and the other one says that his grandmother's window is broken. . . They always scrap down here. . . I don't suppose they will fight it out." But as we

turned the corner the air was still vibrant with the sound of their shrill young voices.

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An hour later I went into the dining-room of the hotel for luncheon.

"Will madame begin with the oyster on the half shell?" asked the waiter, in the caressing tone of every true member of his order. The orchestra was softly playing the Volga Boat Song. Corks were withdrawn from interesting gold-labelled bottles, men and women were smoking, laughing, talking, ordering heavenly meals. . . At the end of the room you could see a handsome mural of Champlain, carefully placing the *Fleur-de-Lis* on Mount Royal, with the blue river shining far below, and a number of Indians in attitudes of careful attention.

The oysters on the half shell duly arrived.

. . . We seemed to see the Indians, canoes piled up with priceless furs, coming softly up to those old wharves, and to the magic of stone houses with glass in windows and fire imprisoned in stoves, to the delirious magic of hot and wonderful water for which they gladly flung down their wares. . . *"Eh bien! Que voulez-vous?* . . You want a blanket? . . . Well, pile on some more skins . . . that is not enough to buy a blanket. . ."

"I can recommend this fillet of sole, madame?"

But one felt, somehow, unworthy of such an extensive meal, remembering the place where all this, our most ill-gotten gains, began. Oddly, the phrase of an hour ago recurred: "He says that his grandmother's window is broken."

## 6

Dancing often celebrates the dawn in Montreal, where cafés are many and interesting. But even in the great hotels, bits of New York transplanted here, that indefinable thing, French Canada, enters.

As the hour goes on for midnight, a jazz band becomes more fervent. Coloured lights and shadows are thrown on crowds of dancers, and the shoe manufacturer from Buffalo, and leading members of other stirring conventions, fox-trot with their lady friends. The English tourist is also here, and Montreal society takes a table and looks in for an hour. But see that motherly soul with gray hair, and a shawl about her shoulders, sitting alone at a table where shortly before she was surrounded by a chattering crowd of friends. Her feet, and they are small ones, keep time to the syncopated tune, and she is all animation. When the music stops a serious looking gentleman leads back to the table—and to a youth who has just approached it—a sprightly young girl. He gives her over to a new partner.

*"Maintenant!"* says he, turning to the motherly soul.

Quickly the shawl is discarded, and gracefully they circle the room. Each member of their family is provided with a partner. It remains to enjoy themselves. The evening has just begun!

# IV

## SOME OLD SEIGNEURIES

### I

TALK of the manor houses and seigneuries of French Canada sounds picturesque, but the truth is that in many cases they were primitive farm houses. Many of them have been in the possession of one family for quite six generations, and they have retained an air of simplicity that is the essence of grace. Climate was the first consideration in their building. In Quebec the snow comes early and stays late, and in summer the sun has an almost tropical heat. Therefore the first settlers built their houses to resist both elements; they sought comfort, they omitted ornament, they built true and so they achieved beauty. The native fieldstone and timbers make a charming contrast, the high-peaked gable roofs, meant to cast off the snow, the small windows, and the great chimneys, are features of most of the Seigneuries that remain to-day. They stand farther back from the road than the *cabanes* of the habitant, because they were the centre of a community and could afford isolation. Smaller farm houses are built on long narrow lots, so that neighbours may live close together.

France used to hold and clear her land by way of seigneurial tenure, vesting with certain of the French

settlers a pretty little power that pleased them enough to make them extremely active in colonization. For the seigneur received his land without money, and only at the price of its clearance. This tenure was that of *foi et hommage*. His tenants rejoiced in the simple title of *censitaires*. They paid a small rent, partly in farm produce, and enacted as part of their obligations certain "banalties" or personal services, such as grinding his corn at the seigneurial mill, and baking at the seigneurial oven, giving the seigneur every eleventh fish caught in the river on which the estate fronted, and dancing round his May-pole when the spring fêtes were being held in the village.

Most of these Seigneuries were simple *fiefs*, which did not carry a title of nobility; but towards the close of the 17th century several baronies were created in Canada by Louis XIV, the best known of which is that of Longueuil.

From Montreal it is not far to seek one of the first seigneurial estates on record; that given to Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, on the Lower Lachine road in the village of that name facing the St. Lawrence on Lake St. Louis. It is a curious thing to find a little remnant of the oriental dream of a great explorer embedded here in a bit of stone wall.

For the barbarous North held little interest for La Salle. He set out to find the fabled passage from West to East, he was haunted by his quest, dis-

mayed that it was not fulfilled, so he named his grant of land by this river of his dreams La Chine, and then he was off again. To finance himself he

"a remnant of the dream of an explorer . . . in a bit of stone wall."

sold part of his farm, En Roture, to the early fur barons, Le Moyne and Jacques Le Ber, and they finished the house and made a trading post. The

wall next the river still contains loop-holes for defence against the Indians. It is hard to realize that this charming, and to all appearances, modern house, still holds a bit of one of the oldest walls of French Canada. The seven sons of this first Seigneur de Longueuil each obtained his grant, now bearing the names of such towns as Iberville and Chateauguay.

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Indeed, the province of Quebec is dotted with manor houses. Going down the St. Lawrence from Quebec, and that is the charmed way to see those of the river valley, one passes seigneurie after seigneurie. There is the manor at Montmagny on the north shore, named after one of the Governors of New France, where at midsummer the inhabitants of the village are out in the hay fields, incredibly wielding the picturesque old-time scythes.

Further down is the island of St. Marguerite and its group, and on Crane Island, Montmagny also received a grant as early as 1641. Its best known seigneur was the war-like de Beaujeu, of whom many stories linger. He was in possession from 1775. His name survives in a sandbank opposite his old manor. He was a great soldier and a Chevalier de St. Louis. "On great holy days" says Le Moine, "he would wear in his buttonhole the precious red ribbon given by Louis XV." He loved to walk on his sandy wind-swept domain, haunted by the cranes who came in great flying squadrons up

from the south with the spring and high tide. The tide washed the very feet of the ancient manor, and plovers, curlews, sea-snipe, sandpipers, were its denizens. From the high ground of the manor, which in its hey-day was laid out with gay parterres and orchards, Cap Tourment could be seen rearing over the islands, a shimmer of magic in the sun; and just to the north, the Dune, that tiny disappearing shoal, on which snow-geese rest. De Beaujeu stayed here till the end. As age crept on it is said that he still kept up a lordly state, and when the *censitaires* came with the rents and seigneurial capon at Michaelmas he would receive them before the fire on "the most spacious hearth in all Quebec."

There are several ruins of manors on the Islands, but you are less interested in them than absorbed by the strange magic of the river; the stir of the vibrant tide, the floating purples and blues and greens that seem to shimmer around you in the air; the overhanging sorcery that deepens with every hour until, as you near Tadousac, you are conscious of a tension that is almost unbearable.

Goose Island, owned now by the nuns of Hôtel Dieu, Quebec, is united to Crane Island by a belt of swampy ground. One of Canada's wildest legends is attached to its seigneurie, a part of the Montmagny grant. The first manor house was a stone prison, and no one has ever discovered who the prisoner was. It is believed that a Sieur de Granville was granted the *fief* in 1672; it is said that he built the

stronghold, and left a woman in charge of a solitary prisoner who was never seen nor heard of. . . The ancient stones have never given a hint.

Over at St. Jean Port Joli, on the south side, is the Manor of the de Gaspés, a sunny old place exquisitely pictured in its best days in "Les Anciens Canadiens."

At Les Eboulement, if you happen to arrive on a Saint's Day or a Sunday, you will see a bit of comic opera, and hear better singing of French-Canadian chansons than on any stage I know.

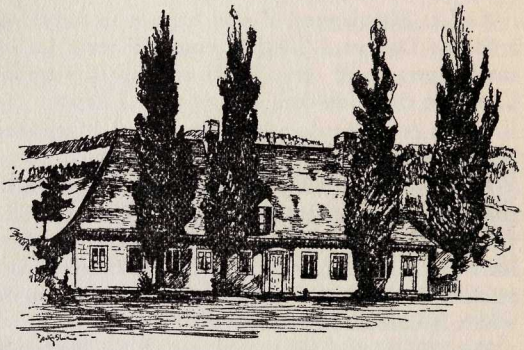
"This certainly does beat Rose Marie!" observe approving tourists.

For the inhabitants of Les Eboulement come trouping down to the dock—even a "rocky hillside" is provided—and as the boat draws in they forthwith burst into song. Small boys strut about smoking long black native cigars; a nice touch which is immediately rewarded.

One of the first factor's houses of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada is at Baie St. Paul. Built long and low behind poplar trees, it is now more than ever picturesque.

At Murray Bay there is a fashionable hotel, and a sweet little village as yet unspoiled by tourists. Near the village church stands an old farmhouse behind a white-washed fence, with numerous outbuildings, and a little belfry whose voice once called its labourers to meals. Its story, and that of its

companion-house across the Bay, are apart from other French-Canadian seigneuries. One is known as Mount Murray Manor, and the other as Murray Bay Manor. In this one lived a Colonel Nairne, and in that a Colonel Fraser. But there are no descendants left to relate the history of their forefathers.



"one of the first factor's houses of the Hudson's Bay Company."

Champlain named this region "Mal Baie" because of the furious tides which move it, even when the weather is calm. Its English name was in honour of General James Murray who gave holdings here to two young Scotch captains, by name John Nairne and Malcolm Fraser. These gentlemen brought a number of soldiers and followers—Mc-

Neills, and McLeans, and Blackburns, and Harveys; and to-day their love affairs are celebrated by families with Scotch names, speaking the French language and observing French customs.

In the dining-room of the Murray Bay Manor hangs the portrait of its Scottish seigneur, Colonel John Nairne. He wears the red coat of a British officer and a wig, in the fashion of the time. "The portrait might be one of a frequenter of Court functions in London rather than that of a hardy pioneer who had carried on a stern battle with the wilderness," says Professor George M. Wrong in his account of the house.

Fraser's Highlanders, whose costume was so ill-suited to the climate, were enthusiastic pioneers, and after the kindly nuns had knitted long stockings for them they were better able to cope with the elements.

These seigneurs, of course, held Protestant views, and would fain have summoned Presbyterians enough to form a kirk, but met with no great success. And so the missionary priest who visited them performed the various offices of the church for Highlanders and French alike. They longed, also, for that bulwark of the Scotch nation, "a free school," but this, too, was denied them. When death came they might not be buried in the consecrated ground of the Roman Church. So John Nairne made a little plot near his own house. But not more than

six people lie there, for none of the children, and few of the Highlanders, remained outside of the Roman Church. . . It must have been difficult, at times, for Malcolm Fraser and John Nairne.

## V

## THE SEARCH FOR BELMONT

### I

NO one in Quebec seemed to have definite news of Belmont. But I was independent because of the happy find of an obscure number of one of Le Moine's innumerable Maple Leaves. Also the porter at the Château had turned me over to the wisest of all his taxi drivers—and the oldest.

"He is a type of the old cocher. He knows the city. I have spoken to him of the place you require. He remembers it well. Trust all to him, madame, and you shall certainly arrive. . . Eh bien! . . . Henri! . . . Bonjour, madame. . . . Merci."

Henri seemed to me too frail to drive a car. But once on the way he was as shrill and spasmodic as the rest in his dealings with all forms of traffic that for a moment retarded our progress.

We were bound for the Ste. Foye Road and it is a pleasant drive along the Grande Alleé and past the Plains of Abraham north to what was a country road, and is now a straggling city, all strung out with churches and villas and rows of shops. The priceless Maple Leaf was in my hand and I read:

> This estate, which until lately consisted of four hundred and fifty acres, extending from the line of the Grande Allée down to the Bijou wood, was conceded in 1649 by the Jesuit Fathers to

> M. Godfroi. It was passed over in 1670 to the celebrated Intendant Talon, by Deed of Sale executed on the 28th September, 1670, before Romain Becquete, Notaire Royal . . . after the conquest it was sold for five hundred pounds to General James Murray, governor of Quebec . . . in 1775 we find that one of the first operations of the American General Montgomery was to take possession of Belmont.

What cups of conquest passing from hand to hand in that old Château! Gay roysterers of times gone by . . . A fête champêtre of lively French officers from Quebec making merry over their Bordeaux or Burgundy, celebrating victories over the English at Fontenoy to the jocund sound of *Vive la France! Vive le Maréchal Saxe!* . . . Murray and his veterans, Guy Carlton, Hale, and Holland, giving Wolfe's famous toast: "British colours on every French post and garrison in America." . . Canadian Barons. . . And later the choice spirits who used to go to sip claret and have ices with Sir James Craig at Powell Place. . . Then Colonel Caldwell who had lived in such splendour at Belmont. . .

We still drove on and on.

"Where are we now?" I asked.

"Ste. Foye Road, Madame."

The car stopped with a jerk. "I must tell you," Henri volunteered in broken but admirable English, "that Monsieur Vakeem is no longer there."

"But that is the wrong name," I said. "I am going to a place called Belmont. It was once the home

of the Intendant Talon . . . very old . . . very historic. We should be coming close to the place now."

"Non, madame," Henri asserted, and his English disappeared in a torrent of French. . . There was no word about Talon or any of his successors in the stream of information which ensued.

I gave a brief survey, in careful French, of Belmont as I knew it. He shrugged his shoulders and repeated, "I know not. I will return and go backward if you desire."

"Not at all," said I. "Take me on then to the place of which you speak, the house of this monsieur."

"But it is abandoned, madame."

"No matter, I wish to see it!"

In the meantime it was softly, almost imperceptibly, beginning to rain and Henri could not get the top up. The more he struggled the more it refused. Deep in history, I had not watched the late afternoon grow so close and dark. The heat suddenly became terrific, the rain rushed on.

"Votre chapeau, madame!" said my cocher with sympathetic looks.

In Quebec one never expects to find a large house open during the summer, and we were now beyond the region of friendly shops. I could not allow my Ancient to drown before my eyes. At last a small

residence with a covered porch over the driveway appeared and we turned in.

> "Is anybody there?" said the Traveller,
> Knocking on the moonlit door.

How dark it had grown! . . The rain seemed to slant persistently in our direction. . . My hat, and more than my hat, was now damp. Then, from some distance, I thought I heard the sound of voices.

"Demand of them the residence of Monsieur Vakeem," admonished the dripping Henri.

I followed the voices around the gravel walk, and found two stout ladies seated on a back porch well out of the rain.

"Bon soir," I remarked.

"Good evening," they answered smartly.

I inquired for my house.

"An historic house near here? Are you sure it was on the Ste. Foye Road? A residence of Talon? . . . He was the old Intendant. He never lived out here, oh never! He had a house in town, in the old city,—"

I gave Sir James Le Moine as my authority.

"That is very singular," said one of the ladies, "very singular indeed. Why, we have never even heard of Talon living in this direction, and we have been here for twenty-five years."

"But this account was written fifty years ago—I mean Sir James'—and Belmont was deeded to Talon in—"

"Oh! Belmont did you say? That is different," they fluttered, with amused smiles at one another, and after a gesture or two, "I suppose she means the Retreat."

"Oh, no!" I protested.

"But yes, it must be Dr. Wakeham's Asylum—the old Belmont."

"Wakeham—Vakeem—so Henri's name does come in," I thought. "But how?" And I asked for information.

"Merely," I was told, "that for years it was a *maison santé* for inebriates!"

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The old ladies begged me not to proceed the half mile further on such a miserable evening. We became friends, and told each other news. In exchange for my picturesque history I got a delightfully gruesome story of decay, after Dr. Wakeham and his inebriates had departed. ("It was always too comfortable for drunkards. They actually kept up the grounds and the hedges.") It seemed that now, although there was a sort of caretaker, the place was thought to be haunted, and was rumoured to be disreputable. The bones of an infant had been found in the furnace. "Anyway," said the ladies, "we do not approve of your going there alone." So, the rain being over, we set out forthwith and shortly came to stone pillars, set amid overhanging

shrubbery, and an iron gate with the word Belmont written thereon. The gate was locked. We went on beyond the high trees and hedges of an enormous garden to a small cottage where, my companions being respectfully recognized by the caretaker, we received a key and took our way over a long wet path through a small wood, choked with underbrush and tangled with fern. We came, finally, to a sweep of lawn beyond whose circular hedge there stood, palely, in the gathering twilight, the house for which I had searched for hours.

Belmont looked beautiful to me at first, coming upon it from the dusky wood path, seeing the tangle of outer garden and the deep semi-circle of hedge; like a place that Marjorie Pickthall might have described 'with a fairy ring around it and an old thorn tree.'

But, as we went up and down the empty halls and corridors and the great echoing rooms, a sense of desolation so overcame us that we lost all desire to explore it farther. It was almost as if one could reach out and feel the dreadful hand of the Past; a soft hand, thickly padded, that can obliterate such a place with fatal ease, wipe it out indeed with a gesture—it and all its crowd of thoughts and memories.

"I really do not think that Canada was ever intended to become a place of mere ruins," exclaimed one of the ladies. "We seem to have no respect for

them. Indeed, if you notice, they are often carted away at public expense even before they tumble down of themselves. Look at the walls of Quebec, for instance. Even the gates are disappearing one by one."

There seemed no answer to this, especially as we ourselves were frankly glad of the excuse of coming darkness to turn the key again upon this particular ruin, and leave it before the twilight had thickened into night.

And the strange thing is that the old lady's "feeling" has materialized, for, since our visit, Belmont has been burned to the ground.

## VI

## MORNING AT SPENCER WOOD

THERE was a sparkle of trees as we motored again the next morning along the St. Louis road, cheerfully bound for luncheon at Spencer Wood, the present Government House of the Province of Quebec. It stands on the banks of the St. Lawrence, a charming and dignified successor to one of the most hospitable and well-beloved mansions of the old régime.

For the first house on this site was Powell Place, dating back to 1780, and named after a relative of the owner, General Henry W. Powell. It was originally a splendid old seat of more than a hundred acres, enclosed between two streams and hidden from the highroad by dense foliage, even as Government House is to-day.

After luncheon we went into the garden, a lovely place admired for many generations. Ancient books describe it as so beautiful that "botanizing excursions were often made by ladies and gentlemen from the surrounding countryside." Within the large gardens there was "an elfish plot" for roses, "a circular fount in white marble," conservatories, graperies, peach and orchid houses and pavilions looking towards Sillery and Isle d'Orléans.

The estate was destined to many changes. After the Powells came the Percevals—the Honourable H. Michael Perceval, who was closely connected with the Earl of Egmont. During his tenure, he was the host of many fêtes and ceremonious dinners. Mrs. Perceval was the daughter of Sir Charles Flower, a Lord Mayor of London—so that in 1806, at the age of eighteen, she had been his official hostess. The link with England was therefore doubly strong. It was at the moment, too, when the real discovery of Canada as a land of promise was definitely made. It was quite 'the thing' to brave a sailing ship to these shores. Quebec was the social centre of British North America, and Powell Place one of its open doors. Visitors from Europe met old Canadian families here: the Duchesneys, the Montizamberts, the Uniackes, the Van Felsons, the de Gaspés, Bâbys, and others.

As visitors walked about the beautiful grounds they could see the deep blue lights reflected in a hundred varying tones on Jacques Cartier's mystic river, the river of dreams, rolling below the high cliffs on which the house was set. Sometimes a half-tame deer startled the silence of the deep woods surrounding the estate. The Duke of Richmond, who visited here with Lady Sarah, in 1810, said that it was the loveliest spot in all this vast new world.

After the Percevals came Henry Atkinson, a

merchant prince of Quebec, who carried out the generous tradition of hospitality. It was from him that the Government, in 1849, obtained the property as a vice-regal residence for the Earl of Elgin; and it is here that our valued friend of the Canadian Maple Leaves comes in, for he, Sir James LeMoine, acquired by purchase ten years later, forty acres of the original estate upon which he built Spencer Grange, and where he lived and died.

Divided from Spencer Wood by a high brick wall and fences, the Grange was always its happy neighbour. In Sir James' own quaint description it was "girt by a zone of trees which made emerald wreaths when the sun shone, and was oft times dipped in molten gold."

"The house faces the river," he wrote, "where the Belle Borne rill rushes down the bank to Spencer Cove; and the place is a great resort of birds."

What The Grange was to Toronto, Spencer Grange was to the Quebec of fifty years ago: its literary mecca, the place where scholars met, the home of one of the most delightful of essayists and raconteurs.

Walking on the terrace, we could see the old Grange smiling in the sun. We thought of a happy afternoon spent there years ago, with the daughter of Sir James LeMoine in his wonderful old library, which contains a rare collection of curios, and vol-

umes relating to Canadian history, MSS, plans, inscriptions, and views of ancient buildings.

Next to his library and his aviary, Sir James took pride in an extensive vinery, which he cultivated with great enthusiasm. When the grapes were ripe he prepared a festival for his friends, which he called "a symposium under the shadow of the luscious vine." . . Here, amid flowers and birds and books, many of the choice spirits of the old capital would gather; among them, prominently, the historians, Garneau and Ferland.

Most of the members of that delightful circle have gone, but it is a satisfaction, to those who care for beautiful old places, to know that the ancient estate of Spencer Wood is apparently destined to continue its dignified existence, undisturbed by encroachment on the part of the growing city of Quebec.

## VII

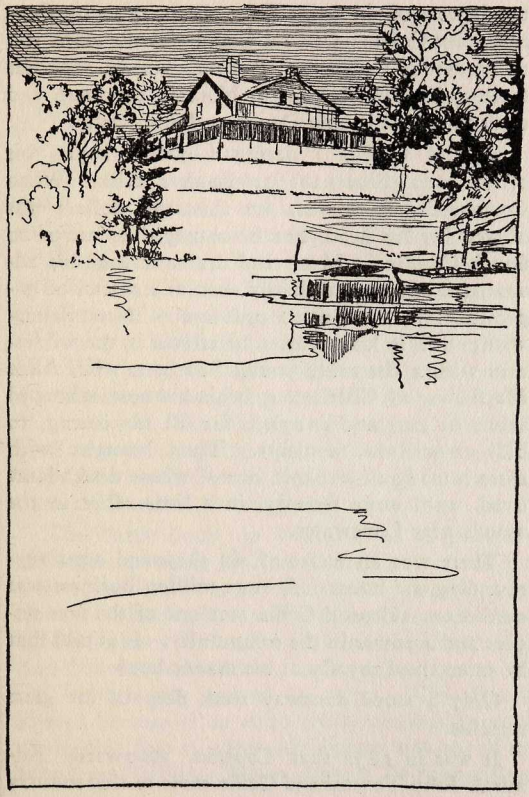
## LONEWATER AND ANOTHER BELMONT

### I

WHO knows and loves New Brunswick thinks of it in terms of little rivers that rush to and fro making fantastic and surprising loops. Coming suddenly upon small promontories enclosed by these loops, as you sail or paddle on the rivers, you are always saying to yourself "What a site for a house!" Usually only cool solitude answers you. But sometimes, miraculously, the house of your imagination appears.

Thus with the Coffin mansion, set in the midst of an old Loyalist estate about ten miles from Saint John on the Nerepis, a tiny tributary of the Saint John River. It is a nice afternoon's paddle, for though a highway skirts it, the river is the way. Just here the river makes a complete half circle, like an old-fashioned ox-bow. And the marshland enclosed in the half circle is swampy and ferny and wild-flowered. Butterflies rise above it in midsummer noons and fireflies at night, and the trees lean over the banks.

It is through such a vista that you first see Lonewater, a house as lovely as its name. Its forbear was Alwington Manor, built near this point to the



"Lonewater, a house as lovely as its name."

north-west of the Saint John about 1790 by General John Coffin. General Coffin was the eldest son of Nathaniel Coffin, of Boston, whose ancestors came to England before the Norman conquest, and settled in what is now Devon and Somerset.

General Coffin, a daring Loyalist, began his career as a lieutenant at Bunker Hill. When Cornwallis capitulated, ten thousand dollars was offered for his head, but he managed to escape to South Carolina. Many and dramatic were his adventures, and he was finally sent, as a matter of expediency, to the British province of New Brunswick. Still in his twenties, he arrived in the wilderness with a charming young Southern wife, Anne Matthews, of Charleston, behind whose whooped skirts he had not scrupled, for all his daring, to hide at perilous moments. They brought with them some black servants, one of whose descendants lived, until quite recently, in a little cabin in the woods near Lonewater.

There was an estate of six thousand acres surrounding the house. A large milling business was carried on. General Coffin was one of the first settlers and a power in the community. It is said that he entertained royally at his manor house.

Only a stone doorway sunk deep in the grass remains.

It was in 1832 that Captain, afterwards Admiral, John Townshend Coffin came to this country

to live near his father. Sailors dug a canal through the marsh making a short cut from the Nerepis to the spot where he built.

Fascinating about these stories of old houses is the fact that they are linked together as families are, with some surprising relationships. Lonewater, sweet and distant, looks back to the ancient Alwington in England, and is a sort of first cousin to the one-time Governor's residence of the same name, in Kingston. . . Admiral Coffin married the beautiful Miss Sophie Donaldson, of Saint John, a great aunt of Miss Lillian Hazen of that city. After his return to England the property was bought by Mr. F. Hazen of Saint John and given to his eldest son on his marriage to Miss Mary Grant of St. Andrews. The Kingston Alwington was built by Baron de Longueuil (whose father was a Captain Grant) and General Coffin's daughter who became the Baroness de Longueuil.

The Hazen house in Saint John is probably the oldest dwelling in New Brunswick. It is just a bit of old building, a commonplace wooden structure set on brick pillars and used now as a store and an Oddfellows Hall. But it has resisted not only time but the various fires that have swept over the city, since it was erected in 1773. The date is known because of an entry in the account book of the trading firm of which Mr. Hazen was one of the founders: "William Hazen, debtor: To four gallons

of West India rum, eight pounds sugar, three quarts of N.E. rum, dinner, etc., etc., etc., etc., and twenty-five shillings for raising his home."

2

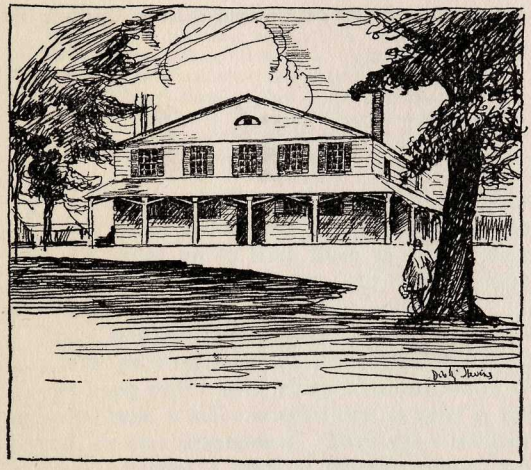
Farther up the Saint John, on its western bank, in Lincoln, Sunbury County, is another colonial house widely known as the Belmont homestead. It is bounded on two sides by the Saint John and Oromocto Rivers, and at the mouth of the Oromocto is Thatch Island, so-called because of its coarse grass. It is a strange spot on a northern stream, for in summer the vegetation is almost tropical in luxuriance; wild cucumber vines hang in festoons on the trees, and purple vetch, convolvulus and other flowers give it a sweet beauty.

Belmont was erected in 1820 by the Honourable John Murray Bliss, a Justice of the Supreme Court, and for a time Administrator of Government in the Province. He built his house of yellow pine lumber fastened with hand-wrought nails and lined throughout with bricks, making it frost-proof, and cool in summer. The rooms are large. There is ample provision for entertaining on a generous scale. So perfect was the workmanship that seeing the house to-day, the shingles seem to be as sound as when first put on—the floors, as level.

Unlike most Canadian houses it has remained for generations in the possession of the same family;

it is still owned in fact by the Wilmots, who purchased it from Judge Bliss in 1837.

The surrounding thousand acres have been much divided, but no one has reconstructed the dwelling



"Belmont was erected in 1820 by the Honourable John Murray Bliss."

which has been the home of two Lieutenant-Governors, a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, two Judges of the Provincial Legislature and a Member of the House of Commons at Ottawa—a record unequalled in the Dominion, when one remembers

that all these people were related and that most of them had been born, married and died in the same place, though their various careers had often taken them far afield. In fact, the strong judicial qualities, the intensely mental side of typical Maritime families are nowhere better exemplified than in this fine old home.

## VIII

## IN A CELESTIAL CITY

The little old lady lived over the way through a green gate that shut with a click, and up three white steps. Every morning at eight o'clock the church bells chimed for morning prayers—chim! chime! chim! chime!—and every morning at eight o'clock the little old lady came down the white steps and opened the gate with a click, and went where the bells were calling.

THAT was Mrs. Overtheway, really the bishop's wife, and after morning prayers she was probably going on to Rika Dom to see her dear friend Juliana Horatio Ewing, the famous lady novelist.

And it might be so to-day, for, in spite of its dignity as the provincial capital, little Fredericton, with its elm-hung streets, over which floats the sound of cathedral bells, is still a celestial city, as quiet as the crystal air that surrounds it. Years ago a military barracks provided a dash of martial colour, and of the precise, long-established social life of the isolated place a romance might be written.

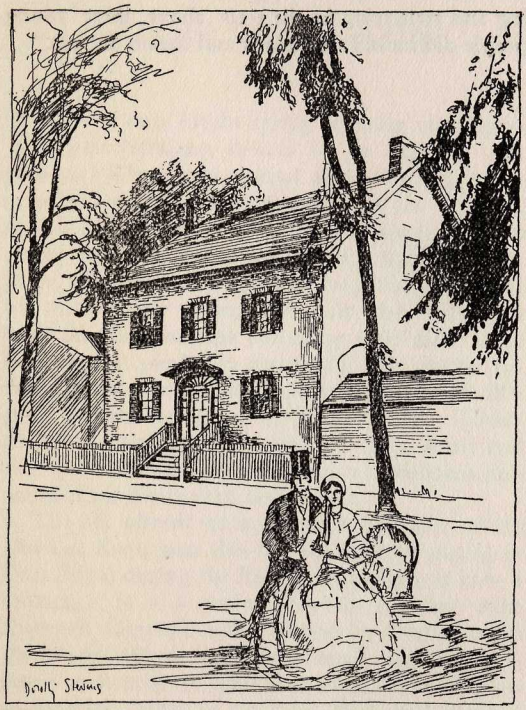
The most interesting houses are near the Cathedral. Below it the street runs close to the water's edge, and the bank is lined with willows. Rafts tie up at night along the shore, and the houses all look out on the water. This one, a double house with

bow windows, belonged to Mrs. Ewing during the sixties, when her husband, a Major in the British Army, was stationed in Fredericton. Afterwards Mr. George E. Parkin and his family lived in the old River House. Bishopscote, the Medleys' house, was just across the way.

Mrs. Ewing loved Fredericton with its "shady streets that had no names, and very few lamps, and pretty wooden houses with pretty faces at the windows". Sometimes she speaks of Rose Hall, on the grounds of which stood a house occupied by Benedict Arnold. At the creek's mouth nearby he built small vessels for the river trade.

A house interesting to Canadians in general is the red brick rectory where lived the Rev. George Goodridge Roberts and his wife Emma Wetmore Bliss. Here Charles G. D., the eldest son; a daughter, Elizabeth; and Theodore Goodridge, a younger brother, all grew up.

Mrs. C. F. Fraser writes of the days of "dear Rector Roberts": "On winter evenings they were wont to read aloud for each other's amusement the rhymes and stories which the day called forth. . . In summer weather the great old-fashioned garden, haunt of all fragrant and time-honoured flowers, was the favourite spot. There, in and about the hammocks, with their cousin, Bliss Carman, extending his great length on the grass below, and shaggy Nestor, wisest of household dogs, wandering about



"the quaint red brick rectory."

from one to another, with half-tamed birds fluttering and twittering in the trees above, these young people did indeed see visions and dream dreams."

# IX

## A STREET OF OLD HOUSES

### I

I SAW it on a bright spring morning when most of its inhabitants seemed to be making their gardens. There was a smell of smoke and young grass and dead leaves perfuming the air. Lovely, in this early sunshine, the grassy ramparts of Fort Anne: bastions, ravelins, embankments, and sally ports, all unused, and probably forgetful of the days of their youth when they saw the first ships built on this continent unfolding their sails. The Fort was a possession quarrelled over hotly, before Quebec was founded and long before the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock. Today there is merely a serene picture of hills, water and sky, grass on the tended ramparts and children perambulating the ancient earthworks.

The old officers' quarters, built by order of the Duke of Kent, near this last fortification erected at Port Royal during the French occupation, is now a museum. It is a quaint wooden building with three tall chimneys, and a fireplace in every room in the house. These rooms are small and low-ceilinged, and there are four little staircases leading up to separate suites, so perfectly built and planned that not a sound carries from one to the other. It is the first apartment house on the continent. In the

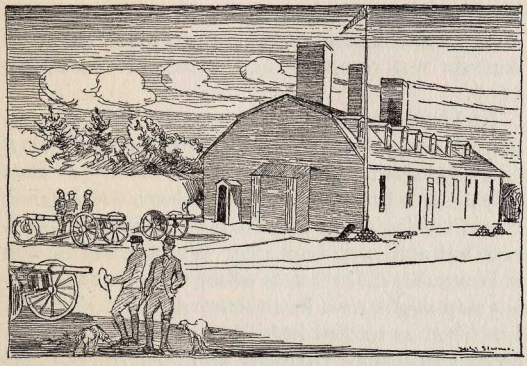
lower rooms one finds the history of Port Royal in charts and prints and fire arms, and furniture and brocades. It looks less a museum than a residence, so skilfully are its treasures set out.

There is a small library where Cromwellian armour is placed over the fireplace, against crimson burlap, and andirons carry out the dark note of the room. There are ancient bookshelves and a little square-paned window hung with old red damask curtains, through which you see the spires of a century-old English church. Mr. L. M. Fortier, the superintendent of St. Anne, gives his life to the small precious house. He told me that he had traced one of the andirons—a beautiful little figure of Ceres which was found buried near the earth works—to a piece designed and made in 1760 by the Carron Iron Works of England. "And the other day," he added, "the same firm made us a mate to their design of over a century and a half ago!"

In contrast to this is the clear blue and white of a transplanted cottage room, full of the furniture and simple personal effects of French-Canadian peasants of two hundred years ago, before the days of the banishment from beloved Acadia.

In the village of Annapolis Royal everything seems to fit gently into surroundings that are undisturbed by the passing of time. It is modern only under protest. In the little Roman Catholic Church on George Street one sees the first missal used in Acadia. Its edges are the pink of a fading

rose, and the lettering and musical notation are exquisite. It was carried from village to village by the first priests. Here also is a tablet "Erected as memorial of the baptism at Port Royal on St. John the Baptist's day, June 24th, 1610, of Henri Memberton, chief of the Micmac Indians and his family,



"The old officers' quarters."

first fruits of the Catholic missions, and the beginning of Christianity in Canada." Exquisite small pictures of the Stations of the Cross by Gabriel Pippett, the English artist, conceived and carried out after the primitive Early Flemish style, have been set in frames of apple-wood made by Micmac Indians.

2

The original Port Royal and the first fort, some nine miles away from the present village, was the scene of an episode, which, in unique and curious interest, cannot be paralleled in the literary history of this continent. For it was here, in this remote and lonely spot, peopled by a few French settlers and some friendly Indians, that the first poetic drama in America was composed and acted in November, 1606.

Its history is as spontaneous as the little play itself. It was written as a welcome home to the Sieur de Poutrincourt, Governor of the Colony of Port Royal, who had gone exploring down the Atlantic Coast, leaving one, Marc Lescarbot, a French Advocate, wit and poet, in charge. When it was known in November that the sails of the Governor's returning ship might soon be expected to enter the Basin, Lescarbot, as he says in his history of New France, decided to express the relief and welcome of the Colony in a lyric drama, called "Neptune's Theatre", to be played almost entirely on the water. The cast comprised Neptune, six Tritons, four Indians and "a welcoming assemblage."

Standing at the Basin's edge where it all occurred, looking out at the hills sheltering the water, I could see the little train of canoes setting out. The God of the Sea in full regalia, drawn by the six Tritons rising from the ocean to represent his horses, fol-

lowed by the useful Indians "bearing gifts." I could hear the ringing, punctilious inflection of those clear-cut French voices delivering the first dramatic verse ever uttered on this continent. . . Then, to the sound of cannon and bugle, I could picture the return to the Fort, over whose gates the arms of France had been encircled with crowns of laurel and Latin mottoes, the "welcoming assemblage," and the end of the spectacle in a brief dramatic epilogue.

3

Following this came another of those lost happenings which bear the flavour of earliest Canada. Under Poutrincourt's régime the chiefs of Port Royal organized "The Order of Good Cheer", and, for all the pathos of their small numbers and complete isolation, they did it well. They dressed "in full regalia", and each in turn became a caterer to his brethren. "Thus," says Parkman, "did Poutrincourt's table groan beneath the luxuries of the winter forest: flesh of moose, caribou and deer, beaver, otter and hare, bears and wild cats, with ducks, geese, grouse and plover; sturgeon, too, and trout and fish innumerable, speared through the ice of the Equillo. . . The Brotherhood followed the Grand Master, each carrying a dish. The invited guests were Indian chiefs, of whom old Memberton, the Micmac, was daily present at table with the French. Those of humbler degree, warriors,

squaws and children, sat on the floor, or crouched together in the corners of the hall eagerly awaiting their portion of bread—a novel, coveted luxury."

This Round Table contained a brilliant if brief roll of names. Besides Poutrincourt there were Champlain, who was to found Quebec two years later, Biencourt, the unfortunate son of Poutrincourt, Lescarbot, Louis Hébert, one of whose descendants is the well-known Canadian sculptor, and Daniel Hay, the surgeon-apothecary, the first of his profession who had a practice on this continent; these and ten others were members of what their descendants would undoubtedly call "the first social club organized in North America."

4

But all this is only setting for a street of old houses, or rather ghosts of houses that remember the little garrison town of Port Royal in that phase of its life when it was removed to the peaceful harbour of Fort Anne. The first desperate fight for mere existence was over, and it had arrived at a social as well as a military existence.

Then, as now, St. George was the residential street. Many of the houses were occupied by French officers and their wives, brilliant women who must have found a piquant as well as terrifying contrast between past, and present: the intense cold, and the heat of summer; the lonely outpost; the hovering In-

dians; and the black slaves who were their servants. Every house of importance in Port Royal had its wine cellar and its slave room; and, speaking of things social, it is said that the Indians invariably sneered at the slaves, and the slaves at the Indians.

"the houses were never pretentious."

Miss Charlotte I. Perkins, in a published paper giving the history of the street, says: "the houses were never pretentious. Many were a storey and a half; low, sloping roof, with or without dormer windows. A door in the centre and two windows

on each side of it. As for verandahs they were scarcely thought of. Set in a garden of old-fashioned flowers, the centre path leading from a white-washed paling fence, there was a charm about them that was very real."

Nevertheless, these toy houses were well built, many of them with walls set with clay and rushes of one foot thickness, and having enormous chimneys and large fireplaces. The interior finishing was of pine—dark brown boards that shone like glass—the narrow, crooked stairways were panelled, the walls sheathed with it. In the front rooms were hand-carved mouldings, and deep seats on either side of the windows.

There was Hall's Hotel, opposite the old ferry Slip, dating from 1760. In the old coach days, we are told, it was one of the famous stopping places for the tally-ho as it drove through from Halifax. On entering the town the driver blew his bugle, the signal for people to flock out and get the news of the world.

The Bailey House, built earlier than the hotel, is not much changed. It was the town's aristocratic boarding-house, and it was "Sam Slick" who gave it the name of "Marm Bailey's." The Duke of Kent danced here, and afterwards sent his compliments to Marm Bailey, who was an excellent cook. Her moose muffle soup was heard of in England. The Misses Bailey were popular young ladies, and naturally came in the way of meeting many admirers,

of whom legend relates that the celebrated "Sam Slick" was one. "Miss Sarah" was the object of his affections, "but she would have none of him, as her heart was given to another."

"the town's aristocratic boarding-house."

It seems that Judge Haliburton ("Sam Slick") who then lived in Annapolis, used sometimes to take the Maid of the Mist, a boat that ran between here and Saint John and landed opposite the Bailey House. On departing he was sometimes assisted by

Rose Fortune, the notorious coloured baggage-smasher with her "Come along, Jedge, come along!"—he, handing her a shilling, with "Good-bye, my black Venus."

There was the old white house of the widow Cooper about which a ghost story clings. Its owner had eloped with an English army officer who deserted her. In 1812 she wrote a romantic letter about the gleaming lights of English cities and how she could never return to the dark streets of little Annapolis. But she did return, according to an epitaph in the old cemetery, and a story which persists through the generations. It originated from two friends who declared that, as the widow lay dying, she asked them for a glass of water. At the same moment, a negress, wearing a turban and rings in her ears, glided over to the bed carrying a glass of water on a tray, and then disappeared. Her friends were terrified but, ignoring the vision, they brought water to the dying woman when she replied, calling by name an old slave whom she had owned years ago, "—has just brought it, on my silver tray."

The street is full of ghosts. One story has to do with the Williams house, birthplace of Sir William Fenwick Williams, the "hero of Kars." His special ghost was a soldier with a bleeding arm whose name may, or may not, have been one, John Kennedy. The present occupant declares that he still roams the house in the early hours, evidently searching for his own identity. There is indeed the plot of a best-

seller involved in the mystery of the tall, magnificent spook, who appeared and re-appeared to inmates and guests of the Williams' house. The modern sequel, which I quote from Miss Perkins, is

"Come along, Jedge, come along."

that when part of the home was removed in 1872, and they were digging a cellar for the Royal Bank building, they found a skeleton, not in a closet, but in a drain pipe! A lady looking out of her window

at the time saw a man lift a plank, and then run as if for his life. The first person in the quickly gathering crowd, one of the old Ritchie family, exclaimed, "My God! It is John Kennedy!" . . . Now the strange thing is that John Kennedy was a native of a nearby village who had long ago disappeared, *but this man was evidently a soldier from the brass buttons, and the copper on his boots.* . . It baffled the imagination of the oldest inhabitant. . . One young lady carried off the skull, and the boots were for years in the Judge's office.

In contrast to the ghost who tramped this house, there is a brilliant Spanish figure out of real life, Gregoria Remona Antonia, the wife of "Major" Norman who once leased the old place. She must have mightily intrigued the ghost if they ever met. She was a favourite of the Duke of Wellington, who had married her to Norman and sent her to this far-away place with a very decent pension for life. Dressed in bright colours, a turban wound about her head, and leading a string of pet dogs—four white French poodles named Jacobena, Puppet, Malta Ray, and Tabby—whom she industriously fed on tender young rabbits—what a note she must have made among the blacks and the Indians, the French and the English of Annapolis Royal! She liked to talk of "my dear Duka" to the ladies of the garrison, but her husband, of whom she was not so proud, she addressed as "Normana! Bruta Beasta!"

The home of Peter Bonnett, High Sheriff, built on the foundations of an old French cellar, has been pitifully changed from the first design showing delightful Gothic windows with shutters and a railing around the top of the roof. This latter was overlaid with copper and had a stairway leading to it. The house was beautifully furnished with old mahogany, china and silver, which, on the death of the Bonnetts, became scattered about the neighbourhood. Among the silver was a coffee pot belonging to Mrs. Bonnett's grandfather, a Colonel de Lancey—one in which his female slave made coffee and poisoned him, from the effects of which he died in 1804. "He had foolishly promised her her freedom at the time of his death."

This house had a high hawthorn hedge, and a pretty garden about which rumor lurked, for it came to be looked upon by some people as a treasure place. History relates that at various times digging used to go on around the trees.

Port Royal changed hands six times, between the French and the English, before General Francis Nicholson's forces from New England finally took possession. Then the name became Annapolis Royal, in honour of Queen Anne.

If I lived on this quiet street, and were making a garden here, I should always be watching for skulls and cannon balls as I dug my early lettuce beds! Looking up from my work I should probably see

strange shadows passing by, especially at twilight. The more celebrated ghosts of Port Royal would not interest me nearly so much as a girl in a Spanish shawl leading a string of poodles, and perhaps the unfortunate Normana. . . I should hope to see Rose Fortune. . . And a phantom priest might pass me by carrying his missal, just as I was planting a peony. . . Old Peoples' Places, indeed!

# X

# DOWN BY THE SEA

## I

YOUNG sunshine gilding the old streets of Halifax; snow on the far hills but mayflowers everywhere; boutonnieres of them on gay, elderly gentlemen, baskets-full in shop windows, bunches fading in children's hot hands! Mayflowers even in the ancient Provincial Chambers where dim, beautiful portraits of past sovereigns and governors seemed to faint before the crudity of such moderns as Victoria, looking her plainest, and Edward VII in a stuffy frock coat!

On the corkscrew streets of Halifax one hears the tramp of soldiers high up on Citadel Hill; the feet of pretty girls tapping up and down the lower level of Barrington Street; and the shuffle of sailors, negroes, Portuguese—riff-raff from a hundred ports along dirty old Water Street at the base of the corkscrew.

There is stonework for Citadel and ramparts and Martello Tower and bits of wall and fences, and for Government and Admiralty Houses; but elsewhere, generally, wooden buildings, toned down to mouse-colour by wind and weather. And, when one least expects it, there is a surprise of old beauty in lovely bits of iron grillwork, in fence, or gate, or

window, to add strength or convenience to a dwelling or public place.

Fire is the angry god of any wooden town, and fire has swept over Halifax so that the stories of many of her houses, and others of the Maritime Provinces, are, like the houses themselves, mercilessly destroyed. But Halifax possesses the most charming of all Canada's very characteristic Government Houses. Like its companion, Admiralty House—though one is in the lower and the other in the upper town—the building stands out in fine relief of brown stone. The back is to the harbour, the front on Hollis Street. Although it was begun in 1800 it is the third Government House.

The first stood on the ground on which the Province Building was later erected. It was put up shortly after the arrival of Governor Cornwallis, and in it he held a Council on the 15th October, 1749. The building was small and low, but one storey high. It was surrounded by hogsheads of gravel and sand on which small pieces of ordnance were mounted for defensive purposes.

The second Government House was also a small wooden structure, but it had its moments! Around an oak table in its library sat the men who carried out the cruel expulsion of the Acadians, while that grim and stern Lord Falmouth, Boscawan, and his second in command, Admiral Moyston, gave their assent to the proposal. Some years after, General Sir William Howe and his staff could be seen calling

on Governor Legge. . . In Governor Parr's time, when young Prince William Henry (William IV) was on his first visit to this court, he opened a ball, given here in his honour, with the Governor's daughter—"the widow of Captain Dodson."

"the building stands out in fine relief of brown stone."

Then came the gay days of the Wentworths, who entertained lavishly at the present residence, and during the Earl of Mulgrave's régime Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, was a guest.

You are reminded of all this from the moment you enter the old-fashioned hall, and read in long lists on pale marble tablets, the names of these men and many others who, for over a century, have

lived in this house as Governors. Red-cheeked and convivial—the first of them at any rate dressed in bright colonial attire—you long to see them escape from their cold tablet, and walk once more in this beautiful, square hall.

If you should be staying at Government House the sound of the sea would be perpetually suggested by a great ship's bell of brass, on a wrought-iron stand, which summons the family to meals. The little ballroom to the left, a modest affair compared to that of other provinces, speaks of chosen society instead of society en masse. A shallow, lovely old staircase leads up to the bedrooms where suites of walnut and old mahogany are of beautiful, and occasionally of rare, design.

2

Naturally there has been a close friendship, and much coming and going, between Admiralty and Government Houses, companions also from an architectural standpoint, though Admiralty House is the younger of the two by fourteen years. It stands, solid and imposing, and, alas, deserted, on its glorious site above the Naval Yard with a magnificent view of the harbour. The masonry, the great fence, the entrance gate and sentry box, the walled garden, and the splendid old structure itself, looks as if it might forever defy the years, had not these years snatched its glory prematurely away.

The billiard room of Admiralty House contains a list of the Commanders-in-Chief of the North American and West Indian stations from 1767 to the time of the removal of the Imperial Navy Headquarters in North American waters to Bermuda in 1910, when Canada took over the dockyard. Almost a hundred names are engraved on these tablets, but they, too, were removed to Bermuda.

We tiptoed about the place where utter silence seemed to reign. We wondered whether anything on earth could look so desolate as a fine, upstanding, empty house—like a middle-aged man, full of life, suddenly stricken. Bitterness of frustrated growth! At the end of its first century such a building has only begun to take its place in the world.

"When one remembers the brilliance of our naval events; the magnificent 'ship-shape' of everything, the gaiety, the colour, the jolly officers, the dances, the little romances that came and went with the coming and going of the ships! . . . Think, too, of the eras it has seen; first the sedan chairs, then the coaches, the carriages, and last, the motors that came mincing, or rolling, or rushing past the little sentry box and through this gateway that bears the coat of arms of the British Navy, tied with a sailor's knot. . ."

It was old Halifax speaking! But we were thinking of the good youth still coursing through the veins of the hundred-years' house of the Admirals —and crying out to live again.

3

There are charming present-day houses in Halifax that carry an old-fashioned air. Gorsebrook, for instance, was once the home of the Honourable Enos Collins, First Lieutenant of the Charles Mary Wentworth, privateer, and famous for his reckless daring and exploits in blockade running. It is said that he amassed great wealth through capturing prize ships. He lived for many years in his beautiful home with its wide lawn, pastures and woodland, walled garden and spacious rooms, and left his property to his sons to whom it belongs to-day.

## XI

## A SENTIMENTAL RUIN

### I

THE old post road which winds along the blue waters of Bedford Basin used to be a tranquil drive. To-day it is a highway for motorists. A rickety little circular house stands on a knoll of ground overlooking the water, and separated from the road by railway tracks. There is nothing to draw the attention of a stranger even when, on a brisk day, a crazy little string of coloured washing beckons airily.

Seeing the washing, we thought the tenant might be in.

But no one answered our knock. If any one had opened we should have peered into that circular exterior and probably met squalor full in the eye. As it was, we remained without, and recalled old stories of the Duke of Kent, and his "lovely rotunda" for music.

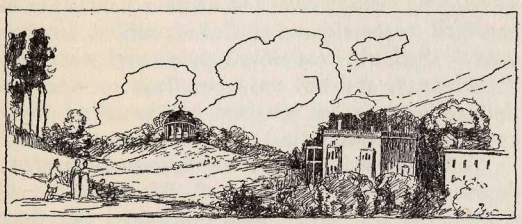
It was in the seventeen-nineties that Prince Edward Augustus, fourth son of George III, arrived at Halifax from St. Kitts, British West Indies, to become Commander-in-General of the Military Forces. Having been brought up as a soldier, under the régime of Baron Wangenheim in Hanover, this English Prince, known as the Duke of Kent, was a bit of a martinet so far as military matters were con-

cerned. But he had a sentimental German feeling for pleasure and so, enchanted by the view of Bedford Basin, he leased from Governor Wentworth a little cottage, set in lovely grounds, which the Governor modestly called "Friar Laurence's Cell." This the Duke proceeded to pull down and build up until he achieved a sort of glorified Italian villa. He embellished it by ornamental grounds in which "charming surprises," Chinese temples, pagodas, rustic arbors and bowers, were set. Silken brocades, candelabra, and fine furniture enriched the interior, and all this, with the addition of the rotunda or music room, on the opposite side of the post road next the water, created such an impression, in the days of its glory, that stories of Prince's Lodge have an almost legendary effect. Legendary because it has all departed,—every trace except the rickety little house on its hillock of grass.

"It was surmounted by a large gilded ball flashing in the sunlight." . . . "Chinese pagoda bells, sometimes sounded from the grounds over the Bedford Basin." . . . "My lady would arrive with her carriage-wheels muddied to the hilt." . . . It may be that rumours still persist, not only in Nova Scotia but in Europe; in Spain, in Italy, in France. Whispers of old grandfathers' stories—officers who had drifted to this port, when a dark-eyed lady from Martinique and the father of the powerful Victoria, gave summer fêtes to the people of Halifax.

Even the great-great-grandson of the Duke, in

his fabulous journeys about the world, has probably encountered no more romantic spot, for the lady from the West Indies, Madame de St. Laurent, who accompanied the Duke and "as much as she was permitted by society" shared his social responsibilities, must have had some strange encounters on warm mid-summer evenings—semi-tropic as Canada becomes in July and August—when



"a sort of glorified Italian villa."

Prince's Lodge was en fête, not only to the grandees of the town but to officers and guests from here, there and everywhere.

It was a semi-feudal existence, for the villa contained its military quarters nearby, "gothic outhouses" for kitchen and servant's use, and a perfect régime for systematic entertainment; so that there was an endless clatter of swords, jingling of spurs, glitter of gold lace, epaulets of scarlet cloth and blaze of jewels.

2

In the meantime we stood before the door of the rotunda.

No one knows quite all that has happened within this little place. . . Apart from its music and moonlight intrigues it was used at one time for the worship and practice of Voodoo, by a strange tribe of maroons from Jamaica, descendants of African slaves, who were so cruel and unmanageable as to be banished to the rigours of Canada where, on their arrival, the Duke was amazingly pleased with their ebon beauty, and not only put them to work on the fortifications but let them practise their black magic in his rotunda.

We stood staring idly at the forlorn little place. A child cried somewhere near. We hurriedly retreated. It was better, after all, that the door should not be opened in answer to our knock.

## XII

## MOUNT UNIACKE

AND farther up country, some ten miles away, there is a charming old colonial house, a family seat, that is typical of its day and generation.

It is said that Richard John Uniacke, in passing over the Ardoise Hills on his way to Halifax, was struck with the resemblance that a part of the land bore to his father's estate in Ireland. In 1786 he received a grant of a thousand acres on this road to Windsor. Later, another four thousand acres was added, and he built the house which he called Mount Uniacke. His Indians laid out the grounds. Gradually a beautiful walled garden full of scented old-world flowers crept up to the verandah. A sundial was set to count the hours.

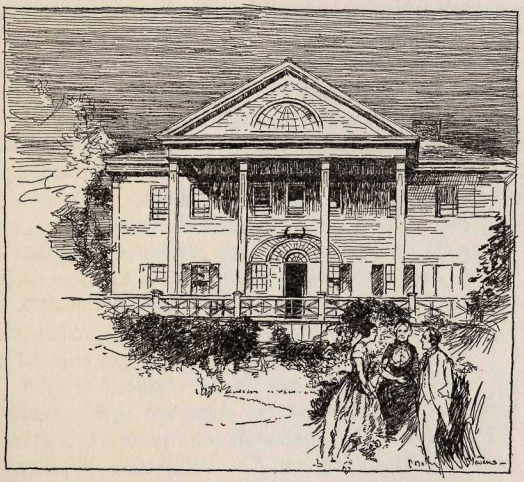
Richard Uniacke had married a daughter of Moses Delesdernier, of Cumberland, N.S., when he was a little over twenty-one and his bride not thirteen. They had twelve children, so there was need of all these spacious rooms. And Mount Uniacke was thronged with guests in the summer, when the entrance to the Annapolis Valley is a dream of beauty. Here the nobility, the Judges of the land and their wives and families, the fashion of Halifax and its visitors, enjoyed the house and garden. The

Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec, paying a pastoral visit in 1815, writes:

> We were to stay that evening at a superb country house belonging to Mr. Uniacke, a Member of the Council, Attorney General, Judge of Admiralty, etc., who had urgently entreated the Bishop to rest there in passing. It is nine leagues from the town. We arrived very late —Madam Uniacke received us with as much courtesy and politeness as an English lady should. After tea, to each of us was apportioned an immense room perfectly furnished. The following morning we had time to look at this great house, with its innumerable dependencies, bath rooms, billiard rooms, balconies, servants' quarters. Well-kept groves border a small and rather deep lake, the waters of which are carried to the sea by several small streams. Nothing that could render this place charming had been neglected. . . After breakfast, which was served with the same elegance and ceremony of the night before, our party re-entered their carriages, the cart received its load of baggage and we left for Windsor.

To-day, the garden is lovelier than ever, as gardens grow with age. The lodge, which stands on the main road, by the lake, is used as a tea-room. An imposing avenue leads to the house which is kept up in the old way of the Uniackes, for the hospitable door is still open in summer. It has a huge brass knocker with a coat of arms below. The hall is large and low with an enormous stove for hardwood standing on huge claw-feet of brass. Here stand also a discreet row of twelve chairs for

the twelve servants of the house to use for prayers. There are large lamps of brass with long chains to pull them up and down for lighting, and the walls are hung with coloured prints of coaching days. In



"Old Canada stands here . . . dominant and unchanging."

the dining-room hang family portraits. Every bedroom has its four-post bed and mahogany furniture.

One of Richard John's sons went in for racing, and called his favourite horse "Emerald," and so,

of the jockey costumes that still remain, one shows white satin breeches and an emerald-green satin coat and cap. And there is a collection of old-time brocade dresses which belonged to the great-great-grandmothers—beautiful old things which are still good, and in the commendatory phrase of the day "stiff enough to stand alone," also old poke bonnets and caps and shawls.

All that the passerby on the train headed up or down the valley can see is a glimpse of white pillars set in dark shrubbery across a small blue lake. Nevertheless, old Canada stands there, poised among the trees, dominant, and unchanging.

## XIII

## CLIFTON

CANADA is still faintly dotted with Martello towers and blockhouses. Blockhouses are usually the plainest things that e'er the sun shone on. But at Windsor, in Nova Scotia, there is one so small and brown, standing on its tiny hill overlooking the town, that you feel like giving it a loving pat. Here is the site of Port Edward, which it has guarded since 1750. In the recruiting days of 1914-18, many battalions camped here: British, Canadian, American, the Jewish Legion. New life must have stirred then in its quiet old blood.

Old blood runs in Windsor, on the banks of the Canadian Avon which twice a day rushes up its tidal lane and brings in the Atlantic.

King's College, the second oldest university in America, was the pride of the town but is now a wreck through fire, the devastator of precious buildings in the Maritimes. It lies just behind Clifton, the old house of "Sam Slick", a "small but elegant structure " a picture of which had fascinated me in childhood. For my father, like most Canadians of a literary turn, used to gather in various periodicals, descriptive of the country, and one of these was, in his time, sufficiently out-dated to be interesting. It was called "Canadian Scenery," and among other

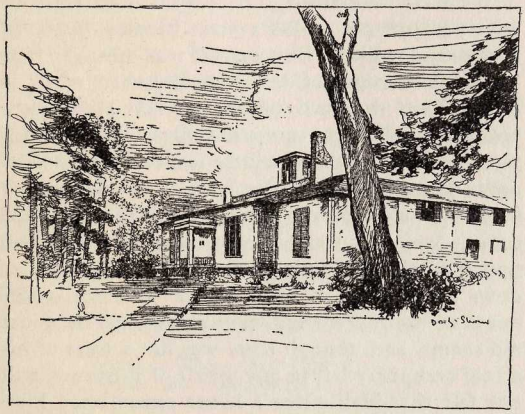
old-fashioned plates was this house of Judge Haliburton, "Sam Slick" the noted Canadian author. The "elegant structure" described, was "delightfully situated on an eminence commanding a noble prospect of the whole township." And so it stands to-day, except that its charming simplicity has been marred by several "improvements": a porte-cochère, like a long nose; a sun-room, which providentially fell to pieces; and an imported fireplace in Judge Haliburton's old library.

The ancient covered toll-bridge over the river, just below the cliffs at the back of the house, has gone since 1886. Until this time the daily stage coach, with its four or six horses, would come clattering into town at a hand-gallop, when a character familiarly known in the town as "Old Johnny Davidson" would open the gates of the bridge and let the coach pass through on its way to Annapolis Royal.

And once, the Black Watch Regiment, en route between Halifax and Saint John, having marched from Halifax to take the steamer at Windsor, stayed over night in the town, and a pond in Clifton woods was given the name of "Piper's Pond," because a piper of the regiment having dropped his watch into the water, thriftily dived after it—but never came up!

In Annapolis Royal, where he first lived; in Halifax, where his early work appeared in Joseph Howe's paper, "The Nova Scotian"; and here in

Windsor, his home for a quarter of a century, the figure of Judge Haliburton is everywhere recalled by portrait, legend and story. His "Sam Slick," type of the wandering "Yankee peddler" so well known in these parts, made its creator an author of



"Clifton, the old house of 'Sam Slick.' "

importance on two continents. It is even affirmed that he is the founder of American humour.

At any rate, his house shows the author to have been a gentleman of taste. A simple structure, suitable to the wooded lands on which it stands, square rooms, low-ceilinged; delightful little staircases

leading up on each side of the hall to add a touch of dignity to the interior; low shuttered windows, everywhere giving on the sweet plantation of beech and white maple, poplar, juniper and apple trees—these make the place as lovable to-day as when it was built so long ago.

We were told of a famous "thicket of acacias," which in summer makes a great bloomy mass of purple and white. But now it was spring. The beautiful branches of trees, lovelier than when in leaf, showed that look of surprise that prefaces the first green. But going up the dark little avenue there was still a trace of wintry snow. The tumble-down lodge looked forlorn. Up at the house new occupants were moving in, and Clifton bore the patient look of an old person upon whom some young relation is pressing a new style. But the windows stood open to the tender sunlight. The youth of the year entered, moving through the sweet old rooms, and, though there was not a trace of his actual occupancy left in any article of furniture, still one felt that Haliburton's house remembered him, and, like its master, was very much alive.

We carried away a spray of mauve-pink daphne, frequenter of early Nova Scotian woods, and we drove over what used to be called, The Kissing Bridge. . . Is anyone ever kissed there now? We wondered!

## XIV

## AT THE CHÂTEAU PAPINEAU

IT was hot in Ottawa. But the flag flew over the Parliament Buildings. Through screened dining-room windows there was a stagey veiling of park-like spaces. Honourable Members, compelled to be in town during the heat, conversed languidly.

My more or less willing chauffeur said, as we lunched, that he distrusted my road-map to Montebello in the Province of Quebec. He wondered why we should not go down the Highway on the Ontario side. On the other hand, I hoped to approach the Château Papineau by a more intimate route: by such villages as Gatineau, Angers, Masson, Thurso, Plaisance.

I have always wanted to go to Thurso:

> Where at Thurso first I heard
> Natalie, our contralto bird.

"What do you mean by that?" asked my chauffeur.

I had to explain that my guide-book was a little old volume that few people know: a collection of villanelles about the valley of the Ottawa, and its villages and its people, and a traditional manor house—neglected for all I knew. . . Passing Thurso we might see Natalie's grandchild upon the street.

So we set out, and soon we were not well but ill upon the way of the worst road in Canada. To do it justice, it was under repair, but the repairs were chaotic. Every few miles the whole thing was ripped to pieces, and to our constant cries of "Montebello?" the workmen, looking decidedly belligerent, made no reply. By a series of terrific detours we approached Thurso quite unfit to seek the grandchild of Natalie. Then Plaisance, where we struck a good road and made a quick run into Montebello.

A tiny street lay blistering in the sun. We were directed to the entrance gates of the manor on the right, and turning in, were plunged into a deep, cool wood, through which an avenue wound upward. We passed over rustic bridges, and saw a small stone chapel among the trees, and came out into the bright world again, and on to a grassy terrace behind which stood a towered Château, facing an expanse of river.

For the Ottawa, hidden from the rocky road, seems to enfold this house in a silvery envelope of water. Everything was utterly still. A little bronze figure on the lawn bent over its dripping shell; red geraniums blazed in white urns upon the terrace; the windows were open; the front door stood wide. We rang the bell, but no sound answered us. Through the transparent screen a long hall lay, with a view of the river through great win-

dows at the further end. It was lined with portraits and set with beautiful furniture. We rang again without response. Then we lifted the heavy door knocker, and, as its deep thud resounded through the house, a strange wild cry came from somewhere in the distance, hoarse, agonized, insistent—a lonely, terrified wail. It broke the silence so horribly that we left the house and set out to explore the grounds when, coming up from the direction of the river, we met our hostess, Madame Papineau.

"I had given you up," she said, "but I expect that my Spanish parrot told you that someone was at home."

2

We sat for a time in a drawingroom overlooking the Ottawa, and it was as though from the very first moment we sank deeply into the mood of the house. It is a place which completely enfolds one. Should you know nothing of its history, or even the outlines of the old burning story of Papineau, this manor house must teach you, in an hour, things that you will never forget, for it is the abode of one vivid personality.

Everywhere there are portraits of its master: a pastel, done when the subject was twelve years of age; engravings made in France; a remarkable bust, and a full length portrait of Papineau, by a

son-in-law, Napoleon Bourassa, showing the trees of the manor house and the Ottawa in the background. The living-rooms are large, and littered with exquisite bric-a-brac and family treasures. The wife of the grandson of Louis Joseph has kept the tradition of the place:

The glint of steel, the gleam of brocade,
"Monseigneur" up in his tarnish'd frame,
A long, low terrace, half sun, half shade;

Tapestry, dusty, dim, and frayed,
Fauteuil and sofa, a flickering flame,
A glint of steel, a gleam of brocade;

"Mme." on the wall as a roguish maid,
Later, some years, as a portly dame,
The long low terrace, half sun, half shade,

Where "Mme's." ghost and "Monsieur's" parade,
And play at *ombre*, their favourite game,
The glint of steel, the gleam of brocade.

3

"How the feeling of the place persists!" we said.

"But the Papineaus have never left it," she answered.

We went into the picture gallery and conservatory, and through the great dining-room to a back hall where quaint, almost clumsy, stairs wind up to the second floor. Here is another wide, straight hall running the whole length of the house with bedrooms opening on each side. Dreams of rooms filled with exquisite French furniture. One iron

bed, in charming harp design, was early French-Canadian. There is a reading room on this floor, where a small Louis Joseph now learns his lessons. And from the reading room, a passage leads to the library tower, a stone fireproof building where five thousand volumes used to dwell. Many of the shelves are empty now, but precious old maps and charts remain. One is a very ancient map showing the Seigneurie of *la Petite Nation* of the Algonquins, upon which the Château stands. And here at the base of the tower, from which ascends narrow corkscrew stairs, is the desk, still holding its ink-well and quill pens, at which Papineau used to sit, facing the wooden grill to which his tenants came. Coming up these stairs my eye was caught by a medieval angel in carved wood. I was told that it had arrived at the Château by way of the old Church of Bonsecours at Montreal.

The private chapel of the Papineaus, among the trees of the avenue, holds the story of the family inscribed upon its vaults. On one of the tablets it is recorded that Samuel Papineau was the founder of the family in this country. He came in 16— "dans l'Armée Française. Puis colon Rivière des Prairies (Ile de Montreal) Mort le 23 Avril 1737."

Four generations are buried here, but a fifth vault lies empty, for Talbot Papineau never returned from Passchendaele. If Louis, the grandfather, was

rebellious to the "little England" of 1737, his great grandson was true to the vast, disturbed empire of 1914.

Louis Joseph, was trained in the Seminary at Quebec, and entered law. He was a brilliant youth, and early, too early perhaps, took his seat in the Assembly as member for Chamblay. He was one of those who are destined to become a political saviour. And his day was full of burning questions and crashing discords. He found himself the leader of an enthusiastic minority of Nationalists, but when the war of 1812 broke out, he took command of a volunteer company and served in that capacity until peace was restored. In 1817 he was elected Speaker of the House, and from then his wit and his oratory were with the Nationalists. He was a thorn in the side of the Oligarchy—in other words, he was a radical. Under him the Assembly, helpless in the face of the Legislative Council, awoke to a sense of power, and when the final struggle came, over a question of supplies, Canada was aroused from Gaspé to Lake Huron. Lord John Russell's order that arrears be paid without the vote of the Assembly was rescinded in part, but it was too late to check the Sons of Liberty. When arms had been taken up against His Majesty's Government, Papineau, who had incited and inflamed his countrymen to see their position clearly, though he never advocated arms, was a rebel in the eyes of the law.

A warrant for high treason was out, and a thousand pounds placed on his head. He took refuge in France, and for several years lived in Paris. Later, the charges against him were withdrawn and he returned to Canada and sat as a Member of the House of Commons, which had been remodelled under the Act of Union.

4

"On good days we have tea in the garden—in the maisonette," said Madame Papineau.

In the pretty, open-air room, therefore, we sat for some time and talked of many things, and looked down on the still river, and a schooner or two making its slow way, and watched the comings and goings of a flimsy little ferry that was shortly to convey us across the Ottawa.

In the meantime there was a drift of rose perfume from the gardens, and the hum of bees, the passing to and fro of the maid with tea, and a soft exchange of French between our hostess and her charming little granddaughter. . . We might have been in Normandy, visiting some old château.

"But no," said Madame Papineau, "no, this is truly Canada. . . Only, a Canada that so few people know—the Canada of French traditions—Canada of the first comers. It is historic ground. The Algonquins of *la Petite Nation* were almost

exterminated here by the Iroquois. These gardens were a part of the Seigneurie of *la Petite Nation,* granted to Bishop Laval by the British West Indian Company in 1674. It was purchased from him in 1804 by Joseph Papineau. The first manor house was built a year later, and replaced, in 1813, by another on Isle Arosin opposite Papineauville. And this house was destroyed by fire some thirty years after that. The present manor was finished in 1850. In 1871, it passed into the hands of his son, Louis Joseph, and upon his death, in 1903, to his grandchildren. Life goes on now much more quietly than it could have done in the troublous days of the '30's," went on Madame Papineau, "but as to the usual way of our village, not so differently, I expect."

"Not so differently," we thought, as we drove again into Montebello's little street, cooler now at sundown. Shopkeepers were standing at their open doors. A little wagonette, painted in bright orange, upholding a stout lady in purple, with a long fresh loaf of bread under her arm, was standing in front of one of the shops while the small, tired horse drank from a bucket. A bell was ringing for vespers and a group of Sisters, in their swaying, black robes, walked slowly down the road. It might have been a hundred years ago.

It was sunset by the time the ferryman had responded to our horn, and the river was pink and

gold as we drifted out upon it—pink as the rose that I had carried away from the garden. The manor house, gilded by the afterglow, looked impossibly romantic from the river. The entire afternoon, indeed, had been the sort of episode that one might have dreamed, sitting there at luncheon, only six hours ago, in a modern hotel. It had been as lovely as a fairy-tale, and as incredible. The ferryman continued the story of "the good family", and a greyhound from the Château, who refused to part with us, accompanied the little voyage with remarks in his own language.

So was it once with friend and foe,
Far off they saw the patriot's ark
Burn in the western evening glow . . .

Think of him now! one thought bestow,
As blazing against the pine trees dark
The red-tiled towers of the old château
Burn in the western evening glow.

In ten minutes we had reached the landing stage, in twenty minutes, an Ontario highway. "Perfect asphalt!" murmured a relieved driver, looking about him for a filling station.

So it was over—Masson, Thurso, Plaisance. Farewell, Natalie—farewell, dark, contralto bird, in whom I shall now believe more blindly than ever, though I did not like your Thurso—. . . After all, it was not a dream.

## XV

## RIDEAU HALL AND EARNSCLIFFE

OUT of the woods surrounding Bytown, woods that were broken by shelves and gullies of rocks, and surrounded by three rivers, a lumber king, Thomas Mackay, chose an estate of ten thousand acres on a high and splendid point. The Rideau and the Ottawa met there, and he called his house for the former river, Rideau Hall.

Perhaps the house did not, from the first, play up to its bold setting, but it was a fine Scotch-Canadian structure nevertheless, built of limestone, and two storeys high. It stood far on the outskirts of the energetic lumber and timber village that nearly a century ago was busy on the enormous enterprise of canal-making, which was to link it to Kingston and make Bytown an inland lake-port for fifty years. Ottawa had not been imagined; Canada, as we know it, hardly dreamed of. Mackay's house stood solitary among the green woodlands with no premonition that, as the decades passed, it might lose its unique identity as a mansion and slip into a succession of many editions to be bound into one volume and called Government House. So successful was it as a mansion that shortly after its occupancy Mr. Mackay was induced by a relative, who wanted to live near the old home, to clear another

bit of land nearer town, overlooking the Ottawa, and build a similar but smaller house. . . And this house was Earnscliffe.

Years passed. Bytown became an important centre, then a city, whose name was changed to Ottawa, and, at last, the capital of a new confederation—the Dominion of Canada.

The old house was drawn into all this. It was not to be an outstanding mansion for nothing. In 1865 it was leased as the Governor-General's residence, and two years later was bought outright. Then, indeed, its independent life was over.

Official residences are generally either wholesale orders to architects, or cumulative growths. Rideau Hall, with not a moment's hesitation, obediently stepped out of its firm Scotch-Canadian mould and became the small arena for a succession of vice-regal footsteps. Change after change crowded quickly upon it. In 1868, for the coming of Lord Lisgar, who followed the first Governor of the Confederated Provinces, Viscount Monck, a great stone wing was added, gardens with walks and ornamental shrubs were laid out, a conservatory was built, a lodge, and important iron gates, not to speak of a "suitable cottage" for the secretary.

For Lord Dufferin, a ballroom was added, with a dais at one end, and in the ballroom great chandeliers were hung, windows were set high in the walls, oil paintings appeared—one of the still

youthful Victoria—and a fine "promenade" was run the length of the new wing . . . everything as it "was done" in the seventies.

But the glorious eighties! . . . The Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise hallowed these improvements by their presence. Indeed, they transformed the new ballroom, twinkling then in oil lamps that had succeeded candlelight, into a little court . . . Ruffles and bustles and wide-swinging skirts, mutton-chopped gentlemen in baggy trousers, bowed and curtseyed before the dais and sauntered through quadrilles, or spun in the dizzy waltz feeling very royal. ("We tried to teach the aides the new reverse, but they thought it an American innovation.")

Difficult for the Stanleys to follow royalty! An era, too, of trying changes, such as the telephone, and the new gas for lighting, and the railroads increasing rapidly and going all through the North West, and Sir John A. Macdonald in power and the country simply losing its head. . . There was little time to improve Government House with so much going on.

But the Aberdeens made earnest reforms. The drawing-rooms were crowded with puffed sleeves and demi-trains for morning and afternoon meetings. . . "Are our Domestics happy in our Service?" . . . "What of Native Industries?" . . . Lord Aberdeen built a chapel and installed an organ.

The Mintos were keen on winter sports, but not being reformers they left the house, and the open-air rinks and toboggan slides, and the quaint pavilion very much as they found them, and did not even put a fireplace into the cavernous waiting room for the skaters, but kept a sensible box stove for heating, which apparently remains there until this day. . . Beautiful daughters, and their youthful English friends, make a lovely memory of Rideau Hall during a régime in which the long reign of Victoria ended, and Edward VII came to the throne.

Earl Grey built a room that is rather like him: panelled high in dark oak, crowded with books and lit by splendid windows that let in the romantic outlines of distant towered Ottawa.

Then royalty again! When the Duke of Connaught arrived, in 1911, the old Mackay house slipped further and further out of sight under more improvements. A noble entrance front arose, crowned by an Attic pediment bearing the largest stone sculpture of the Royal Arms in existence; an Entrance Hall, paved of marble; a "terrazzo" and wide marble steps leading to the promenade. With her parents a new Princess had come to a new Canada from that which her aunt Louise had known. . . Let hammers ring and changes be made in Rideau Hall, disgraceful old pile! . . We really should build a new Government House! . . . We are spending enough to do it. . . Does the Princess Patricia dance the Tango? Suppose Government

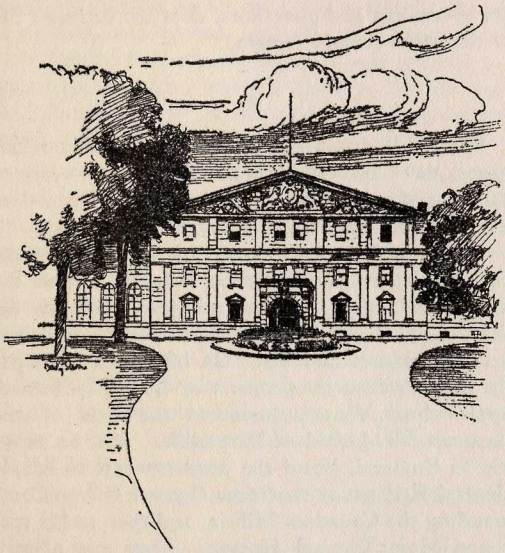
House should ban it! . . . In 1913 there was strange tension in the air. . . Then 1914. . . Clear everything out to make room for the Red Cross. . . The Princess Pat is embroidering her colours for the flag of her own regiment. Figures in khaki are crowding up and down the spotless Marble Front—every inch of the house is needed.

The Devonshires came like calm after storm, and ready to listen to conversation. All sorts of plans were drawn up and considered, but none of them happened to touch the life of the old Mackay homestead.

Then, Lord Byng of Vimy! His wife looked about the gardens and saw that they might be lovelier. After thinking it over she added the one thing which they have always lacked, the thing for which they were obviously intended in a region of waterfalls, rivers, and ridges of splendid stone—a rock garden. And she did a nobler thing than this—she renovated the kitchens.

Thus Rideau Hall—a story of changing people and régimes—a shabby, rambling place in spite of its new front, a place that any self-respecting "realtor" would despise, because it has few, pitifully few, tiled bathrooms—indeed not one apiece for guests! . . . A place of small curtseying throngs, shifting and turning through the generations, and yet, at heart, a Canadian—perhaps even a Scotch-Canadian house!

Some faithful and unchanging inmates it possesses. One finds them standing solemnly all over the place, dotted here and there through the laby-



"a story of changing régimes."

rinths of rambling rooms: solemn old sets of walnut, towering bedsteads that have loomed over generations of small human heads lying unconscious

in sleep, polished dressers and stiff Victorian chairs, solid old doors, of the original house, of native wood that gleams in warm reds and browns.

I thought that here, more than in the portraits of her sovereigns and governors, does the intimate life of the house silently remain.

2

When Thomas Mackay built his second, smaller, house, the Scottish lad, who was in after years to draw together the floating threads of Confederation, had not even arrived in the land of his adoption.

By comparison with that of its ornate parent the outline history of Earnscliffe is brief. From the Reynolds family, relatives of the Mackays, Sir John A. Macdonald purchased the estate and took up his residence in 1883. On his death, in 1891, the house became the property of Lady Macdonald, upon whom Victoria bestowed the title of the Baroness Macdonald of Earnscliffe. She, on moving to England, leased the property first to Major General Herbert, at that time General Officer Commanding the Canadian Militia, and then to his successor, Major General Hutton. After this officer's departure for active service in the South African War, the estate was purchased by Mrs. Charles Harriss, who, with her husband, the English composer and musical director, lived at Earnscliffe until her death in 1924.

## RIDEAU HALL AND EARNSCLIFFE

As I drove in through the open gates on a winter morning, it stood shining in the sun, for the terrace windows look south over the Ottawa River and the Laurentian Hills. I knocked, and, as I stood at the door waiting to be let in, I felt curiously excited. The door was opened, and the great entrance hall was flooded in southern light. I was ushered to a room on the right, which I knew to be Sir John Macdonald's study, where stood the present owner of the house.

"I am immensely stirred at coming here," ran my thoughts. "The very name of the house holds for me a lost magic: legendary tales of early childhood mixed with the first stories I ever heard, stories out of the Bible, stories out of Grimm's fairy tales." . . I was caught in far-off childish things that took me strangely back to vague impressions: long silver rails flung over a great C.P.R. bridge, on and on interminably through the fabulous mountains of the West—to a moment, shivering in the icy woodshed of an Ontario house, watching a huge laurel wreath being slowly unpacked.

"Good morning," said Dr. Charles Harriss, coming forward.

"Good morning," I echoed.

(The laurel wreath was prickly, and at night there was an endless aisle in the crowded Hall, and two other children bearing roses, and a tall knight in a fur coat holding my green laurel wreath.)

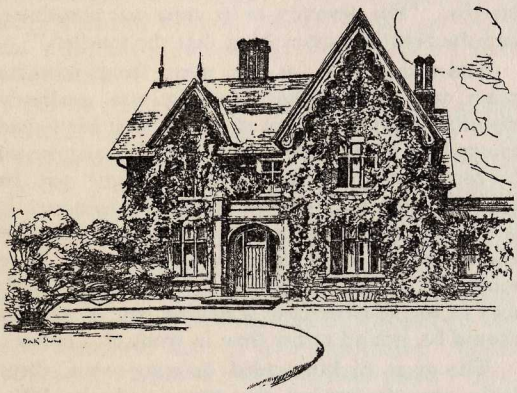
"Will you come nearer the fire?" asked my host.

Suddenly the present asserted itself. I was standing in a beautiful room of primrose-coloured walls, white bookshelves, soft couches, a striking medallion in marble of Macdonald—a profile bringing out the amazing resemblance to Disraeli—a magnificent fire-place, the crackle of coal, the portrait of a beautiful woman over the fire-place—a wholesome, peaceful, harmonious room.

"Not so much changed," said Dr. Harriss, looking about him, "—the furnishings, possibly. Naturally, Lady Macdonald carried off her treasures. Here, in place of my piano, stood Sir John's desk—near that window. There the daily conferences with Joseph Pope took place; and here, I suppose, he thought out his manifestos before the three important elections which were held during his occupancy of the house. The bookshelves are his; the fireplace was always here, though now we use a different mantel. Yes, it is a homelike room, a place of memories. It was dear to us for many years before we owned it; as it was, and is, to everyone who knew the old chief and to thousands of people who did not know him personally. When my wife heard, in London, that the Baroness Macdonald would like us to have Earnscliffe—well, of course, we thought ourselves fortunate."

I remembered that this was the study where, after strenuous days in the House, the family used to

gather in private after dinner on the few evenings when there was no entertaining to be done. I had read that the library just across the hall was used for more ceremonious occasions and that the great drawing-room, which I knew lay at the back of the house, was kept for formal affairs.



"it is an altogether friendly house."

We sat talking for some time. Dr. Harriss came in his youth from Oxford, embued with its traditions and those of his master, Sir Frederick Arthur Gore Ouseley, to make early Ottawa his home. We spoke of Canadian eras in music and in political life. It was strange to think of two creative minds, both

set in frail bodies, working out—rather, under the circumstances, fighting out—aggressive schemes for the recognition of statesmanship, and for the academic recognition of music, each one moving nearer to this peaceful place which was to be his home.

"No story of Earnscliffe is complete without mention of my wife's affection for it," said Dr. Harriss. "Her devotion to its cause was absorbing, and she beautified everything that she touched."

And this, indeed, as we went from room to room, was self-evident. Nothing was needlessly disturbed, and the fabric of the house itself had everywhere been strengthened, renewed, augmented by some distinctive gesture that brought out its character. Earnscliffe has a distinctive character. It is an altogether friendly house, a house intended, because of its welcoming central hall and large rooms, to extend hospitality. It beckons its visitors to the allurement of a garden, set, as gardens should be, behind rather than in front of a house.

The great pink-brocaded drawing-room, then, looks over the garden, the river, and the hills. Flaming sunshine lights up slim rose and gold chairs, and cabinets filled with treasures that would be the envy of any European museum of fine arts. On mantel and tables are Dresden china figures of the most ravishing contour and colour; small glittering boxes of gold and silver and mother-of-pearl and semi-precious stones; rare vases of exotic out-

line, priceless fans; tiny ivory elephants, troops of them.

"One for every European concert that my singers gave," said my host.

The library, to the left of the main entrance hall, is a delightfully proportioned room with mahogany and crimson furnishings. Tiers of bookshelves, filled with rare editions, line the walls, and here is the well-known portrait by Patterson of Sir John Macdonald.

At the entrance to the dining-room are marble busts of Sir John and Lady Macdonald. One thought of the famous companion of this one of the first premier in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral. The dining-room has been redone since the Macdonald régime. It might belong to oldest England. It is panelled and raftered in heavy cut oak. The magnificent table and carved furniture date from 1610. There are tapestries heaven knows how old, and brasses and silver of great importance. An urn of brass, for instance, was owned and used by Alexander the Great. Behind the dining-room, lying between it and the study, is the little "waiting room" whence, in Sir John's day, it is said that he used to escape to the garden when "hard put" by relentless callers.

Up narrow, red-carpeted stairs are the bedrooms. One of them was the focus of every one, no matter to which political party he happened to belong, when

the most brilliant figure in the Canadian political world was fighting his last fight in the June days of 1891.

The large room was silent and benign. I stood by the pleasant window looking over the front of the house to the entrance gates, where they used to post the doctors' daily bulletins, and down upon the shade trees, where the telegraphers, wiring news of the chieftain's condition around the world, had pitched their tents. . . The far-away early nineties seemed at the moment very near.

Slowly, then, we came down the narrow red stairs to the primrose-coloured study again. How alive the room looked in the firelight—intensely alive! . . A room of splendid echoes: friendships, camaraderies, active aversions, sorrow perhaps, but more than sorrow—joy!

## XVI

## KINGSTON

THERE'S a flash of crimson about Kingston. At any moment you may see a Gentleman Cadet with his cape upon his arm and his cane in his hand. Motors rush through the prim streets, but the stamp, stamp of horses, the champ, champ of bridles, the clamp of soldiers, suits Kingston best —and a ship at the end of a street.

I go about and wonder who lives here and there, for the atmosphere awakens interest and curiosity. Old French families, British officers, men of letters and politicians have dwelt in this ancient seigneurie of Cataraqui, and traces of them persist.

Alwington House, lovely as I saw it set in a midsummer garden, was built by the fourth Baron Le Moyne, which links it with the ancestral fortress castle at Longueuil and with Alwington Manor on the Saint John river.

This Le Moyne was a Grant. His father, a Scotch captain, married Carolina de Longueuil. She became a baroness in her own right at her father's death. In 1841, Alwington was the residence of three Governors-General. To two of them, it was an ill-fated house. Near its gates, Lord Sydenham's horse swerved, and he died as a result of the fall. Sir Charles Bagot, who succeeded him, also died at

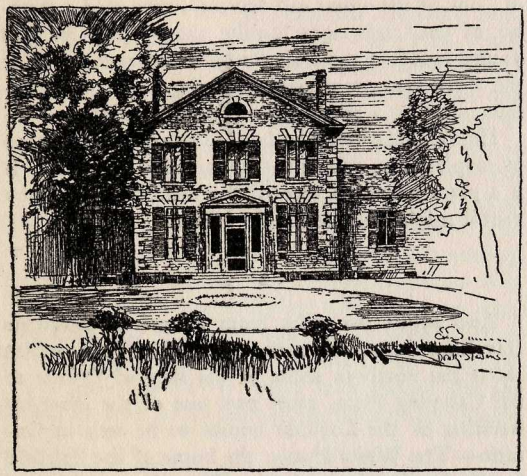
Alwington. He was followed by Sir Charles Metcalfe, who resided there until the seat of Government was moved to Montreal.

The Longueuil estate was really on Wolfe Island, which lies like a gold-green shoal at the point where the St. Lawrence flows out of Lake Ontario. This island was an Indian haunt centuries ago. Dark faces had peered out at stray white men who came up and down the river, long before Frontenac arrived at the wooden fort on the Cataraqui. France and England both craved its fertile meadowlands, hence Wolfe's name for an old French holding.

Carolina Grant, Baroness de Longueuil, lived here for years in a small house which is now used as a summer cottage. Her daughter, who had married an Irish clergyman of a literary turn, the Rev. Antisel Allan, built Ardath, a lovely limestone house, going almost sheer down to the water. People remember it in its zenith as "a dream of beauty." There were terraced gardens and roses in summer, and great hearth fires in winter where men of letters travelling this way always received a welcome. The son of the house was a well-known novelist, Grant Allan.

On Rideau Street East, stands the house in which Sir John A. Macdonald spent most of his boyhood; and nearly opposite, across the river, is the little abode once occupied by Molly Brant, the sister of the Mohawk Chief. And there is the house where

Tom Moore boarded, and where Charles Sangster lived; but these are not easy to find. "The little, loyal rectory" of the Stuarts is linked with the story of Dundurn, linked with the manor house of the de



"Alwington House built by the fourth Baron Le Moyne."

Gaspés at St. Jean Port Joli, and with many families who are vital to the life of Canada.

In 1870 the late Sir Richard Cartwright built a pretty summer residence on the site of an old grant given to his grandfather by George III for service

to the state. It is a rocky point jutting into the St. Lawrence, but in spite of its arid soil it is well wooded. Hundreds of men were employed by Sir Richard to turn it into a small estate.

Miss A. M. Going, of Kingston, relates the story of "one of the oldest cab drivers", who told a member of the Cartwright family that when he was young he often took Sir Richard down to see how the work was progressing, and once saw the workmen roasting a sheep whole for their dinner.

Here are lake views and tall pine trees, and a screen of maples from which the house takes its name. It is a place which so successfully evades the passerby that it might be called Hidden House.

2

And about ten miles from Kingston, motorists travelling westward on the old Indian Trail, which skirts the northern shore of the Bay of Quinte to the Carrying Place, must pass one of the most interesting of the Loyalist houses to be seen in Ontario—The White House, the home of the Fairfield family for five generations. There is something of the south about the lovely old place, white painted, vine-hung, not at all venerable in appearance despite the fact that it is the first two-storey house and the oldest of its size in Ontario still retained by the family who built it.

The Fairfields, of English descent, came up from

Vermont with the Michael Grass expedition of Loyalists. They brought with them negro slaves, and lived in log huts until they could build the "big house." Months were spent in its erection, for it was intended to resist time and weather. Its thick brick walls, the deep basement and huge chimneys were protected by wood. The wide centre hall, and winding staircase with bannisters of black walnut and mahogany, the hard oak floors and windows set just in the right places—all speak of care and comfort and beauty. And when at last, in 1793, the house was completed, records show that "from far and near came the United Empire Loyalists over the corduroy roads, or blazing a trail through the unbroken forest" to a house warming, where wine flowed like water and great roasts were cooked before the huge fireplace which took an eight foot back log. The log was placed with a chain fastened to a team of oxen outside the window. They pulled it slowly while men guided the log across the floor to its place at the back of the hearth.

# XVII

## TOM TALBOT'S CASTLE

### I

A SAD day for "gay Tom Talbot" should his jovial but testy ghost still haunt the log Castle of Malahide on Lake Erie, at news that the remains of his semi-feudal estate has gone into the hands of an American syndicate!

More than a hundred years ago, when settlers used to apply to him for grants of land, the imperious Colonel Talbot would confer with prospective buyers from behind a sliding window pane, and to the enquiries of Americans would reply, "This is a British settlement." If argument arose, as it often did, his formula was simple. He merely turned to his faithful steward, valet, and man of all work, Jeffrey Hunter, and ordered, "Set on the dogs."

Few people recall one of Canada's most romantic stories.

It began at Malahide, nine miles from Dublin, in a castle that might have come out of a medieval fairy tale—a place of lofty arches and circular towers and carved oak ceilings, Van Dyke portraits and an altarpiece by Dürer, once the property of Queen Mary.

The lordship of Malahide has remained in the Talbot family for more than seven centuries. One of William the Conqueror's barons was a Richard de

Talbot. The name figured in Shakespeare—John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who was the terror of France. It was his descendant, Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, who, at the coronation of King Edward

The Honourable Thomas Talbot.

VII, took rank and precedence as premier Earl of the United Kingdom.

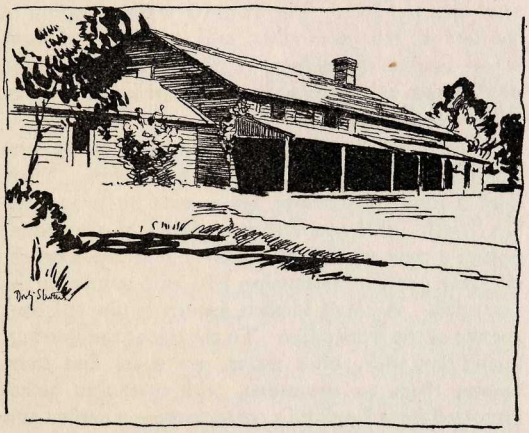
In the castle of Malahide, and of this ancient stock, Thomas Talbot, the founder of the Talbot Settlement in Upper Canada, was born in 1771.

As a younger son he seemed destined for diplomatic service, but his imagination turned to adventure overseas. He talked of the new land, Canada, with a boon companion and life-long friend, a fellow aide-de-camp of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, one, Arthur Wellesley, better known hereafter as the Iron Duke of Wellington.

The upshot of the matter was that young Talbot left Dublin Castle in 1790 to join his regiment, then stationed at Quebec. He wished to penetrate farther into the wilderness, into the country fabled by Charlevoix as "the paradise of the Hurons"—south-western Ontario. And so, using his influence with the Duke of Kent, then at Quebec, he shortly became an aide of the first Governor of Upper Canada, Sir John Graves Simcoe, and was stationed at the capital, Newark (now Niagara).

Here, beyond "the country of the cataract", lay the most entrancing of all mysteries—the unknown. Various errands through the bushland, to Indian councils, to settlements and villages, and into border cities of the United States, greatly intrigued Talbot's fancy. He was recalled to Europe on military service, but in 1800 sold his commission and returned to Upper Canada with the thought of founding a colony. It is said that he was sated with society, that there was an unhappy love affair—even that one of the King's daughters had been in love with him. . . Anyway—on an expedition with Simcoe

he had chanced upon a lovely region between Lake Erie and the River Thames, a place to fill the imagination and the heart, a place in which to hew out a kingdom. With the skill of an adept court follower he began pressing his claims on the crown, aided and



"a place in which to hew out a kingdom."

abetted by influential friends and by the country's need of colonization.

He received his grant, upwards of 70,000 acres, on condition of placing a settler on every two hundred acres. After the first years of difficulty and of superhuman effort the settlement grew and ex-

tended to over 500,000 acres, with a population of fifty thousand.

The situation was, and is, as beautiful as stream, lake and woods can make it. . . Talbot Creek flows across fertile meadowland towards the lake. There are great yellow cliffs of sand, and sand shoals extend into the lake. The shallow water, lapping at the feet of the great cliffs, makes a band of lapis lazuli against the deeper water beyond. Through poplar trees one catches azure vistas shining between their tall, dark shapes.

Woodsmen, Indians and half-breeds felled trees and broke ground for Talbot's first cabin. Years later a more pretentious house was built and the log "castle" still standing is a replica of the second house: a mere echo of its heyday. A wooden bench, the only personal possession left, still stands on the verandah. A small kitchen garden is planted over the site of the wine cellar. To the left of the clearing, facing the wide, blue water, are some fine trees, among them an enormous, wide-spreading locust imported from England a century ago—a perfect and beautiful tree except for a huge, fallen branch.

They told us that on the morning of the day that the option papers were ready for the disposal of the property it was noticed that the old tree was going —the Colonel's favorite tree. "There wasn't any storm that night," they said. "It just fell, as though its time had come!"

2

This appeared to be a sort of rural château, with "a really civilized rose garden," to Anna Jameson, the English critic and historian, travelling by springless wagon, over corduroy roads, and through the dense bush in 1836. She has left the best picture of the place that we have, and writes of orchards and innumerable outbuildings, the wide hall, where panther skins glared from the rafters above, "ghastly and horrible," handsome lodging-rooms, and blazing open fires.

The Colonel kept open house. No one of distinction came to Upper Canada without paying him respect, noblemen and gentlemen, judges, littérateurs, and ladies of distinction. Once, his nephew, Richard, afterwards Lord Airey, came to stay for some time. His wife, being of an artistic turn, hung Greek lace curtains from the Ionian Islands on the windows of the half-savage "castle" and changed the hours for meals,—all of which was deeply resented by her host. Of the visit of Lady Emeline Stuart-Wortley a quaint little souvenir lies in the British Museum, for her daughter of twelve—now Lady Victoria Welby—was moved to write a diary of her travels with mamma in America, which includes a studious chapter on Port Talbot. One of the rare copies of this book I was fortunate enough to see in the home of Dr. J. H. Coyne, of St. Thomas, editor of the Talbot papers.

A century ago Ontario was soaking in alcohol, but Colonel Talbot, in spite of his detestation of temperance, used to say that a man who imbibed in the early morning was sure to die a drunkard! Therefore, he placed a mark on an outbuilding showing where the sun should rest at eleven o'clock, and would sit on the verandah patiently watching the dial. When the moving shadow touched it Jeffrey Hunter produced the decanter. No business was transacted in the afternoon.

An English portrait of Talbot, when he was nearly sixty, shows a florid, good-natured face the features of which strangely resemble those of William IV. The costume is homespun (woven and made by his settlers) a grey coat and picturesque striped trousers of scarlet and black.

His sheepskin coat for winter was famous on both sides of the Atlantic, for he loved to swagger about London in Canadian clothes.

As to the Talbot habit of resembling kings, that which Anna Jameson calls the most memorable repartee ever recorded in the chronicle of wit occurred when Richard Talbot, then Ambassador to France, was asked by Louis the Fourteenth, who was struck by the amazing likeness to himself, "M. l'Ambassadeur, est-ce-que madame, votre mère, n'a jamais été à la cour du Roi, mon père?" Talbot replied with a low bow, "Non, Sire—mais mon père y était!"

3

We regarded a forlorn lemonade-stand, doing a dingy business with visitors, arriving to picnic and scatter papers on the ground, and thought of the high-handed Talbot. History will write him too high-handed. While his splendid scheme of colonization and road-making succeeded, in so far as strict loyalty and the collection of settlement duties were concerned, it failed, in reality, through lack of initiative and tolerance.

We had just driven over the famous Talbot road, leading to the estate. It was originally an Indian portage. What drama it involved! Indians celebrating with ritual and war dances; settlers landing from small boats at the mouth of the Creek; plundering bands from Kentucky, during the war of 1812, moving up and down the road destroying farm buildings and carrying off everything portable; the colonel himself, driving his light springless waggon in summer, and in winter "a strong high-shouldered box sleigh piled with buffalo robes," on his way to and from the little village named St. Thomas which he proudly called "My Capital."

Here on each 21st of May there was a grand commemoration of the founding of the settlement, with the colonel as hero making a speech which he invariably ended with an emphatic "God bless you all!" after which he led the dance that followed with the youngest and prettiest girl.

Stories are still told in St. Thomas of his great political meeting in 1832—the crowning triumph of his career. A reform government was in power in England. The Canadian Liberals—a large proportion of non-conformists, Scottish and American immigrants, all anathema to the colonel—were agitating not only a new policy, but worse than that, the temperance question! Enough! Peremptory orders were distributed summoning "A general meeting of My Settlers on St. George's Day the 23rd of April, at the King's Arms at noon, when I shall attend." Apparently the whole countryside flocked in high excitement and listened to a speech which began, characteristically, with "Silence and Attention" and ended in the complete routing of the rebels who advocated cold water and revolutionary principles. A fanfare of drums, torchlights and songs of victory followed the magnificent colonel home to Port Talbot.

4

Tory, Loyalist, aristocrat—how completely he has vanished in the general standardization, the "community spirit" of to-day! Tourists, from the modern hotel overlooking the lake, will play golf over the hillsides where he planted English cowslips, and soon even the rumour of a wild rose, lost descendant of his famous varieties, will be gone. . . But the log house is not to be disturbed—"at least, not for the present."

## XVIII

## A WITCH-HOUSE

STEP softly over the grass, this is a Witch House, a little tumble-down shed behind a hidden road, weed-choked, and desolate. There is nothing to see, unless a trace of folk-lore is a sight, or an old legend.

Dr. James H. Coyne, of St. Thomas, had told us how to find it, and he warned us of the road. We remembered his words as we slid down a kind of sand pit, and then, through a tangle of bush, approached our ruin on foot.

"Cursed be all witches for bringing us to see a log hut," swore my chauffeur.

" 'Cursed' is the word," we reflected.

It is a forlorn spot. Thrice cursed I should say—the shell of a wild, forgotten phantasy holding nothing but an old superstition. For the tale of Dr. Troyer, once owner of this shack, belongs a century and more ago, when doubts may have been fashionable—but not in a rustic community like this.

Long Point, about a mile and a half east of Port Rowan, was originally settled by German, Dutch, French and British immigrants. Dr. Troyer was a German and his specialty was witches. Yet he was a liberal person and believed in all kinds of magic,

with a natural leaning, perhaps, toward black. And he did a little mineral-rodding, by which he divined where gold was hidden. But nothing took the place of witches with him.

"the shell of a wild forgotten phantasy."

He came to this part in 1790 and built a log house, and planted apple trees, and was Norfolk's first medical practitioner. Tradition says that he was a kindly man, and much regarded for his vast potential dealings with the Unseen. His divining rod was held in great esteem. In 1893 Dr. Coyne had from the lips of one of the oldest inhabitants,

Mr. Simpson McCall, then eighty-five years old, an extraordinary tale connected with Troyer and an ill-famed Indian trader named Ramsay, who arrived at Long Point with stolen goods. In the old man's own words:

> One, Ramsay, before and after the Revolution, traded with the Indians of this region up to Detroit, etc. About 1790, when Ramsay was coming from Detroit with two men, and his boat loaded with furs and gold, he had a dispute with Indians living at Port Stanley where they had large corn fields, over his refusal to furnish them with liquor. They followed him from the land down to Port Burwell and the carrying place, and from Long Point to the end of the peninsula, and prevented him doing any further trade. At the portage he buried his money in an iron chest, and killed a black dog and buried it over the chest as a protection. This was Ramsay's last trip. About 1817 Dr. Troyer and his son, Michael, having found out by his divining rod where the treasure was, went out towards evening to dig it up. I saw them going out in the boat. My father was the only one I know about that they had consulted, but he was an unbeliever, and would not go. The Doctor afterwards told me that they dug down to the box. He held a Bible open and a lighted candle to keep away the Evil One. Michael dug and tried to pry the chest out of the ground, when a big black dog rose up beside the chest—grew right up bigger and bigger, until the light went out, and then they took to their boat and went home.

It is obvious that the fame of Dr. Troyer extended well along the lake shore, and as far as the Detroit River. It reached Lord Selkirk's ill-fated

Belledoon Settlement where strange things were happening. In 1829 witchcraft was at work among the Highlanders. John McDonald's house on the banks of the Chenail Ecarté was plainly victimized. It was riddled with strange sounds and magic bullets and was finally burned. Every effort was made to exorcise the spirits, but even the priest, with bell, book and candle, failed to check the evil manifestations.

Luckily, the Methodist minister, the Rev. Mr. McDorman, thought of Dr. Troyer, a hundred miles away, and he and John McDonald set out to find him. Sorcery attended the journey of three long days. At Longwoods, a thirty mile stretch of forest, came the crisis when the Highlander was terrified by the hoot of owls, the cry of wolves, and then the heavy tramp of a vast multitude, voices of men, crashing of boughs, and the rush of some great unseen host, followed by groans of the wounded in the midst of combat and shrieks of the dying.

Arrived at Dr. Troyer's house, it was his daughter, "a sallow, fragile girl of fifteen," possessed of a miraculous moonstone, who undertook the case. She went into a proper trance but not before "divining" that John had had trouble with a neighbour's family.

"I see," she said, "a long, low, log house."

The Highlander listened to this alliterative statement, and other correct personal details with regard

to the family of his enemy, with religious awe. Dr. Troyer's daughter then retired to her chamber and after three hours returned with news. She informed McDonald that his outbuildings had been burned to the ground two hours ago, which afterwards turned out to be exactly true.

"Have you ever seen a gray goose in your flock?" she asked.

He had, he had shot at it with a leaden ball, and the fowl had escaped. She assured him that no bullet of lead would ever harm a feather of that bird. It was merely a shape assumed by his enemy. He must use a silver bullet, and if he hit the mark his enemy would be wounded. He and McDormand returned to Belledoon. The next morning the goose reappeared with the flock in the river. He fired, and it fluttered into the reeds with a broken wing. "Rushing to the long low log house he found the woman who had injured him with her broken arm resting on a chair, and her withered lips uttering half-ejaculatory curses. From that moment the witchcraft ceased, but the witch suffered always from racking pains throughout her body."

All this is from an ancient pamphlet, "The Belledoon Mysteries, An O'er True Story," written many generations ago. Echoes still float about, coupled with names that were once well-known in the neighbourhood.

Dr. Troyer looked upon certain of his neigh-

bours as witches, one of the most dreaded being the widow of a well-known captain in the local militia. She was a very clever woman who used her wit and beauty to torment him. If he chanced to meet her when starting on a hunting expedition he would at once turn about and go home. Here, at the foot of his bed, a huge trap was bolted to the floor, where it was set every night to catch witches. The jaws were about three feet long and when shut were two and a half feet high. But in spite of this defensive means the witches would occasionally take Dr. Troyer out into the night and transform him into various kinds of animals, compelling him to act the part. "One night the witches took him out of a peaceful slumber, transformed him into a horse and rode him across the lake to Dunkirk where they attended a witch dance. They tied him to a post where he could witness the dance through the windows, and fed him rye-straw. The change of diet and the hard treatment to which he was subjected laid him up for some time. It required several doses of powerful medicine to counteract the injurious effects of the rye-straw and restore his digestive organs to normal condition."

Nevertheless, Dr. Troyer was considered a sane man. He is described as wearing a long white flowing beard. It is said he lived to be ninety years old and that just before his death he shot, off-hand, a hawk, perched on the peak of the barn roof.

2

Do you wonder that we felt a little nervous as we glanced, from time to time, at the decaying structure before us? The lonely door is unbarred now against magic, black or white. We shivered as the gloaming came and the coarse field grasses creaked in a sudden wind. "Emptiness personified," we said. But who can tell? It may not be so completely abandoned after all. . . Certainly it gave us a peculiar stare as we turned to leave it, for (so far as we were concerned) as long as it has strength to hold up its head, there in the weedy field.

## XIX

## SWORDS AND SASHES

### (In the Village of Niagara)

THE Village of Niagara is the essence of old Upper Canada.

In summer it is full of sweet-william and peonies and larkspur; and there are carefully-marked old houses; and occasional meetings of the Historical Society. The memory of a hero pervades the place. His ghost, in a scarlet uniform, with a cocked hat and a sword fairly leaping from its scabbard, is everywhere to be seen. That he was a noble and spirited hero makes his hold secure; the life of the village leans upon the drifting aura of his wraith.

It is true that, from time to time, a few wealthy strangers have been known to come and build modern houses; but they do not often stay. Even the Queen's Royal, which was a social centre for over fifty summers, has closed its doors; the Provincial Highway between Toronto and Buffalo sweeps by without entering; and the village thinks of Brock, and his day of glory and his four funerals, and every year or two it presents another memorial tablet to a fallen hero or an ageing building.

The town has had nine names, beginning with Ouinagara and ending with Niagara-on-the-

Lake. It was the seat of the first Parliament of Upper Canada in 1792. The earliest newspaper

"The Wilderness . . . a rambling one storey house."

began a year later. After the decisive episode in the War of 1812, known as the Battle of Queenston Heights, it was left a "smoking ruin in the hands of

the enemy." Fort George was built in 1794; St. Mark's Church, ten years later. The latter was used as a hospital by the British after the Battle of Queenston Heights, and by the Americans as a barracks in 1813.

The greatest treasure in Niagara's historical house is the cocked hat of General Brock, with white ostrich plumes, red and white cockade and gold plated chain. Pamphlet No. 5 says:

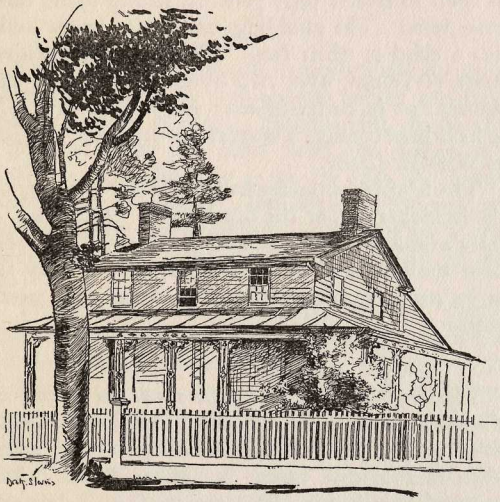
> Since, like George Washington, we cannot tell a lie, it must be confessed that Gen. Brock never wore the hat as when it arrived for him from England he lay in a hero's grave in Fort George. A letter is in existence written by him to his brother: "All the articles I ordered have arrived except the cocked hat, for which I am sorry, as on account of the enormous size of my head I find it difficult to obtain a hat to suit me." The ladies of the Historical Society, Toronto, wrote to have it measured inside, and the result quite justified the use of the descriptive adjective as the measurement was twenty-five inches. A military order of 1811 that the ostrich plumes be inside the flaps, and another in 1814 repealing this order justify the position of the trimming. The hat was used at the different funerals, being placed on the coffin in 1824 and again in 1853 when many old soldiers asked permission to try it on.

Indeed, it is at present what you might call tattered.

2

Thrusting the hero from us, though we never finally escaped him, we went lazily up the village

street towards the camp grounds and officers' headquarters to see The Wilderness. And there we heard a romantic story and found a lovely house. The land on which it was built was given by the In-



"Niagara's literary house."

dians "in return for many good deeds" to Mrs. Daniel Claus, daughter of Sir William Johnson, and widow of their Superintendent. To acquire the property they sold a part of their holdings on the Grand River. The first house was

burned when the Americans fired the village in 1814. This one was erected during the next five years on the same plan as Longwoods, Napoleon's house at St. Helena. Year by year the Indians used to come to receive their presents, sitting under these great trees. The rambling, one-storey house looks like a child at their feet. There is a marvellous Balm of Gilead, over two hundred feet high, and sixteen feet in circumference; and a huge oak, said to have been brought a century ago from the grounds of Windsor Castle.

The Mohawks, under Brant, coming down from the headquarters of the Six Nations, could see it from a long distance over land or water. They must have thought well of their lordly gift as they sat in its shade waiting for their presents and treaty money.

2

William Kirby, a Yorkshire man, the author of the celebrated historic romance "The Golden Dog," lived quietly and usefully in Niagara for many years in a modest house on River Street. And accumulating in his desk, afterwards to be stowed away for years in the attic, were diaries and documents and letters of considerable importance. Here are copies of Indian treaties, and observations as to the doings of the countryside, with some perspective of the outer world; and letters conveying the pleasure of Queen Victoria in "Le Chien d'Or", and from

Lord Tennyson and the Duke of Argyle and others. Niagara's literary house is linked by marriage to one of its oldest families, for Mrs. Kirby's mother was the daughter of Daniel Servos.

3

Something wise and old, belonging not so much to pioneer life as to well ordered family existence, comes to one in Niagara. Palatine Hill, the Servos' homestead, some two miles from the village, is a quaint wooden dwelling set on the edge of a grassy amphitheatre of daisies. But step over the door sill and time seems to stand still, as though for a moment you could catch a detached fragment of old life.

This family was of Prussian origin. Christopher Servos came in 1726, and his son served under Sir William Johnson in 1759. Palatine Hill was an important estate. The long drive to the house from the entrance gate was lined with the dwellings of farm hands, carpenters and millers. For the amphitheatre of daisies was occupied then by grist and saw mills, busily at work, and part of the house was used as a government store. People came from long distances to have their grain ground and to buy provisions and furs. Near the house is an old barn in which American dragoons were quartered for a time. In the family graveyard lie four generations of the same name.

It was pleasant to be received by a daughter of the Servos family, here where old names seem linked through the generations. To come from The Wilderness and the home of William Kirby to the quaint rooms of Palatine Hill was like a little round of social activity with pleasant ghosts, all connected by friendship or marriage. . . . Five o'clock tea with fraternal phantoms. . . Here is a shell snuff box in "token of gratitude from William Claus to Mrs. Eliz. Servos, 1801."

The Historic Room at Palatine Hill is full of echoes of pioneer adventures: an old saddle used by Grandmamma Frey when chased by Indians as she was carrying despatches, news of escaped slaves, and rumours of Assemblies at Navy Hall, when French counts and their ladies, American commissioners, governors and their parties, and neighbours, such as the celebrated Mr. Tom Talbot from his castle of Malahide near St. Thomas, came to dance with the élite of Niagara.

This house is still remote, strangely untouched. The low rooms, filled with priceless mahogany and walnut, and crowded with bric-a-brac, are full of yesterdays.

Why is it that no high-set house achieves the distinction of one which appears to be on the level of the ground? This one feels as though it had sprung naturally into being, and was not unhappy in old age. The very sagging of its eaves is pleasant, and

the lines on its face are lovable. So is the tiny totter of a step between the dining-room and kitchen, and the humility of narrow stairs going up to the servants' quarters. How did they plan so perfectly

Count Joseph de Puisaye.

years ago, when everything—money, time and labour—was so hard to secure? It is difficult to draw the portraits of these places, for everything lies in the way that one feels them. The Servos house is lovely because it is simple, because it exactly fits

its surroundings, because it is an echo of early Ontario, into which such glorious courage went.

4

"But we must go on to the Count's house," said the lady from Niagara.

"Which one?" I asked, as we left Palatine Hill.

"Count Joseph de Puisaye, of whom you may have heard . . . and after that I thought that we might drive to Stamford to see the Village Green. The only Village Green in Canada—really a dear little place."

Secretly I hoped that the Count lived on or near the Village Green. But it was presumable that he was now deceased. And I found that this was so. He had been dead for exactly a hundred years, but information regarding him is freely circulated in Niagara to-day.

He was, it seems—and I should have known it—a noted figure in Europe after the Revolution in which he had played a strange part, first in sympathy with "the people" and their alleged reforms, then, alarmed at their excesses, back to his own party. He escaped with his life and in 1797 applied to the British Government for funds to form a Royalist Settlement in Canada. And so he became the leader of a forlorn cause. He embarked with a little train of Royalists, some soldiers and two ladies; the Marquise de Beaupoil, and the Vis-

countess de Chalus, with their waiting maids. Some of the party stayed at Quebec, but de Puisaye and the Count de Chalus attempted a settlement at the "Rivière de Niagara."

I was told that the house is hopelessly changed: "To be exact, only half of it is still standing."

The river, just approaching Lake Ontario, is quiet here. It moves steadily after its shimmering rush over giant walls.

There is a thick hedge of box, and behind it a bit of a Norman house facing the river, with dormer windows and sharply sloping roof. Built against one end of the house is an old structure supported by stone buttresses. It has a vaulted interior and two divisions, a wine vault and a powder magazine; or a dungeon and a vegetable room, perhaps. The story is told by an old gardener that there were some ancient French pear trees, ancestors perhaps of those that grew to such a wonderful height at the Bâby Mansion near Lake Erie, trees of a rare variety that de Puisaye undoubtedly planted. And there are mementos of by-gone parties, and the legend of a room lined with mirrors, which in those days was almost a miracle. A letter from a friend in Kingston thanks the Count for a present of peaches, and speaks of having bought for him for only a hundred piastres "une petite nègresse."

De Puisaye went to England to finish his History of the French Royalist Party begun here, and

he never returned. He died at Blythe House near Hammersmith. There was no Canadian settlement.

5

We were driving now from Niagara inland, through country roads neglected by motors, towards the fork of the old portage road around Niagara Falls, and St. David's ravine road. And I heard the forgotten story of Stamford, how it was old and once ambitious; how Sir Peregrine Maitland built a vice-regal residence there, when Niagara was the capital of Upper Canada; and brought with him some military friends, the Dees, and Ottleys, and Mewburns, and others; and they all lived in a comfortable, old-world fashion with the Village Green in the centre and the Church of St. John the Evangelist, which they founded and furnished, on the edge of the Green.

The road wound through beautiful country, but suddenly we came upon great banks of reddish earth looming up in queer shapes, and falling back into soft pink caves that were faintly jewelled by the rays of the sun. I saw that it was a great sand belt upon which, in the distance, huge machinery for its exploitation had been set up.

And all this was once the Maitland estate. Here was the great house that Sir Peregrine had literally built, unknowing, upon the sand; a place of twenty

rooms, of careful gardens and terraces and lawns, and peacocks strutting on the lawns.

"I do like a peacock!" said the lady from Niagara.

"And there," she went on, "is all that remains of the residence. It was once a Lodge." The small stucco house on the edge of a pit might have been a real-estate office.

6

Stamford was sound asleep. But we woke the vicar and he unlocked the tiny church, which may hold a hundred people, and must have been an exquisite place before they removed its ancient pews of black walnut and the beautiful choir stalls, of which only one remains. The original pulpit and altar of walnut is left, the servant's gallery at the back, and an old alms-plate of heavy brass. The Maitlands' square pew with its coat of arms has been replaced by a pale, modern bench. And yet a hint of the quiet beauty of the perfect little church somehow survives.

I must say that the Village Green has been slightly marred by a tennis court at one end, about which electric lights are festooned. A cow should be gently grazing there. But one cannot expect too much.

It was as we returned to Niagara, slowly through a twilight of misty gray, that the heart of the ad-

venture unfolded, unexpectedly, perfectly, like the sudden sound of a long familiar song.

> There was a sound of revelry by night
> And Belgium's Capital had gathered there.

The Eve of Waterloo; the ball given at Brussels by the Duke of Richmond for his daughter, Lady Sarah! . . . She who had inspired it—deathless, romantic dance—was afterwards to marry Sir Peregrine Maitland, and to become the first lady of a small Canadian capital and the mistress of a great house that, it seems, was destined to be built upon sand. Lady Sarah, who must have sat demurely, or otherwise, in the little church whose door we had just so softly closed. . . Another link in the delicate chain of intricate associations which bind old countries with new ones.

It was a filigree link. We looked at it, and turned it over, and laid it beside the swords and sashes that we had seen that day.

## XX

## "OUR ALTARS AND OUR FIRES"

### I

IF their forefathers in the British Isles were not the very bulwark of the nation they were at least substantial beings. Many of them came from the professional classes, some of them were in diplomatic service, and there was here and there a title in the offing. And when a younger, and occasionally an elder, son was inclined or persuaded to brave the Atlantic and to found a career, and possibly a new family, in North America, it is excusable that the parental stock overseas loomed large.

Families of this sort, most of them ambitious Tories, comparatively few in number but exceedingly influential, moulded the political and social life of York. They thought much of themselves for their life in Upper Canada gave them little sense of perspective. They had missed the first elemental battles with forces greater than themselves which the French who founded Canada had endured. And they were not exactly aristocrats, merely rather stiff-necked gentry who had formed a petty kingdom in a raw lake-port at a time when the worst of the civilizing process was over, and there was leisure to observe and plan the progress of social activity.

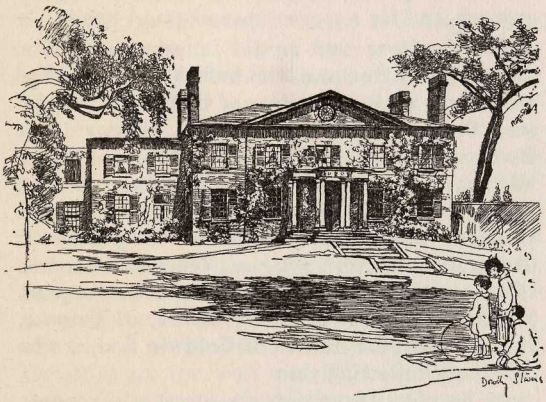
After York began about 1792, on the bay front near the Don River, it gradually spread westward. In twenty-five years it had grown to about three thousand inhabitants, among them some of the families who were to mould its destiny. Indeed, they had already established themselves and built houses representing their firm position.

It was the beginning of the brick era. The first brick house, the Bishop's Palace, erected for the famous Scotch divine, the Right Reverend John Strachan, was on Front Street between York and Simcoe. It is interesting that a material which was the pride of early Toronto was *infra dig* in the older and more sophisticated Halifax, where it was used merely as a lining.

A less pretentious residence than The Palace, a villa indeed, also of brick, and afterwards known as Beverley House, was built on Queen Street by Mr. D'Arcy Boulton, and later taken over and added to by Sir John Beverley Robinson.

Chief Justice Elmsley was one of the first residents to dream of a suburb, although, before his time Governor Simcoe had built a pretty retreat made of logs, a sort of summer house, which he called Castle Frank, upon a ravine in the present Rosedale. Chief Justice Elmsley, however, moved from King and Simcoe Streets, in 1816, to the far wild regions of Grosvenor and St. Vincent Streets where he built Elmsley Villa as a permanent abode. His

King Street property was then used as Government House. About the same time Colonel G. T. Denison built Bellevue House in the western section, and of these, and several other gentlemen's residences, such as Dunstable, the original Ridout house, Holland house, built by the Honourable



"the Grange was built on the lines of an old English manor house."

Henry John Boulton on Wellington Street in 1831 —of these, only The Grange remains.

It seemed to have been chosen for permanence. "Well out of town," slightly above Queen Street, the great property ran as far north as the present Bloor Street, and from Beverley Street to McCaul,

though of course a century ago none of these streets had been laid out. It was built, about 1817, upon the lines of an old English manor house, of brick probably made in York. The Lodge was at the entrance gate on Queen Street, and there were large gardens and orchards north of the house. Beyond that the property was used for cricket and lacrosse grounds, and for a race course and grand stand.

The Boultons were an old Lincolnshire family. Judge D'Arcy Boulton, who built The Grange, had married, in 1808, a daughter of Christopher Robinson, Esquire, of Kingston, and afterwards of Beverley House. They had nine children, of whom William Henry, the eldest, became heir to The Grange. He married Miss Harriet Dixon who, a year after his death in 1874, became the wife of the distinguished Oxford professor and man of letters, Goldwin Smith. In 1909 the house, by her bequest, became the property of the Art Gallery of Toronto, subject to the life interest of Goldwin Smith, who died in the following year.

So until its latter end it never changed hands, but how its mood must have changed!

It was always a conversational house, a centre during its early days for dyed-in-the-wool Toryism and attendant Tory gaiety. What fine, hearty, gossiping, convivial red-cheeked gaiety . . . toasts to the King, and toasts to the Beauties of York . . . great plans for Upper Canada, assisted by good

food and drink in the discussion of these plans—things done as they were done "at home." "Let us keep free of the rabble," said these cheerful gentlemen. They came to be known as the Family Compact.

Into Little York no ships sailed from far off ports. There was seldom chatter of foreign tongues upon her muddy streets, or strange bright visitors on adventure bent, here to-day and gone to-morrow. The Family Compact had things very much in their own hands, and beneath their jollity a rod was tipped with iron. There is no gainsaying the fact, however, that it was in most ways a wise rod, the best possible for the times. To a wandering artist this early society of York, which had now merged into Toronto, was at once interesting and amusing. Anna Jameson, the English critic, whose tender mercies were not always kind, found this town of the thirties full of contrasts. "Interminable forests within half a mile of us, the haunt of the red man, the wolf and the bear, an absolute want of the means of ordinary mental and moral development, and yet, conventionalism in its most oppressive and ridiculous form."

2

It was in a later era that the well loved master of the old Tory house gave place to one of the outstanding advanced Radicals of England. A thin-

lipped, solemn scholar was Goldwin Smith, whose youth was spent at Eton and Oxford, followed by further and prolonged historical research. In the middle of the last century he was deep in University Reform, the question of the abolition of slavery in the United States, and other movements, radical at the time, which set him definitely as a defender of "fundamental moral principles." He was intensely unpopular with the Court party in England, and was as greatly disliked by Benjamin Disraeli as he was admired by Richard Cobden. The Jamaica massacres, and the aftermath of passionate discussions and recriminations, probably wafted him to Toronto, for he resigned his professorship at Oxford, and accepted the Chair of English and Constitutional History in Cornell University at Ithaca, New York. In 1871 he removed to Toronto, where he retained his connection with Ithaca and also entered journalistic life in the small city.

The warm and kindly house took on a more scholarly tone. Its lovely grape-arbours were removed to make way for the library, which was to house an important collection. And the room, dim and gravely beautiful, became an influence in the country. Few visitors of importance to Toronto for the next three decades failed to call upon the sage of The Grange, and the conversations which here took place were probably as interesting as any book that Mr. Goldwin Smith ever wrote.

Of the mistress of the house in her later years, it has been said that she was "a beautiful old lady with silver hair and a placid, chastened face, resembling greatly her brother, Chief Justice Sir John Beverley Robinson."

Goldwin Smith loved The Grange; even his caustic pen softens as he writes of the great elms "to whose whisperings under the starlight I owe some lessons in philosophy." . . . "In such a mansion," he goes on, "lived Miss Austin's Emma and her father. Only church chimes were wanting to make me fancy that I was in England. . . . Traditions are attached to the house, of horses killed by bears in its garden; of a red Indian presenting himself in the bedchamber of its mistress; of British sportsmen losing themselves in the wood in which the house stood, and being guided to it by a lighted window. Among other relics of an olden time here preserved are the wine glasses of Governor Simcoe without stands, so that you had to empty them before you put them down."

Those who have been in the constant service of a house and its inmates through more than a generation have no unimportant part in its history. At The Grange the English butler, Chin, who lived there for more than fifty years, is a connecting link between two régimes. He opened the door to princes and savants, dukes, archbishops, actors, and governors. He was not there when Jen-

nie Lind was entertained by the Boultons, but he remembers distinctly a breakfast party given to Mr. Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederate States, at the time of the Civil War, and he also remembers the day that Matthew Arnold, and afterwards, John Morley, came to call on Goldwin Smith. He has seen governments come and go, and was quite conversant with the gossip of society at home and sometimes abroad. But he was always discreet. Chin is over ninety years old, in perfect health and full of memories. I count him one of the most interesting characters in this book. "I often think," he says, "that it is a fine thing to have served such people. In Mr. Boulton's time a gentleman considered that he had a duty towards his city as well as towards his friends, and you do not meet that spirit in the same way to-day." The old butler showed me a letter sent to him by Mr. Goldwin Smith; one of the famous wine glasses used by Governor Simcoe; and a little painting of "Flossie" a pet spaniel of his mistress. The picture was left to a waiting maid, at whose death it was to be sold. "I was glad to buy it," said Chin, "for I should not like to have it go out of the family."

3

In marked contrast to The Grange, but no less important in the history of Toronto, is a humble little wooden house, the simplest of the simple, standing

on the southern edge of High Park given by the owner of the house, Mr. John G. Howard, to his adopted city.

Here is a two-storey cottage, with a circular front and a little shallow wooden verandah with slender unstable-looking pillars, and quaint, white-painted, wooden swans. Within are small, low rooms, some bits of walnut furniture, and, a novel feature at the time in which it was built, a bath with taps for hot and cold water. But in spite of its simplicity it is an architect's house, and fits perfectly into the sweet little old-fashioned garden surrounding it.

Just beyond the garden and the motor roads that now wind up from the Lakeside Drive there is a rather imposing tomb: a granite cairn, surmounted by a marble cross, and enclosed by a portion of the massive iron railing which once surrounded St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Here is the homesick note, the note of England, the one bit of sentiment in a remarkable story of a man's enterprise and genius for construction.

Close to the house is its most interesting feature, a picture gallery formerly filled with drawings, sketches and plans made by Mr. Howard and his wife, who was a fair amateur artist. And behind the picture gallery is an old coach house, which still contains a "chariot" brought to Toronto in the thirties by a Major Tullock. It was built in London for the famous Mrs. Trollope "to convey her from

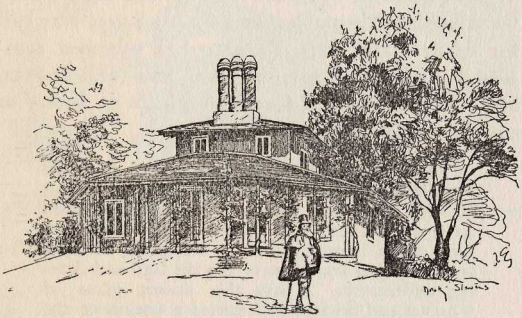
place to place in England to give her Shakespearean readings." The garnet damask lining of cushions, the fittings for cards, portmanteau, and perfumes, the folding steps, so exquisitely carpeted, all make one long to see the dramatic lady setting forth upon her recital tours.

In his little known diary, of which very few copies remain, one reads a story in miniature of the life of Howard. It is the story of a strange, long voyage on one of those terrible sailing ships where people often died of seasickness, or slept with a pistol under the pillow because it was the fashion of sailors to mutiny in mid-ocean; a story of fogs which might mean death, and calms which certainly meant starvation; and at last the sight of the St. Lawrence with great rocks running out into the sea, and warm wind off the land and the perfume of strange flowers. Then the long journey up the river, and worse perils than those of ocean, for now the crew could get liquor enough to keep them permanently drunk, and cholera was raging up and down the settlements on the shore. . . At last Quebec, Montreal, and York. . . The first entry on landing reads:

> Arrived at York at 6 a.m. on the 14th September, 1832, eleven weeks and three days from London. After landing I began to inquire the best mode of reaching Goderich. Going up Church Street from the landing place I was much surprised to see in a huckster's window a very handsome carving knife and fork for sale, which

I had given as a present to my brother-in-law before he left England. Going into the shop judge of my surprise to find my wife's sister whom I believed to be in Goderich. She looked half-starved. One child was dead and the other in a wretched state. My first act was to call in a doctor.

The diary for the next ten years is an amazing chronicle. Plans for almost every building of im-



"wearing carelessly the picturesque old cape."

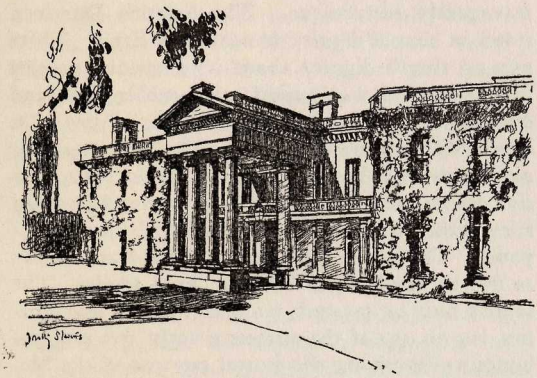
portance, public or private, in York and in the later Toronto and, indeed, within a radius of a hundred miles, seem to have been the work of John G. Howard. He was rewarded for the greatest of gambles, which lay in the hope that a crude young town in Upper Canada might provide a living, not to speak of scope for the powers, of an English archi-

tect of ability, who had been a student in a well-known London firm, and had his first experience in assisting in the rebuilding of Leeds Castle. In this new country his tireless industry and invention are beyond anything on record to-day. Most of the residences and public buildings that he planned and superintended were designed for the old Toronto that lingered about the water-front, when King and Wellington, and Frederick Streets, and Park Lane were fashionable centres, and Queen Street was still far north. His little Toronto has vanished completely, and with it most of his architectural designs, but not the trackless forest of which he writes so simply and affectionately:

> They have conferred upon me the title of Forest Ranger since I conveyed 120 acres of land to this city as a public park forever. Colborne Lodge and its forty-five acres will follow at my death. I have made improvements in the park, forming roads, making drains, surveying the land and clearing underbrush. I have also drawn plans of wharves and bridges, and erected a station on the Lake shore for the benefit of women and children waiting for the trains. The rest of my time has been spent in making thirty-six water-colour sketches of the Grenadier Pond and Old Indian Trail and Lovers' Walk. These are in a portfolio in the drawing room.

There is a portrait by Berthon of Mr. Howard at the age of eighty. It shows him serene and dignified, wearing carelessly the picturesque old cloak that he enjoyed describing as "fifty years old and a little

over." And it contains the same delightful quality as the humble little house and the imperishable acres of wild wood that surround it—a certain freedom of spirit, a splendid, calm detachment.



"set apart from other Tory houses of its day."

4

It was in the thirties that a young Colonel of Militia in Upper Canada, a member and sometime Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, was knighted for his efforts to put an end to the Mackenzie Rebellion, and so became Sir Allan Napier MacNab. He was descended from an old family who owned a place called Dundurn in Perthshire, Scotland;

hence the name of the ambitious structure which he erected upon the banks of the bay at Hamilton.

It was always a self-complacent house with a bit of a swagger about it, but set apart from other Tory houses of its day because it was, at the time, extravagantly picturesque. The Scottish Dundurn stood in simple dignity beside Loch Erne. There was no simple dignity about its namesake on this robust bay. Its columned porte-cochère led, and leads to-day, into a wide marble hall paved in mosaic of blue and white tile. The drawingrooms are impressive. Buffet bows to buffet across a massive dining room. The billiard room and bowling alley enclose a beautiful courtyard with terraces beyond. The stable buildings and yard are to-day as fine as anything to be seen in Canada. The family burying-ground, with its massive iron railing, lay on one of the terraces silently awaiting the honour of receiving the mortal remains of the McNabs. To the right of the plot, discreetly removed, is a small building, of interesting architecture. It was Sir Allan's Little Theatre, about which strange stories linger, having to do with hunting bouts when Dundurn was en fête, packed full of gay gentlemen whose ladies were not always permitted to view the private performances which took place in the Little Theatre.

The pompous porte-cochère is at the back of the house. The front faces the bay, and there is a

touch of distinction in the shallow pillared verandah which runs across the centre, with its odd railings, an intertwined design of Maltese Crosses and Sacred Hearts.

It was on this verandah that the MacNab, glorious in his swaying kilts, received a young Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward the VII, and many a grandee. Here his eldest daughter was married in 1855 to Viscount Bury, afterwards the Earl of Albermarle, whose daughter, Lady Susan Townley, proved a small storm-centre to the British Foreign Office because of her alleged notorious indiscretions during and after the Great War.

## 5

It is an ambitious old story, born of days when it was easy to impress a struggling community with a sense of influence and of grandeur. Allan MacNab made the most of everything: of his ancestry—although his grandfather of the original Dundurn was neither more nor less than an officer in the Black Watch, and his father, a Lieutenant Dragoon and aide-de-camp of Governor Simcoe—of his love of country; and above all, of his kindling loyalty.

At the time of the American invasion of York in 1813, young Allan was fifteen years old. The family were living in York, so the two MacNabs, father and

son, arrayed themselves side by side in defence of "our altars and our fires." That, without chance of striking a blow, they were shortly hurrying with the defeated ranks to Kingston was not their fault. The next year, under Sir George Prevost, we find our youth, "with his foot upon the blade of his sword" snapping it in two to show his protest against his leader. He was a born actor, and he could afford to play a part, for he was sure of himself, his position, and his party. Nothing on earth could daunt him. He courted danger, and danger's little gadfly, debt, he simply waved aside. It was said of him that he was designed by fortune to move in the circles of fashion for he was "dipped in debt and made a merit of telling." Why not indeed, when to relate one's woe so often brings assistance? His father had several times been cast into a debtors' prison only to be extricated by his friends, in defiance of boorish traders. He, himself, in his youth, was only too familiar with that charitable institution of York, "The Limits," a sort of lordly bail, for gentlemen who were in temporary embarrassment. A succession of posts, painted blue, and tipped with a dab of white, were planted about the town at a certain distance from the old jail, beyond which the embarrassed might not with safety promenade. All the best people living within the restricted area it was a simple matter to pursue the even tenor of one's way within "The Limits."

And so, fortune favouring him at every step, and he mounting on the shoulders of one rebellion and another; and making speeches, and giving dinners; and being imprisoned falsely by William Lyon Mackenzie, and so becoming, most profitably, a martyr as well as a bon vivant; and then building Dundurn, a place which so magnificently set off his social ambitions, his martial stride and his tartan waistcoat; what else could happen, in the ordinary course of events but knighthood, and "The Thanks of Her Majesty and the Provincial Legislature"?

And then the Speaker's Chair, and England, as representative of the Tories on certain questions with regard to the Rebellion Losses Bill, and a tiff with Mr. Gladstone, and then more political experience, and further honours.

At this time one of the most astute of the younger members of the Cabinet was one, John A. Macdonald, whom he called "my active young lieutenant."

On retiring from office he was created a baronet, with further royal thanks.

There are three women in the story. His first wife was the daughter of Lieutenant Daniel Brooke, of Kingston. Her eldest son died but she left a daughter. His second wife was Mary Stuart, one of the daughters of the old Kingston rectory, that over a hundred years ago sent out so many distinguished sons and daughters. This Mary Stuart lived up to her name and tradition, for it was her

eldest daughter who became the Countess of Albermarle.

The symbolic railing of the upper verandah at the front of Dundurn, carved in hearts and crosses, has been noted. It was not accidentally placed. After his wife's death in 1846, Sir Allan accorded a home to his brother's widow, a zealous Roman Catholic, who acquired a great influence over him in his declining years. She introduced the railing. Nevertheless, he remained loyal to the Anglican faith. But the extraordinary circumstances which followed his death made a drama that was recounted all over Upper Canada for at least a generation.

In a phrase of the sixties, "no sooner had breath left his body before startling reports began to circulate" . . . He had, while unconscious during his last hours, received the Roman Catholic bishop. . . His body was to be "taken" by that Church for burial . . . All of which was celebrated by poster, and by speech in public places. Explanations by the lady and the bishop were brushed aside. Furious editorials were written, and the famous Grave Scene cartoon, afterwards suppressed, in which appeared His Satanic Majesty, a bishop, a clergyman, and several ladies—accompanied by a key to the names—was sold in thousands. Many people gathered for the funeral. . . Friends of the family, assembled in the marble hall of Dundurn, waited to see and hear who would officiate at the

service. . . . Shortly they were seen retreating in choleric haste. . . . In a few moments not half a dozen persons were standing in the hall. . . . Nothing is chronicled as to the crowd without, but it is certain that Sir Allan was never more triumphantly a public man than in his last moments.

6

I considered it all as I stood looking at old china, and stuffed animals, and pictures of local interest in the spacious rooms of Dundurn, which is now a museum. Many shabby persons about me were eyeing the treasures encased on all sides as listlessly as I. I wondered anew where all the jaded birds with moulting wings who gather daily in such places live when museum doors close in the evening and they must go home.

I was depressed by the present Dundurn, and I frankly said as much to its curator who had so patiently taken me upstairs and down, and shown me black walnut doors, and wainscotting and marble mantels.

"After the city took the place over," she volunteered, "it became a Deaf and Dumb Institution for a time."

I am afraid I interrupted her there. It was something better left out. I turned to go. But she followed me to the grandiose porch, where noisy little motor cars filled with tourists were drawing up.

She beckoned me to the side of the house where the great billiard room and bowling alley lie, and where, beyond the terrace, the bright bay shines forever on the hurrying visitors to Dundurn.

"I was standing here one day," she said, "it was not so very long ago, when I saw a tall handsome young fellow strolling around and looking most interested at everything. When I went back to my little table in the hall, he followed me. 'I have heard,' he said, 'that the family burying-ground was over there by the terrace. I can't find it.' 'You wouldn't,' said I, 'for when the city took over Dundurn the private cemetery was closed.'

"He asked me to show him where the plot had been, and he stood looking at it for a long time. Something about him made me wonder, and then he turned and said to me, 'I don't know how I'm going to tell my mother this.' . .

"It turned out that he was the present Albermarle," the curator concluded, "so I gave him the old key of the enclosure. He said he would take that home to his mother."

## XXI

## CHIEFSWOOD

IN autumn the grain fields of Ontario are waving in brazen tides that creep up to the door sills of comfortable farm houses and huge barns. Through a meadow valley the Grand River cuts a deep blue path among the fields. We stopped at a village for gasoline and asked if we were near Brantford.

"Quite near. You will see the Chief's house to your left as you go along. It is about ten miles from the city—the old Johnson place, facing the Reserve. See that strip of land on the other side of the river? Old Reserve of the Six Nations. A country by itself. You can get over by the ferry just below Chiefswood. There's an Indian will take you if you use your horn."

So instructed, we found an old house standing in a wide field facing the river, and separated from it by a slope of magnificent trees. We opened the rickety gate and a flurry of chickens rose before our feet. We saw an English residence, plain in line, with long French windows, and walls that have been washed with a deep cream plaster. We came slowly up a grass-grown path and knocked at the door. A young woman appeared, and there were

children close behind her. "My husband raises chickens" she said, "so you can see that we do not attempt to keep up the grounds. So far as the interior goes there is just a trace of the Johnson occupation. . . There is the old stone fireplace in what was, we suppose, the reception room. . . Here is a walnut sideboard—a wonderful piece. . . This, we think, was the front door and, see, the bannister is solid walnut."

It looked as though it were polished every day, so beautiful was the initial finish. We followed the exquisite satin bannister up the stairs.

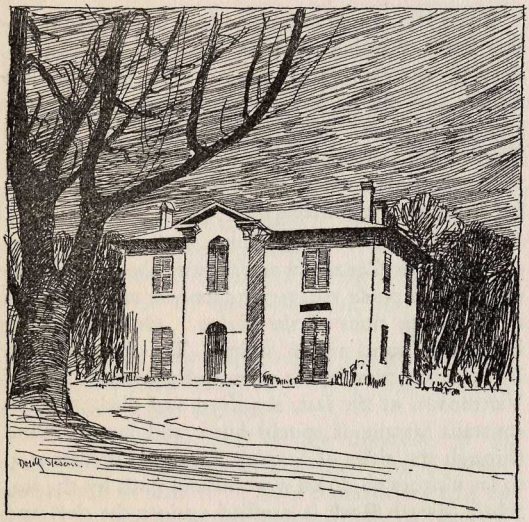
"This was the room in which Pauline Johnson was born," said the tenant. It is a square room overlooking the valley. "And here is something that may interest you. This cupboard door . . . look at the sentence written here upon it, either by Pauline or her sister." Faintly written in lead pencil, we read: "Walnut from seed between woodshed and barn, 1861."

"They must have loved the place!" went on the woman reflectively.

Yes, one loves a place where one has seen the trees grow, out of which one's doors are hewn.

Chiefswood was built nearly a hundred years ago, as the wedding gift of Onwanonsyshon, Chief Johnson, to his English wife, who was of the family of Howells, of which the American, William Dean, was a member. Plank was laid on plank,

the finest lumber being used, with no hammering of nails but by pegs driven into auger holes as in David's Temple, that monument "to light and beauty", in the village of Sharon, Ontario.



"the wedding gift of Chief Johnson to his English wife."

One remembered stories of the life of the Chief's daughters, educated by their mother, and then at a public school, with some penalty to pay for a dif-

ference: the difference of the "cross of red and white." Averted glances, perhaps, for these young people whose home faced a Government Reserve comprised of many Indians over whom their father was chief.

Years afterwards in England, in her gorgeous native dress, Pauline Johnson charmed London society by the reading of poems that told of lost causes, and old heroisms; poems that sang strange and pagan tunes. Into them, Chiefswood, soft old English house fronting the Reserve, must have entered; the house where she was Tekahionwake, tribal princess of the Mohawks.

After her London experience, in days when western travel in Canada was difficult, she went barnstorming in crude villages and among camps, and in smug young cities of the plains. On the Pacific Coast she found a new home. To the Capilano Indians, she was "great poet and princess", and in Vancouver, at the last, she lived and died. As the constant stream of tourist-buses and motors wind through the aisles of Stanley Park, the drivers stop to let visitors go down a woodland path by the sea, where Siwash Rock is profiled against the sky, and a stone is set up with an Indian girl's face cut into it. There is a little drinking fountain below the stone, where flowers or garlands of leaves and ferns are always to be found.

But in her native province there is only this fad-

ing house on the edge of the Reserve, with strangers leasing it.

2

Down a bit of rough road, then, to the river's edge . . . a blast of the horn, and almost at once the Indian ferryman with his raft. As we floated softly over the river we asked our way through this unknown country. The ferryman was evasive. "You'd better go over and see Mr. S——t," he said. "He's a councillor, he can tell you all about the Reserve."

"Is he an Indian?"

"Nobody but Indians here!"

"The name sounds German."

"Well, some Germans marry with the Indians once. Very clever, those Germans, they make the land pay."

"Does your friend approve of Longhouses?"

The ferryman laughed. "Oh, you ask him about them pagan Indians!"

We took careful note of the direction of the councillor's farm, and over narrow country roads we set out to find it. . . In a moment we had entered a primitive region separated by a hundred years from the highway just behind us. Faintly one recalled certain neglected sections of the State of Kentucky, but only faintly, for there, brick houses are sometimes found among the negro cabins. Here one drives for miles and only log houses or un-

painted shacks are in evidence. Sometimes we saw grass-thatched barns; sometimes an old well; or a primitive punt; once a quaint little enclosed graveyard; and several times low wooden structures which we thought were Longhouses. Horses and buggies driven by sombre youths jogged slowly along the narrow roads. Often across an open doorway the figure of a man sprawled,—relaxed and supine in the sun.

After a time we arrived at a prosperous line of barbed wire enclosing broad fields of grain. A small house and large barn topped a little hill, and toiling up the lane leading thereto we came upon a dark stout gentleman in a yellow linen dust-coat, with a small valise in his hand industriously puffing along.

"Give you a lift?" we asked.

"You may," responded the gentleman, and opened the door of the car and entered solemnly.

"Going up to Mr. S——t's?" we asked hopefully, for we were not altogether sure of our bearings.

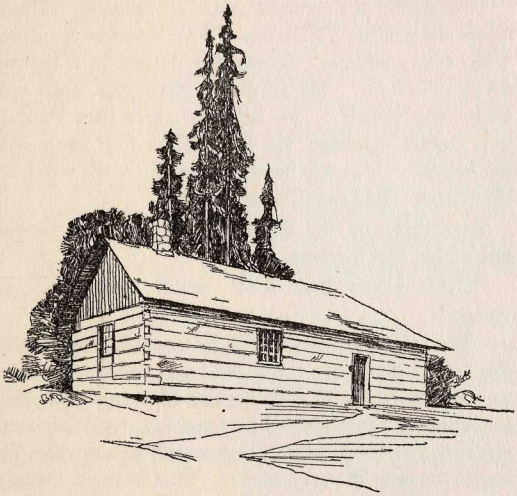
"I've walked all the way out from Brantford," he replied, "you friends of Mr. S———t?"

"Just visitors," we answered him. "Do you belong to the Reserve?"

"Yes—I belong. But I been away. All my people belong. We don't have no outsiders here you know," he added, lest false hopes should be

raised. We explained the situation, and he promised on our arrival at the house to find Mr. S——t and send him to us if possible.

We awaited the great man, gazing with interest at a crayon of a (probably deceased) soldier in full



"Indians talk-talking in a wooden Longhouse."

modern regalia sunning itself against a large stone in the front yard.

Mr. S——t presently emerged, an elderly half-breed in tweed trousers and a purple shirtwaist.

Like most celebrities he made his position quite definite at once.

"Well, folks," he said kindly, extending to each a firm brown hand, "I got a party on inside. I can't talk long, but what you want to know?"

It sounded the ominous note of brevity. Whereupon we praised Chiefswood and Pauline Johnson. That was a success. Sympathy flashed into the eye of Mr. S——t. He admitted that the Johnsons were "big people." He acknowledged that Pauline was a poet—though, for himself, he had never seen her books. "I'm too busy," he said, "with work on this farm. Big farm, you see!"

Something of the German pioneer spirit looked out of his shrewd eyes.

"Other places here look small compared to yours."

"Yes, they are smaller," he agreed, "originally there were about five thousand Indians here and they were given ten acres each by the Government. But some people farm more than that, for, while we cannot buy any land, we can buy or sell to any man the improvements that we make. This is good enough soil—but it's hard to make the Indians cultivate it." Again the German in him spoke.

"What about the future of the Reserve?" we asked.

"Oh, good future—good future. Have you seen Ossweken?"

"Do you mean the village?"

"Yes—we got two churches there, and big Council House."

"Is there a Longhouse too?"

He looked inquiry then, and his face darkened. "Yes—four Tom-fool Longhouses are still on the Reserve. That is pagan Indians' work. They make all the trouble—all our trouble at Ottawa is pagan trouble. They talk, talk—all the time in Mohawk—night after night—talking, talking. Time Longhouses were closed up now. That old system is just about done. We should all speak English, like they do in schools and Council Houses. Very big Council House in Ossweken—you better see it."

We asked about the present working régime of the Reserve.

"The Council men used to be chiefs. Now we carry on business in English. We take some of our business to the Government at Ottawa—Indian Department. We discuss many things there. It is a very interesting thing to be in the Council, Indian affairs are not dead yet you know—not by a long way."

But we could see that our host was getting restless. He glanced often and anxiously at the house, from whence the sound of guttural voices proceeded. We hurried the next question.

"Do the pagans try to interfere with the Councillors? Just who are the pagans?"

"Pagans?" in haughty disdain, "pagans are old stuff. They believe this country is still ours, still Indian. They want to possess the money in the hands of the Government for the whole Reserve. Big fund there, more than a million dollars. The pagans want the fund money more than its interest which goes on all the time. . . Talk, talk, talk—all in Mohawk. . . You wait ten, twenty years—no more Indian talk then. All English!. . . . Well, I got a party on. I guess I got to go now. Glad to see you folks. You look all around, and come back and talk to me again some day. You go to see Ossweken—fine Council House there."

With another grave handshake we were dismissed.

3

Through a long dusty road, between little farms where bulrushes and swamp weeds made contrasting colours in corners of many a neglected field, we finally emerged on the edge of the village.

Here were a few houses more prosperous than any we had seen. Coloured glass window panes enlivened larger wooden dwellings, and there was an Indian inscription on what we afterwards learned was an English church. Then a lane that led us to the main road into Brantford.

We felt as though we had shaken off a dream. What ancient ghosts of a period long gone! . . . Indians talk-talking in their wooden Longhouses;

German half-breeds speaking of moneys in trust for an almost vanishing tribe—truly an alien wedge thrust into cheerful Ontario; an echo of old forces!

Think of their ancient power. Homer might have written of these people at their best, thinly disguised as gods—beings that suggest the myths and legends of this continent in a mysterious way. . . The Mohawk tribe was one of a confederation formed by Hiawatha four centuries ago. At the beginning of the 17th century it included five tribes, but in 1715 they were joined by a related people and were henceforth to be known as the Six Nations. In government, and property system it was advanced beyond anything that its discoverers had experienced except in dreams. The tribes managed their own affairs under a sachem and a council; and a council of fifty sachems met annually to dispose of questions affecting the confederation. The Mohawks had crossed into Canada under Joseph Brant, and for their fealty to the British Crown were given two reservations near Erie and Ontario, on one of which, to the north of Lake Erie on the Grand River, Chief Brant had settled.

And what exists of it here is the remnant of a race living out its last hours in this sober little Reserve; the fading house of a chieftain and his English wife—and a handful of poems.

## XXII

## A CURSE AND A BLESSING

THE Curse fits snugly in between other houses on the long busy thoroughfare that links Windsor and Walkerville. It seems not unlike the structures that surround it, unless one is aware that an ancient malediction has touched it. Then, of course, it looks different. For, this is Moy House, and here is its sentence:

> That never the son of a Chief of Moy
> Might live to protect his father's age,
> Or close in peace his dying eye
> Or gather his gloomy heritage.

The Curse came down the centuries, and it was to touch Canada, since this house was founded by a member of the Moy family. Its fate was pronounced by Margaret Grant of Urquhart, as she ended her life in Loch Moy after the dead bodies of her father and brother were brought to her by the chief of the MacIntosh clan whom she had rejected as a suitor. And, from the time of Lochlan, the twentieth chief, who died in 1731, to that of Angus, the twenty-fifth, in 1833, not a son was left.

This twenty-fifth chief settled near the Detroit river and called his house by the fatal name of Moy. He figured in the War of 1812, he became a Hudson's Bay factor, and he built his home of lum-

ber from the virgin forests about the settlement. It became a trading post. From its colonial porches the master could look down upon his pioneer shipping-yards. The countryside had many settlers from Lower Canada, who had come up to this region, so after a time the MacIntosh married a French wife.

Perhaps it all worked together for good: the fresh, hardy, woods life, the break with tradition, the actual contribution to the opening up of new land, the generous giving, instead of reaping, from the very soil itself. At any rate, the spell was broken. After the twenty-fifth chieftain was recalled from Canada to possess Moy Hall, its sons were allowed to remain in the world long enough to protect their father's age, and to gather their gloomy heritage.

2

The Curse is allied to the Blessing in several ways. When Angus MacIntosh returned to Scotland he sold Moy House to William Hall, upon whose death it came to his ward, a Miss Bâby, thus linking the most significant dwellings of the neighbourhood.

For the Bâby Mansion stands on the banks of the Detroit River, in Sandwich, which many people to-day might call a continuation of the thriving city of Windsor. But a hundred years ago it was affectionately described as "a picturesque old town",

and no one had dreamed of such a place as Windsor. Sandwich was an important Hudson's Bay post from which, by log canoe, people could go to and from Detroit. "La Traverse" was already popular, and Madame Labalaine, the ferryman's wife, would suspend over her door a tin horn exactly four feet long which she blew lustily to call her François' attention to important passengers. Labalaine being so rheumatic that he must be assisted in and out of the canoe, spent all his days therein, leisurely paddling across, and landing people where it suited his convenience—at the foot of Woodward Avenue, Griswold, Shelby, or Cass Streets.

Jacque Duperon Bâby, His Majesty's Indian Agent, and his wife, Susanne Reaume, were the important people of this early Sandwich. M. Bâby was a great trader, and had an uncanny power and influence over the Indians, who feared and loved him. A delightful story is related of his prowess in this direction and that of his wife, typical of the careful diplomacy necessary at the time.

Pontiac, the Ottawa Chief, a great warrior, had come down full of wrath from his camping ground on the *Ile au Pesche* to visit his friend the trader. He found him in his store adjoining the house busily counting furs.

"Sit down," said Bâby.

Pontiac, looking suspiciously at him, reluctantly took a seat before the log fire.

"They tell me," remarked the chief, "that those red-coats have offered to give you a basket full of silver if you will betray me into their hands."

"How foolish that would be!" was the answer. "For I make a living by trading with you and your tribes. As a proof of my friendship we will smoke the pipe of peace."

Pontiac seized his tomahawk, and pointing to its head, declared, "This is my pipe." After their smoke, his host remarked, "It is a long walk to the Island to-night; here are my buffalo skins; use them and sleep before the fire, and see if I betray you in the morning. But before going to bed Theresa, my negress, shall bring your supper."

"Theresa has gone to bed," Mme. Bâby said, "but I shall bring bread and milk for Pontiac."

Presently, she entered with a silver tray, a large china bowl, a loaf of bread, and a silver spoon.

"Good squaw, Bâby; many papooses?"

Bâby held up both hands twice, counting twenty.

"Big Camp!" exclaimed Pontiac, smoking his tomahawk pipe in silence. He made his bed of buffalo skins, and went to sleep with his feet to the fire.

The next morning after breakfast Mme. Bâby appeared, and shaking hands with the chief bade him farewell, saying: "Remember me to your squaw, and when you return I should like six marten skins, dressed, for a boa, and a beaver skin for my bon-

net. But here is blue cloth for frock and leggings, a red blanket and twelve yards of calico, two shirts, and glass beads, and a silver brooch the size of a saucer for your squaw to wear."

Pontiac gave a grunt, wrapped them in his blanket, said "Bonjour" and left—a contented man.

3

The Honourable James Bâby, born in 1762, was the son of this Jacque Duperon, and he, too, was connected with the fur trade. Being a great favourite with his father, he was permitted a Grand Tour to Europe before settling to an extensive business; for, since the family had come up from Lower Canada, their holdings near Sandwich and Detroit were important.

The homestead was destined to become historic. A grandson, William Lewis Bâby, writing just thirty years ago, says:

> It was built about the middle of the last century when there was difficulty in accumulating material and labour to erect such a structure. Along the shores of the River Detroit there were nothing but scattered *moulins au vent*. The nearest saw and grist mills, up to the year 1828, were fifty miles away. The siding and all lumber required for use in the construction of the building were cut out by a whip-saw and every board was finished with a bead, and every wrought iron nail driven through a hole bored with a gimlet to avoid slipping. The size of the house, and it was built for the Northwest trade, made it capable of

"Its walls and chambers have re-echoed the voices of the past."

> holding six hundred or more pipes of wine or liquors, which were then of the best quality in the world and were brought from Montreal in bateaux to Queenston, then loaded in waggons to Chippewa, again trans-shipped, threading their way along the Niagara River and the shores of Lake Erie to their different points of destination. The framework of our house is filled with bricks and mortar, beams and sheathing are of oak, and the sills of doors and windows of walnut. In the hall was hung an iron hook, from which was suspended massive scales capable of weighing two thousand pounds of fur, otter, beaver, buffalo and mink. The roof is steep to shed the tempests of snow and rain. It stands, the silent witness of the cannons' roar on lake and field. Its walls and chambers have re-echoed the voices of the past, and it has sheltered and entertained the mitred and ermined. Its doors were ever opened alike to the Huron and the habitant. . . It has a well-stocked garden of the choicest fruits the climate could produce. In 1888, I measured two of its pear trees over a hundred years old, the *bon chrétien,* grafted on a stalk of the old French pear tree, the other the French tree itself. They measured nine feet in girth and seventy in height. These first and tenacious emblems of the gospel and cross were brought here from France nearly two centuries ago, nursed and cradled by the tender care of the missionary fathers in wet moss, and planted, and intermingled with the primeval forest adorning both sides of the Detroit River. They are gradually disappearing, but in the archives of Loyola will last forever.

In this house the American General Hull billeted himself, and issued his proclamation to "the inhabitants of Canada" telling us that his Grand Army was ready to free us from oppression. And he was

quickly followed by Brock, who had just made his extraordinary compact with Tecumseh. The great hall was littered, then, with soldiers' accoutrements, and full of the excitement of coming battle.

Across a mile of river front lay the massive walls of Fort Detroit, and behind it, treble the force of the little Canadian army. But there were shadows of Indians, Shawanoes, Ottawas and other tribes, in the forest that fringed the garden, and the adjoining lands that had been cut out of the wilderness with such effort. These tribes were the old enemies of the Americans.

"Hold your scalping knives," said Brock, "and no liquor till you've humbled the Big-Knives." But to Hull he wrote; "My force warrants my demanding the immediate surrender of Detroit." "The Indians," he added, "may get beyond my control."

He waited here in the house where he wrote this despatch and the answer came: "General Hull is prepared to meet any force brought against him, and to accept any consequences."

Then far into the night, shells and round shot shrieked across the water. . .Towards dawn there was no sound but the river. . . Bateaux full of scarlet coats and canoes of painted Indians were silently floating over. . . With dawn, wild war-cries, like the shrieks of the damned. But, as all the world knows, it was a bloodless affair, and to the delight of Tecumseh's warriors the colours of the Fourth

United States Regiment passed into British hands. For the Shawanoe tribe, especially, were not feeling agreeable, owing to the fact that under General Harrison six hundred of a half-armed band had been killed in the Battle of Tippecanoe less than a year before. . . To them, the old Bâby Mansion, wise intermediary for generations between the claims of friend and foe, from under whose roof their White Chief Brock had set out on this lucky enterprise, had once more proved itself to be a blessing.

## XXIII

## THREE PIONEERS

### I

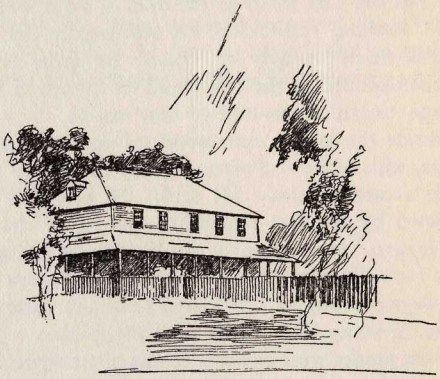
THE old cart stood in the dust of an out-house, looking rather like an antiquated old cage. It was made entirely of wood, its large wheels wooden-pinned to the axles, and its thongs of shaganippi, tough as sun-burned hide can be.

Beside the cart, a man stood talking—a stalwart figure, tall, spare and erect, bearing his eighty years with a careless zest. He said: "I had this constructed by the last remaining builder of the Red River carts. In my youth, one like it was an important factor in my life. I have lived and slept in it for days and nights. We used to watch these carts come crawling like snakes over the prairie. They and the ponies were our sole means of transportation of supplies and news. Our world was a vast wilderness, yet it was smaller than the world of to-day. You could address a letter in England to John Jones, Red River Settlement, British North America, and it would find him. It never failed. Imagine addressing John Jones, Winnipeg, now!"

This man, the Honourable Colin Inkster, was President of the old Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and has been the sheriff of Winnipeg since

1876. His grandfather, William Sinclair, was for many years Governor at York Factory, where he died in 1818. William Sinclair was said to be of the family of the Earldom of Orkney.

The Honourable Colin Inkster spoke even more proudly of his father, who had been "merely an

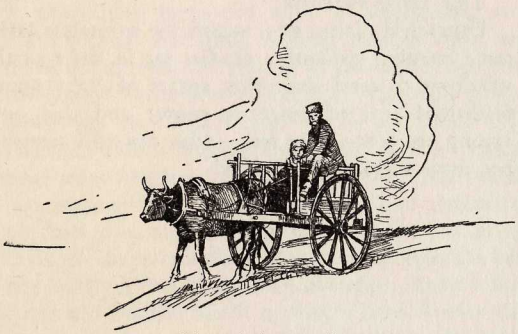


"to its doors, out of the illimitable prairies . . . came the carts."

agent" of the Hudson's Bay Company, at £15 a year. He was a stone mason, and built the foundation of his own house, the oldest habitable house in Manitoba.

Sheriff Inkster's present home is near the site of the battle of Seven Oaks. We walked across a bit

of original prairie grass to reach the older house, still standing in good repair. It is made of hewed logs. The interior is well planned and roomy. There are thin, wood-panelled ceilings and walls, fireplaces of red brick, and the usual shallow verandah of the day.



"the springless carts."

The little post office and store closely adjoining it dates also to '51. To its doors, out of the illimitable prairies surrounding what was then scarcely even a settlement, came the carts, with settlers eager for letters and supplies, and with traders and merchants coming up from St. Paul and other centres, to sell their wares, and to buy skins.

"After all, those were happy days," said our friend. "This house which I seem to have deserted

in my old age, for we have given it and the grounds about it to the city, is still home to me. There were many unforgettable occasions within its walls, though I suppose that it, like my Red River cart, is just a curiosity now. Perhaps we have all three had our day!"

The Three Pioneers!

Untracked plains, over which the springless carts came trecking patiently; candles set in these small windows to send their tiny spears of light upon uncharted seas of grass or snow; and this one among the few—how few—who can still remember those extraordinary days!

## XXIV

## MOUNTAIN CABINS

IT would be easy to sentimentalize, for there is everything here—the echo of mountains, and soaring skies, and small rushing streams (that we see in the movies, and read of in best-sellers made in the United States about Canada). And this cabin-house fits in so perfectly. It is log built and raftered, with a pointed barn roof, and a typical huge stone fireplace. Skins of cariboo, timber wolf, and marmot hang on the walls, and an enormous burdash robe, rarest of possessions, is the hearthrug. Over the fireplace is the head of an antelope, the last one legally killed in British Columbia; above it is a queer old Buffalo skull; a sheep's head is over the door. Tawny striped denim is hung on the windows; and there are saffron cushions, making the rustic furniture comfortable as well as picturesque; wrought iron candelabra, and stray gleams of light from copper bowls and bits of rock crystal. The front door opens directly into the living-room, and there is a short curved staircase of jack pine, leading to a little gallery from which you can watch sunlight or open fire warm the savage little place.

Major Fred Brewster and his wife, its owners, are trail riders of the Rockies. To them the moun-

tains are an open book. They live in the village of Jasper, which lies in the heart of the old Athabaska country, on the northerly way through the Rockies, originally chosen by the first surveying party for the projected railroad.

The very early history of the district has never been accurately known and never will be written. The oldest settlers have scant data and only vague memories of their immediate predecessors. There are few records of the loneliest trails, and the stories of stray adventurers, living, heaven knows how long ago, are legends, passed by word of mouth from tribe to tribe.

But if there is meagre record as to the mountains they can afford to ignore the fact. For the movies have them. One of the great American film companies was here a week ago, working on a picture up on Maligne lake. So, presently in London and New York and Chicago, and in a score of foreign countries, people will sit in hot and crowded cinemas waiting for a sight of the mountains just outside this door.

2

We left the cabin behind us and motored down the valley. Beside our hurrying car marched the Colin range, very stern and cold, behind us rose Pyramid Mountain, and Edith Cavell with her attendant, Angel Glacier. The little Miëtte River

ran noisily beside us. We were nearing Henry House.

"Speaking of old people's places, and their habit of disappearing," said our host, "if we should stop just here I could take you down there among mounds of stubble and earth and stone, and we should find remains of clay ovens, well built, and apparently very old. They may have had some connection with Henry House; they may be more ancient. Who knows? The whole thing is lost in indistinct beginnings! . . . I am taking you to a place that I do know, the remnant of the Swift ranch. Louis Swift, the old stage driver, came up from the south-west, and became the best known trapper and trader of this part. He was a great provider, and probably fed and rested all the stray expeditions bound for the Punch Bowl—the meeting place of the Athabaska Trail. . . Here is his old location."

We left the car and walked over rough grass, and up a long slope beyond a little chicken run and some outbuildings to where a small log house stood facing the mountains. In front of it was a canvas-protected stoop under which were gathered a few home-made chairs, a grindstone and some implements. Over its entrance a sun-dried antler hung, white as a bone.

"This is not the first shack," said Major Brewster, "but its predecessor was probably exactly like

it. On a stoop like this, or that, old Swift has entertained most of the white people coming this way for more than a quarter of a century. His wife, a French half-breed, was no less hospitable than he. I want you to come up and see the water-mill."

We climbed further, accompanied by a million mosquitoes, to where silver of water was heard through branches of immense firs. Near it lay the abandoned mill which Swift had made with his own hands out of one or more of this very group of trees, and where he ground corn for the Indians and the few settlers about him, with no charge to any of them.

It is a lovely place. Besides the towering firs, hemlock and birch and cottonwood are refreshed by the clear stream. Indian Paint-Brush pricks the grass with colour, and there are bushes of Saskatoon berries, that grow in clusters like grapes, and are loved by the Indians and the mountain bears. But the railroad runs now—we could see it from our point of vantage—between Swift's deserted cabin and his barn. He and his wife have moved to Jasper village.

3

Old Mrs. Swift can weave her baskets and beadwork in great comfort now. She can see her grandchildren passing to and fro to school on a good sidewalk, that so shortly ago was a bit of mountain trail. Yet, as we talked I found that she was not so

much interested in the things of to-day as in those of the distant past. Her mind went back repeatedly to ancient stories, especially to one about wild horses, and the days of Moberly, a trader, which had impressed itself vividly on her memory. But a mixture of mountain French and Cree is hard to understand, and there was no interpreter. Besides, one of Mrs. Swift's first questions was: "How many languages you speek? I speek five. I speek Soto, Stoney, Cree, and French and English."

That naturally upset me. . . I hesitated to reveal a mind so empty that a reply from her, in any one of four of her languages, would leave it a blank. She promised that the next time I came she would relate the story of the wild horses more fully, in English. She wore a trail-rider's badge,—and told me that she and her husband were the first applicants in this valley for admission to the order.

"Times all change," she said. "In my day we had no, what you call Clubs, for riders. One by one, one by one, they went over the mountains. Now they go a lot altogether, and it is good fun for them. For us it was business, all business, long ago. But I not speek so much with you to-day," she ended sadly, "because my son, he is very sick—for him my heart is sore."

A bell rang through the village street. She crossed herself in prayer.

## XXV

## A POET'S GARDEN

LANGARAVINE, the home of a well loved poet of Vancouver, Mrs. J. M. LeFevre, stood with open doors on an August afternoon. The doors are often open, for it is a house of many friendships. Its short history is beauty.

From a flagged terrace at its rear, you reach the garden. Below this terrace lies another one of grass, then lawns, and, at their farthest edge, turquoise of ocean, and beyond that the deeper blue of hills. There is a Japanese tea house near the cliff's edge, and after tea, there is the cliff's edge itself, where you look over a low stone wall far out to jade-green distance where the Islands lie—many, small, difficult of access; where all sorts of people are living their remote lives, cut off by sorcery of the sea from the modern world.

The eastern boundary of this garden is a deep ravine. On the other side of the lawns there are water gardens, with wax-white lilies, wide awake. And deeper still an old skid-road,—early British Columbia—left untouched at the garden's edge. Bluebells mount jauntily up the old skid-road.

Beneath the terrace late roses were still in bloom and the faintest, sweetest flower scent in the world, that of midsummer phlox, came from the gardens

below. Fuchsia trees were in flower, magnolias lingered, and California poppies—romnia—grew in thick shrubs, as pale as ghosts. . . Through the drawingroom windows there came the distant sound of strings, and, when the music stopped, there was poetry read from an ivied balcony above the terrace.

It might have happened long ago in Italy—the blue skies and sea, the music of strings, scent of roses and sound of poetry: a traditional sequence perfectly understood by nations more childlike, and much more sophisticated than our own. . . But fortunately it was not Italy; it was Canada.

## XXVI

## THE SEA CAPTAIN'S HOUSE

NEW WESTMINSTER, originally Sappertown, was built by the Royal British Engineers and Sappers before Vancouver came into being.

Back on the Fraser one loses sight and sound of the ocean. There is a dim gravity about the place. One of its oldest houses is Hollymount, the home of William Irvine, a Scottish sea captain who, trading out of ports or early settlements on the Columbia River, in Oregon, moved north in the van of the Cariboo gold rush of '58.

The stalwart holly hedge, from which the house takes its name, almost completely surrounds it. In point of construction the residence is a monument to the skilled labor of the Royal Engineers. It is a remarkable fact that in a province whose wealth is in timber, the interior finish should have come from California. But those were the days when redwood was brought as ballast for the ships coming up from the south.

The eyes of the captain gazed kindly upon us from the sea-blue background of an old portrait in oils. They had seen much in their day, when his steamers made the great run from here to Yale and back. Yale was the head of navigation on the

Fraser, and the point where the famous wagon-road, constructed in '62, began, and extended four hundred miles north to the Cariboo Mines. In "the golden days of Cariboo" it is said that over this highway passed thousands of miners and millions of treasure.

What tremendous tales from everywhere on earth our Captain must have heard! What legends of fame, and what despairs! We learned that he was one of the coast captains most diligent in the search for Sir John Franklin, and that he gave personal assistance and advice to Lady Franklin in her fruitless, persevering quest.

"This is one of the treasures of Hollymount," said Captain Irvine's daughter. She placed in my hand a framed picture of Sir John, dated 1861, with an inscription "To Captain Irvine from Lady Franklin."

It was another of those curious and unexpected contacts. Who would have thought that, chancing on this house here in New Westminster, one should hold in one's hand for a moment a link, slight but direct, with the most tragic and absorbing chapter in Polar exploration.

## XXVII

## AN ISLAND FARM

CLOVERDALE is a cheerful name for a farm, it reminds one of grass scents and buzzing bees. But this place looked melancholy, almost eerie in an autumnal light that filtered through the faded leaves of oak trees, bronzed by drought. Built on a hill the farm house is still surrounded by trees, but through them, we could see rolling country and the invasion of houses and factories—the city of Victoria creeping up to an old estate.

This is the first stone house on Vancouver Island, with an original holding of over twelve hundred acres of cleared land. It was necessarily self-contained, as you may see by its generous ration room and huge bake-ovens, for the three mile trip to Fort Victoria through dense woods was something of an adventure in days when the tender mercies of the West Coast Indians were far from kind. That was in the 60's of the last century.

A delightful porch still bids you hearty welcome. One of the family had planted here a slip of English ivy. To-day, there is an overhanging wall of lustrous green, supported by giant trunks that twist and turn in weird and sinister shapes. As you enter the house you seem to be enveloped in the shade that the ivy casts. It is mingled with the green of Vir-

ginia creeper. The interior is dim, but through the shadows a blur of Indian relics becomes disentangled; bows, spear heads, pottery, and beadwork make history in the shaded hall.

The drawingroom is mid-Victorian, but un-English, nevertheless. Its furniture came by sailing ship around the Horn, and though there is the inevitable crinoline chair, with its ample armless seat, and a roulette table with a round top that may be swung up out of the way, and an old rosewood sofa whose wavy back suits soft billows of brocade, there is also a lacquer cabinet that arrived here on the *Fujiami,* the first ship in recorded history that came into Victoria Harbor from Japan. A fine gilt mirror hangs over the fireplace. It once hung in the diningroom of the famous Bachelors' Hall of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver while that Fort was still British territory, and the boundary line was farther south than it is to-day. When Fort Vancouver was abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company the mirror was bought by the founder of this house.

It is nearly a century since Dr. William Fraser Tolmie came from Inverness and Glasgow to Fort Vancouver as a physician and clerk in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. Later, he became a Chief Factor and was deeply concerned in Pacific Coast affairs. He learned and translated the language of certain of the West Coast Indian tribes,

the Enncultaws and the Songhees, and the grounds of his farm gave him ample opportunity to collect relics and implements of vanished tribes. He was an ardent botanist, and that is why so many excellent specimens of British Columbia flora found their way into Kew Gardens under the régime of Sir John Hooker who was his close friend.

This early settler lived British Columbia to the full, an existence utterly different from that of any other province. The ocean brought its strange adventurers, and the mountains were like evil magnets for Indian superstition. It was a locality of mysterious murders and haunting superstitions.

"Stlalamsin!" said the first Indians, pointing to a pleasant hillside on the farm in Dr. Tolmie's day. "Stlalamsin—place of bones!"

"There is an oak tree on Quadra Street just below Cloverdale school," said Miss Tolmie, "with the mark of a cross on it. Nearly sixty-five years ago one of our gardeners, a half-breed, was found hanging here. Other murders took place more to the west. For years no one could be induced to walk after dark through the brick-fields yonder, a part of the farm which was supposed to be haunted. My father loved the mountains, and he tried to overcome the terror of the Indians of evil spirits, who were, of course, the unseen powers that tossed great avalanches about and sent them scuttling down the valley with a roar like that of thunder. It was

his great desire to climb Mount Ranier. He was the first white man to attempt it, and he would probably have succeeded but for the refusal of his Indian carriers to encounter the giant spirits who lived among the snows."

"Many years after my father made this attempt," went on Miss Tolmie, "several of us, his sons and daughters, formed an expedition to visit the mountain and annually, ever since, we have repeated the pilgrimage."

The Tolmie family are united in their affection for this house in which they were born. And indeed it must be lovelier now than ever. The grounds about it called to us on this autumn morning. We walked down to a bark tea-house, covered with ivy, with a wild-flower garden stretching behind it. It is a place in which to rest and invite long thoughts. Monarchs of long ago live quietly here —a sequoia, sixty feet high, planted over a century ago; an oak estimated according to its girth at eight hundred years; tall Douglas firs; lazy acacias. And there are flowers of all seasons, though the trees cast rather forbidding shadows, disapproving of colour. But something lingers that is deeper and stranger than mere garden magic. Cloverdale is not a sweet old farm house; it belongs tremendously, mysteriously, to the Island.

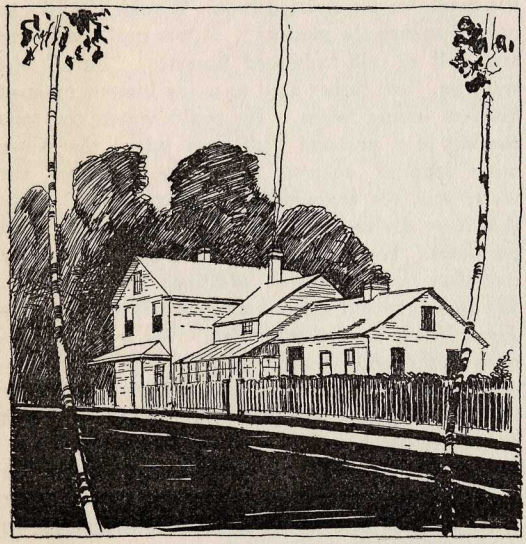
## XXVIII

## THE OLD DOCTOR

WE crossed the open place in front of the Empress Hotel. There was a little wind, and the cry of gulls was coming in from the sea; the sound of an impatient siren from some out-going schooner was heard, and a ship's bell in the distance. A great steamer was in from China that morning. Important looking luggage was waiting, heaped in piles in the rotunda of the hotel. In the thrilling sea-washed air people looked happy, walking about at leisure with the world and apparently glad to be in Victoria. People from everywhere—grandees, and mere tourists; sailors; coolies; French maids taking the air while madame rests after the voyage; madame, herself, perhaps; and all of them strolling through the gardens behind the hotel towards the little city of luxurious shops, or, as we strolled, in the direction of the Parliament Buildings raising lovely domes to the sky. It is a cheerful, cosmopolitan little square.

In two minutes we had passed through it and were in a quiet backwater where we noticed a vacant sunny slope upon which a huge cherry tree and a great oak spread themselves. And then we were lifting the knocker of an old door—a low door, a modest iron knocker, a small wooden house stand-

ing beside a laurel hedge, with sunshine glittering on its dark polished leaves.



"we lifted the knocker of an old door."

"Knocking for the doctor!" we thought. "Knocking for the old doctor!"

The door opened, and the doctor's daughter asked us to come in.

"I saw you stop beside the cherry tree," she said, "it does not have many visitors now-a-days. Just a stone's throw from all the coming and going of the hotel, we are isolated here. Would you like to come first into the garden?" It was cool and shady and full of old-fashioned flowers. "Here," she went on, "my father used to enjoy himself most in his few leisure hours. He could watch the sails passing in a peaceful little cove where the water came lapping against the shore. Where the water was, the Empress Hotel now stands. Only this fence divided us from the Douglas house and Sir James' beautiful garden, of which the cherry tree that you were just admiring alone remains. We used to fly our kites as children where aeroplanes descend now almost every day. We were all relatives and friends, bound together by the struggles and chances of pioneer life, and we were happy in an isolated and tiny place that seemed to be our very own."

We went indoors after a time to her father's office and study, where, in days long gone, the doctor sometimes sat him down before a tiny fireplace to smoke his pipe in peace. But there is a huge bootjack, and a lantern still in a corner, for there were many sudden calls out into those early, and sometimes almost impassably muddy roads of the Island. The walls of the room are lined with portraits of his confrères and their professors at Guy's Hospital.

"Before he entered Guy's," said his daughter, Mrs. William Higgins, "papa was in the office of Dr. Graves of Trinity Square, Tower Hill. And during that time as an apprentice he used to make up the medicines and pills, and later he obtained a license from the Apothecaries' Company. It was as a reward of merit, because he had captured a number of prizes, that he was offered an appointment on the Hudson's Bay Company's ship, *Prince Rupert,* on its voyage to York Factory. He returned to England, and after that, he sailed the Indian seas for a year and a half as ship's surgeon on the *Mallacca.* But this coast lured him, and he came again, this time as clerk and colonial surgeon, to the Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver Island, arriving in 1850. He was again transferred, this time to Fort Rupert, on the now historic steamer *Beaver.* The coal mines were opening, and I have heard of a mutiny of the employees while he was there—something about the California gold excitement. Then he was suddenly recalled to Victoria, returning in a canoe paddled by Indians, a wild lot in those days, running the gauntlet through coast enemies for three hundred miles. I think he escaped because the savages had a wholesome fear of "King George's men", as they called the Hudson's Bay officials. . . I should have said that papa was sent for on account of Governor Blanchard's illness—

but the Governor had of course recovered before he had time to arrive!"

This, then, was John Sebastion Helmchen, of whom we had often heard. His medicine chest stands in the hall, a clumsy, wonderful old box, each precious vial secured in a separate wooden compartment, safe from the terrific lurches and sudden inundations of a sailing ship.

"Here was the place for surgical instruments," said Mrs. Higgins, "but they are packed away. I did open them for Dr. Banting, the other day. . . I liked showing them to him."

A beautiful old drawingroom is full of treasures, but we returned to the study which has for some time been used as a diningroom and where Christmas and New Year festivities were enacted for years, and are still enacted, with the old ceremonies that began with Grace Before Meat, and ended with Sir Roger de Coverley. It was on such occasions that the old piano was used for the quadrille. It is a lovely slim thing of Circassian walnut, with brown moire silk laid fanwise under its lacey carving. It, too, came round the Horn. We asked the doctor's daughter to play on it.

"I know nothing but old-fashioned waltzes," she said, "things that people have forgotten now-a-days."

We assured her that we had no desire for jazz. So she opened the cover and put up the music rack

and twirled the round stool higher, and into the silence of the small low-ceilinged room the voice of the old piano spoke, in a faint spinnet-like tone, but with no uncertain sound.

> You recall candelight,
> Harpstrings and background of a rich brocade
> Where stately figures, delicate yet staid,
> Were wont to dance.
> Ghosts are your only partners;
> Rakish young gentlemen of long ago,
> Of courtly grace and wigs of powdered snow
> And devilish ways . . .
> Yours is precise music,
> A little arrogant and sweet and thin,
> It does not let one wailing measure in—
> Not even the last bar!

It might have been written of the old piano, we thought, as we bade its owner good-bye.

"You must come again," she said, with the old Island hospitality, "remember that this is always open house!"

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