



A  
SHORT STATEMENT OF FACTS  
RELATING TO  
THE HISTORY, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, LANGUAGE, AND  
LITERATURE  
OF THE  
**Micmac Tribe of Indians,**  
IN  
NOVA-SCOTIA AND P. E. ISLAND.

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By S. T. RAND.

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Being the substance of Two Lectures delivered in Halifax, in November,  
1849, at Public Meetings held for the purpose of instituting a  
Mission to that Tribe.

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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SUPER-  
INTENDING THE MISSION.

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HALIFAX, N. S.  
PRINTED BY JAMES BOWES & SON.  
1850.

Price to non-Subscribers, 7½d. Profits devoted wholly to  
the objects of the Mission.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE object of the following pages, is the spiritual and temporal good of the Micmac Indians. They have been written for the purpose of arousing christians of every name, to the importance of carrying out, more faithfully than has ever yet been done, the design of the "great commission"—"Go teach all nations," "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." This commission has been in the hands of the Church for 1800 years. Every christian is authorised by it to do all the good, and to attempt all the good, in his power, both to the souls and bodies of his fellow men, of every nation, of every rank, and of every condition. And this is, too, one of the first dictates of real piety. It is a serious fact, however, for which it is impossible to account satisfactorily, that this great commission has been, so far as relates to the poor Micmac, almost wholly overlooked by Protestants. They have been in our midst; but they and we have been strangers. From our infancy we have been familiar with their miserable appearance, their poverty, their degradation, and their vices. They have been pitied, written about, and talked about. The philanthropist, the christian, and every lover of justice, must have often grieved for the wrongs they have sustained. Occasional and momentary efforts have been made to promote their civilization and salvation. Wherever these efforts have been made, they have to some extent been successful. But hitherto no systematic and persevering exertions have been made, to instruct them in the true knowledge of salvation. The power of THE GOSPEL, "to save all those who believe," both from temporal and eternal ruin, has never been really tried upon them. The question now brought before the christian public, for their decision, is, whether it shall be always thus? Whether we have any warrant for

## INTRODUCTION.

overlooking the Indian, in our efforts for a world's enlightenment and salvation? Whether we can, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, see the remnants of this nation doomed to be deprived of their means of existence, to fall victims to decay, and to be swallowed up in the vortex of ruin, into which our vices have helped to throw them; without making an effort, in the strength of Omnipotence, to save them? Under such circumstances, could we dare to meet them at the Judgment Bar, in the great day of account.

The christian public is beginning to awake to this matter. We all wonder, and well we may, how it came to be so long neglected.

But previously to detailing what has been done, or attempted, a few facts are to be stated, respecting the history, customs, language, literature, and religious belief of this interesting but long neglected people. These facts have been chiefly collected from themselves, and from the observations of the writer, while mingling among them somewhat during the past three years.

THE  
HISTORY, &c.  
OF THE  
MICMAC TRIBE OF INDIANS.

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CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORY OF THE MICMACS—THEIR EARLIEST HISTORY—FIRST  
DISCOVERY OF THE WHITES—WARS WITH THE MOHAWKS.

THE earlier history of the Aborigines of America, is involved in total darkness. From what part of the world they migrated, and at what period, is unknown. There are various and conflicting theories on the subject, but nothing satisfactory. Some have concluded that they came from Asia, and some, from other portions of the globe. Some have conducted them, by a northern journey, across Behring's Straits; and others have found the means of accommodating them with a more direct and easier transit. But it is now generally admitted that of their earlier history, as inhabitants of this western world, we know just nothing. But we can go back beyond this. Their *earliest* history, we can trace with certainty. An authentic record traces it for some hundreds of years. Their ancestors were born, and grew up, and labored, and suffered, and died, along with *our* ancestors. At that period the progenitor of the degraded inhabitant of the most wretched wigwam, dwelt in the same hut, ate from the same dish, gathered pebbles from the same brook, and slept on the same strand, with the progenitor of Britain's Queen. Their genealogical line runs side by side for ages. Aye, and the ancestors of the Indians, and our ancestors, and those of all the nations of the earth, were once crowded together, with beasts and reptiles, and living things that had breath, of every kind, in one vessel, and floated over the billows, and were preserved together from the common destruction, when the flood of waters "covered all the high hills which were under heaven, and every living substance which was upon the face of the ground, was destroyed from the earth, and Noah only remained alive and those that were with him in the ark." The Micmac can therefore boast of ancestry as ancient and as noble as the proudest of Adam's race. He is indeed our brother; for the Bible teaches us that "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth, and hath fixed the bounds of their



habitations." And it is instructive to know that as deep a mystery hangs over the earlier portion of the history of Great Britain, as that which rests upon America, and that the ancient inhabitants of England very much resembled the Indians of the western world. They lived in miserable cabins, in the midst of gloomy forests; they engaged in ferocious wars; they painted their bodies, and dressed in skins. Their chiefs attached the horns of cattle to their heads, as the Indian chief of the far west does to this day, the horns of the buffalo to his; they worshipped hideous idols, and offered human sacrifice. The well-known advice of Cicero's friend, not to purchase his slaves from among the British captives, as they were too stupid to learn anything, occurs immediately to one's thoughts while reflecting on the possibility of elevating the Indian from his present degradation, to the rank of a man.

But there is not only solid ground beyond the region of uncertainty, upon which the historian may plant his foot, there is also as firm standing on this side of that region. We can easily trace the history of the Micmacs, as well as those of other tribes, for the last two hundred years. And during this period, strange and affecting events have been crowded into their history. We shall look upon it as they relate it themselves. Strangers landed on their coast, and were received in a friendly manner. They retired and returned in larger numbers. They took possession of the lands; treated the Indians as though they had no rights; employed them in their wars, and rewarded them for their deeds of cruelty. It is instructive to reflect how their history and that of the nation to which it is our boast to belong, is woven together during this period. The two cannot possibly be separated. The white man dealt treacherously with the Indian, and he dealt treacherously with the white man. They boast that in their collisions with the English they killed many more of us than we did of them; and they cannot attach blame to their forefathers for their deeds of valor. True they applied the brand to the lonely habitation, they often shot down the husband and the father; dashed out the brains of the infant, and dragged the mother and elder children into captivity. But wherefore? Because they delighted in blood? By no means. Their natures were no more cruel than those of other men; but they felt themselves bound to redress the wrongs they had sustained, and they were also rewarded for these deeds. The Indian now shudders as he relates the barbarities of former times; but he says, "*Wenuchk teladakadijik ak Aglaseauk*,"—"The French and English must bear the blame." They hired the Indians to butcher the whites. They gave them a fixed price for the death of every foe; and the scalp was torn off—the Indian will go on to explain—not because his grandfather was a cruel man, but because it served as evidence, *stuga wegadigunchaja*, "like a written document."

During the period now under consideration, they have been paying more attention to our history, than we have to theirs. We have recorded but a small portion of their words and deeds; but the whole volume of our actions is preserved among them. They have only occasionally interested us. We have always interested them. The white man may pass from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, and travel all over the adjacent Islands, and see but little which reminds him, with any force,

of those who once owned and occupied the soil ; but the Indian can travel nowhere, and pitch his tent nowhere, without seeing that which forcibly reminds him of those who now have it in possession. Our towns, our villages, our highways, and every farmhouse and bye-path, are to him striking and affecting mementoes. Sit down in his wigwam and gain his confidence, and he will tell you your history, and that of your father's. He will refer to those happy days when his fathers held undisputed possession of all these regions, as the gift of the Great Spirit. Then they were at peace among themselves ; drunkenness with its fearful effects was unheard of ; the forests abounded with game ; the rivers with fish ; and poverty and want were unknown. They could then muster by thousands. The various diseases which have of late years swept them away had not reached them. Sheltered in the forests from the cold ; experiencing comparatively few changes in their diet and modes of living, and bountifully supplied with covering, they lived on through a long period of years. They could spread down the skins of the bear and moose, said an old Indian to me a short time since, and cover themselves over with others, and in the severest weather they would be warm and comfortable anywhere. " But," he continued with emotion, " it is not so now. Our lands have been taken away ; the forests have been cut down and the moose and the bear nearly exterminated. We have no skins now with which to wrap ourselves up in the winter. Government, it is true, gives us a bit of a blanket, and we spread it over the children. One awakes crying with the cold, and gives it a pull ; and then another awakes crying, and he gives it a pull ; and (suiting the action to the word), ' by-and-bye they pull 'em all to pieces.' "

They have a tradition respecting the first visit of the whites. An Indian on Cape Breton, discovered a strange track, on the beach. He followed it. It was not a man's track, he concluded as neither the impression of the naked foot, nor of the moccasin was made. Still it was the length of his own foot, and the steps corresponded in distance to his. What could it be ? Was it some kind of man ? As he advanced he discovered indications which confirmed this supposition. A ship at anchor soon burst upon his view. He then returned and told his companions. The strangers landed, and visited the wigwams. They could not understand their language, and conversed by signs—" speaking with their hands," as they expressed it. The noise of the guns astonished them. The strangers gave them some biscuit, and other things ; and gained their confidence. They say that soon a young Indian was conveyed away to France, and finally came back, and could then speak French. Their language at present bears the impress of the nation that first took up a lodgement among them. Those European animals and things which have some resemblance to those with which they were previously acquainted, still bear the Indian name, with the appellation *French* prefixed. *Wcruch* is their word for a Frenchman. This in composition is shortened into *Wenj*. *Te-am* is a moose, *wenjuteam*, an ox or cow. *Wigwam*, a hut—*wenjegwom*, a house, or a *French hut*. *Soon*, a cranberry. *Wenjusoon*, an apple, or a French cranberry. And so for some forty or fifty words. For such objects as nothing with which they were acquainted resembled, they adopted, and have preserved the French name.

In the records of the history of Nova Scotia, are presented accounts of several battles with the Indians, and other matters relating to them; with the treaty of peace finally concluded. They have also themselves preserved the history of these events; especially the latter, deeply engraved in their memories. They say that for a long time it was *matundimk, matundimk*, "war, war,"—that finally they made peace. The English Governor met with them in Council; he and the Indian chief smoked the pipe of peace together; they then dug a hole in the earth, and buried their weapons. They remark with emphasis, that the Tomahawk, or *Tomegun*, as is the Micmac name, was buried *lowest*. This implied that the Indian would not pull up his weapon, until the English should have pulled up his. He would not be the *first* to violate the treaty. And they say they have always strictly adhered to it; but that the English have not; a charge, alas! too well founded.

The Micmacs boast that they are the bravest and best of the Indian nations. They look down upon the others and speak of them with contempt. Each of the other tribes, it is probable, have the same conceit of themselves. And what nation on the face of the earth, thinks otherwise respecting their own superiority? The Micmacs say they once almost annihilated the "Mountaineers." They boast, too, that in their differences with the English, they destroyed far more than they lost. And they will not allow that they were worsted even by the Mohawks. This latter statement, I am aware, is not the usual impression among the whites; but it is what has been told me by Indians in different places. With the Mohawks they had a long and fearful war. One event of this period I wrote down, in Micmac, from the mouth of an Indian, since dead, who resided near Charlottetown, named Jacob Michell. He learned it from an old man, who died some years ago. It is without doubt true in the general statements, though interspersed with idle fables, respecting the supernatural powers of their chiefs. It well illustrates the Indian character. It exhibits him in domestic life, and in war. The marvellous portions of it show what high pretensions were formerly made by their leading men; and also what is still most firmly believed among them. The whole tale is too long for insertion. The substance of it is here given:

"There was once a large Indian settlement near the mouth of a river. One autumn a party of the men went up the river, according to custom, on a hunting expedition. Two of their *braves* left the rest, and took up their abode in one wigwam, about half way from the main settlement, the place where the rest went. There they engaged in hunting, and taking care of their venison and fur, during the whole winter. The name of the principal man was Ababejit. He had a wife who had three children by a former husband, two boys and one girl. His comrade was married, but had no children. The whole party consisted of seven. All they had collected during the winter, was, in the spring, brought down to the river, and they were waiting for the ice to break up, that they might convey it home in their canoes. A war party of Mohawks discovered the wigwam, and planned an attack upon it the ensuing night. Of this attack Ababejit was admonished in a dream, while resting from his morning's hunting excursion. He dreamed that a flock of pigeons alighted upon the wigwam, and completely covered

the top of it. Such a dream invariably portended war. Annoyed with his comrade, who was also a *brave*, because he would not believe that any revelation had been made, seeing he had received no intimation of it himself, from the Great Spirit, Ababejit would not disclose the coming event to any of them. They lay down as usual, and were soon asleep; but he kept watch, gun in hand, seated in the hinder part of the wigwam, during the live-long night. The war party was very large. Some delay in their operations was occasioned by the breaking up of the ice, which made it difficult for them to cross the river. They crossed, however, and drew up around the wigwam, just as the day was breaking. Ababejit knew all their movements, and just as several guns were raised in the doorway, he struck his comrade with the breech of his gun, and said to him, *kvedabekw nuga nuuchase*, 'we are all killed, now get up.' At that instant the Mohawks fired. The girl was just in the act of springing up, and was shot dead. Ababejit, being wide awake, was not hurt. The bullets could not penetrate his body; but rattled and fell to the ground. Had his companion been awake his body would also have been impervious. But, alas! for his unbelief, and envious ambition! He was but half awake, and therefore one of his legs was shot away. Had he been asleep he would have been killed; had he been fully awake he would have sustained no injury at all. The Mohawks having discharged their pieces, rushed upon the '*camp*.' Three of their braves attempted to force an entrance, and in their eagerness wedged up the door. Ababejit sent a bullet through the heart of one—for, be it observed, a brave can kill a brave, though no one else can. The surviving two sprang upon him, seized him, and attempted to bind him, that they might lead him home as a captive, and enjoy the luxury of torturing and burning him. But the Micmac had no notion of gratifying them in this way. A desperate struggle ensued—a struggle for life and death. The report of the guns had not awakened the two boys; but the scuffle aroused and alarmed them. 'Who is this attacking my stepfather?' cried the eldest. 'We are all killed,' exclaimed the old man. The boy drew his knife and sprang to the rescue. The two Mohawks were instantly dispatched, and the old man was free.

"But the other Micmac chief was not idle. He had lost one leg, but he had another left; and the perfect use of his arms. His courage and strength being superhuman, remained in all their force. He had seized the tomahawk, and taken his station by the door, where he made quick dispatch of all who attempted to enter; and singing the death-song as he smote them down, he tossed their lifeless bodies to the back part of the '*camp*.' Ababejit had left his lance, the day before, sticking in a tree, at some distance. He bolts out of the '*camp*,' rushes through the midst of his enemies, and makes for this weapon. Three men seize him, and nearly overpower him; but uniting artifice with strength, he disengages himself, and again darts forward towards the tree where his lance is. Once more he is seized; and once more he is free. The weapon is now in his hands; and he turns upon his foes. He fought like a tiger maddened with rage. Terrible was the slaughter that ensued. Samson with his jaw-bone, levelling the Philistines, heaps upon heaps; an Achilles or a Hector, dealing death among their foes; or the

sword of Michael 'felling squadrons at once,' would scarcely gain by the comparison, could but a Homer or a Milton tell the tale. But fresh combatants closed in upon him, as those in front gave way. He at length grew weary in the work of death. He announced himself at the door of the camp, and was permitted to enter. He sat down and took breath. His comrade still continued his song, killing every man who attempted to enter. Ababejit now directs the two boys to keep quiet until he should have gone out and engaged the enemy again. Then they were to creep out carefully at the back part of the wigwam, and make all haste down to their settlement, at the mouth of the river, and give the alarm; that the warriors of their tribe might hasten to the rescue. They obeyed; but were discovered and pursued. Ababejit gave chase to the pursuers; but they were younger and swifter upon the foot than he. But he calls in the aid of magic. The terrible war yell arrests them. As he utters it they are deprived of all power; they cannot move a limb. He kills them; but he has scarcely turned his face again towards the warriors who surround the 'camp,' when he espies another man running towards the boys. 'Ula aleyu,' he cries, 'come this way.' 'Ula chenum,' 'here's a man for you.' 'Let those children alone.' This poor fellow shares of course the fate of the others.

"But now the boys are frightened, and dare not leave the old man. They beg of him to go on with them to the settlement, and not return to the camp. But they hear the two women shrieking for help. Their mother is crying out, 'Where is Ababajit? He promised me he would stand by me and defend me to the last.' 'Must I leave your mother,' he says to the boys, 'to be killed by the Mohawks.' But the cries of the mother, and the remonstrances of the father, are vain. Self-preservation animates them, and he concludes to protect the future warriors, rather than the women. 'Lay it up for them,' says the boys, 'and avenge it at a future day.' They go away home together, leaving the wounded *brave*, and the women, to their fate. A general onset is now made by the Mohawks upon the wigwam, which is torn to pieces, and scattered in every direction. Ababejit's wife and the man with one leg are dispatched and scalped; and a tomahawk is raised over the head of the other woman, when a chief cries out, 'Neen n'tabitem,' 'she shall be my wife.' This decides her lot and she is spared.

"The Mohawks now carefully collect all their slain, and hide them under the shelving bank of the river. They then carry off all the plunder and secrete it in the woods on the top of a mountain. Ababejit soon returns at the head of a party of warriors. There lie the dead of their own party, scalped of course, and everything valuable has been carried off. They search long and anxiously for the Mohawks; but in vain. The latter kindle no fires in the daytime, lest the smoke should betray them. But before they dare venture forth their provision is all spent, and they have grown so thin in flesh, that their rows of teeth can be distinctly seen through their lantern cheeks. The Micmacs have now given up the search and returned home. The snow is gone, the river is clear of ice, and the Mohawks having first built a sufficient number of canoes, have started for home. But just at this time the hunting party of Micmacs, who had gone up the River the previous

Autumn, and who had been engaged in hunting all winter, were also returning home in their canoes, laden with the product of their labors. They met on a large lake, just as each party was rounding a point. They were thus in close quarters before either party could be discovered by the other. The Micmacs recognised the captive woman in the chief's canoe, and readily divined what had happened. No hostile demonstration was, however, made by either party. They met and saluted each other on apparently the most friendly terms. The Micmac chief proposed to his brother Mohawk, that as they might never see each other again they should land and spend the night together. He consented. But no one slept during the night. Each party, and each individual, very naturally mistrusted that under this display of friendship, there lurked a design of mischief. The sagacious Mohawk took care that his worthy brothers should have no conversation with the captive at his side. But they out-generalled him. Busily preparing for the night's lodging, they were moving in all directions, when, just in passing, some one whispered in her ear, 'Ukchenumumok?' 'Where is your husband?' 'Chelautok,' is as hastily replied,—'he is slain.' This was sufficient. Vengeance is resolved on.

"Unluckily for the Mohawks their chief had left his kettle some distance down the river, the previous day. The sun had scarcely risen, when he, with his stolen wife, (it is thus she is designated in the tale,) launches his canoe, and goes back in quest of this important article of wigwam furniture. Now then is the Micmac's opportunity. 'Prepare the fattest and choicest pieces,' says he to his boys, 'and give your brothers their breakfast.' With appetites sharpened by long fasting, they eat enormously. The expected result ensues. They are soon stretched on the ground asleep. 'Now prepare your guns', is the order given by the wily chief. No sooner said than done. Each warrior selects his victim. The deadly weapon is raised; deliberate aim is taken; and one volley lays every Mohawk dead. But the work yet is only half accomplished. The Mohawk chief who is a *brave*, and possessed of superhuman powers, still lives, and is more to be dreaded than hundreds of the ordinary grade. It is well known that there is but one among the Micmacs who can kill him; but one that he would dread to meet; but one that he would even deign to fight in single encounter. This is the chief himself; and should *he* be killed, woe be to the rest of them. Now then for a specimen of Indian tactics in warfare. Half of the living Micmacs exchanged dresses with the dead Mohawks; then launched their canoes, and commenced sporting upon the smooth waters of the lake; while the dead men were placed on the bank, and carefully adjusted so as to give them the appearance of being alive, looking at the others. The party on shore, and the party on the lake, would seem by their dress to be made up of each tribe. The Mohawk chief had found his kettle, and was leisurely impelling his canoe back against the stream, when he was startled by the discharge of firearms. '*Matundimik!*' he exclaimed,—'there is fighting!' and onward darted his canoe. But when he came in sight he perceived his own men, as he supposed, mingled with the others, moving about in the greatest harmony, occasionally discharging their guns, and following each discharge with shouts and roars of laughter; while another party were

reclining leisurely upon the bank, looking on. 'Mogua matundenuk; paboltijik,' said he to the woman. 'They are not fighting; they are only at play.' But as he approached the shore, he observed that those on the bank never stirred, nor even moved their heads. He suspected all was not right. He had, however, but little time for reflection. The Micmac chief had secreted himself near the landing place. Several of his men had run down to the water, as if to meet them. 'Turn the canoe, side to the land,' they cried to the woman. She did so. The Micmac fired; but missed his man. The canoe was capsized; the woman thrown into the water; and away went the Mohawk, swimming below the surface until he was far out in the middle of the lake. The story gravely asserts, and I shall not take upon me either to change or modify it, that it was *two hours* before he came to the top! that he then came up 'in the shaps of a loon,' gave two or three screams after the manner of that bird, to let them know, I suppose, where he was; and then dived again, continuing as long below the water as before. 'Quick! launch the canoes;' shouted the Micmac chief; and away they went to the search. No one could see him but the chief, but he was soon moving about among the canoes, searching for his equal, and scorning to lay hands on those of ordinary rank. His proximity was indicated by the occasional capsizing of a canoe; but no one was hurt. At length the Micmac chief discovered him, and aimed a deadly blow at him with his spear. But he missed him. And now there are no more canoes upset. Again he approaches the chief's canoe, swimming under water, and invisible to all eyes save to those of the chief.—Again he is struck at, and again missed. 'Now,' says the chief, stepping forward into the bow of the canoe, 'I have but one more chance,' for it seems the 'third time is the trying time' with them, as well as with more civilized nations. This 'third and last time' soon comes; and now he is successful. 'He is running off with the line, spear and all,' exclaims the triumphant chief. The men begin to search for him, supposing him to be dead somewhere near. 'He'll not die in the water,' says the chief. 'He will take to the shore as fast as possible. Let us follow him.' They obey; and, sure enough, there he is, wounded but not killed. The young warriors are for rushing upon him at once; but the chief restrains them. 'Should he kill one of you,' says he, 'he would be just as well as ever.' No one must approach him but the the chief, and he soon dispatches him.

"And now occurs another fearful act in the tragedy. 'Come, bury your husband,' they say to the rescued woman, alluding to the one who had been killed by the Mohawks. So they convey the dead Mohawk chief a little distance from the shore. The woman takes a knife and plunges it into his breast. She then takes the scalp of her murdered husband, which the Mohawk had been carrying off, and buries it deep in his breast.

"I must sum up the remainder of the tale in a few words. The woman is carried home; marries again; accompanies her husband and his two brothers on a hunting excursion. She remains alone during the day, watching the camp, and taking care of the venison, while the men are hunting. One day she is startled by the barking of her little dog. She looks up and sees the alders all in motion, for some distance.

They are still as soon as the dog gives the alarm. She thinks it a war party. The men, on returning at evening, will not believe her. She takes her child, and withdraws some distance from the camp, where she remains for the night. When she awakes, after daylight, she has lost her scalp; her child is killed; and the three men are dead and scalped, just where they had lain down to sleep. She binds up her head; returns to the settlement, and gives the alarm. When they see the state of her head, they give credit to her story. The warriors muster, and go in quest of the enemy. But *mogua kesimtawadigul*, 'they cannot track the enemy.'

Poor Jacob would not consent to my publishing this tale, with his name appended, lest the paper might find its way into Canada, and the Mohawks get hold of it and be displeased. Poor fellow! he need not have been alarmed, and now he is where it can give him no uneasiness.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE MICMACS—THEIR ANCIENT CUSTOMS—MODIFIED BY THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE WHITES—AN INDIAN'S IDEA OF THE WHITES—DOMESTIC HABITS—A WEDDING IN CHARLOTTETOWN—THE WIGWAM—RULES OF ETIQUETTE—THEIR DEVOTIONAL HABITS.

ALL the Indians of North America, except the Esquimaux, strikingly resemble each other, in their features, their languages, and their manners and customs. These are, of course, all modified by the approach of civilization. Any treatise on the customs of any of the tribes of Canada, or New England, when they were first discovered, will apply equally to the Micmacs. Our business, at present, is with the existing generation. In many respects they are now different from what they once were. Formerly they dressed in skins, and painted their bodies, adorned themselves with shells, and feathers; used bows and arrows, stone axes, and stone arrow heads; lived chiefly by hunting and fishing; and delighted in war. They have now very extensively changed not only the material of which their clothing is made, but also the fashion; adopting that of their white neighbours. The latter part of this statement is more particularly applicable to the men than to the other sex. They now make baskets, buckets, and barrels, and beg. In some places they till the land on a very limited scale, and dwell in houses. Drunkenness is fearfully prevalent among them; though not so much of late years as formerly; and other vices resulting from the proximity of what we proudly call "civilization;" a civilization which too often seeks its own interest and gratification, regardless of either the temporal or spiritual interests of others; caring for neither soul or body. But while we mourn over some of these changes, there are others which call for different emotions. There are no wars with bordering tribes. No ambitious chieftain gains immortal fame by pursuing



for months his enemy, way-laying him, and killing him. The Micmac chief does not reckon among his *sakamoundel*, or *regalia*, the scalps of his slaughtered foes: and there are no torturings and burnings of prisoners. Chiefs are, however, duly elected. The Indians assemble on such occasions to give their votes, and any one who knows any just cause why the candidate should not be elected, is at liberty to state it. Councils too are held, to which ten different tribes, extending from Cape Breton to Western Canada, send their delegates; and they seem to consider the affair as important as it ever was. The mystic dances, too, of the ancient Indians, are not wholly omitted. Part of the ceremonies of their great annual religious festival of St. Ann's day, consists of the *wigubalthik*, and *neskouwadijik*, the "feast" and "mystic dance" of the *sakawachkik*, "the Indians of olden times." At the proper time a chief comes out of a camp and sings a singular tune, and dances a singular step, and is responded to by a singular grunt from the assembled crowd. And they assert that during the ceremony the body of the dancer is impervious to a musket ball; but woe betide the audacious wight who might venture on the experiment of attempting to shoot him.

But we pass to their social habits. In few places are the principles of order, "a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; a time for every thing, and every thing in its time; a station for every one, and every one in his station;" more fully carried out than in the Indian's wigwam. One unacquainted with their customs, would not suspect this. He looks in upon the beings in human form—"caricatures of humanity," as he possibly considers them—and every thing is so different from his own ideas of order, that he may suppose that all is, in reality, in as much confusion as it appears to him. Little does he suspect that the tittering and chattering, going on among the youthful members of the group are probably at his own expense, occasioned by his apparent ignorance of good breeding. "Well," said an Indian, who was assisting me in translating Luke 14, "Well, I would like to read that to some of the Scotchmen. I think they might learn a little manners from it." He referred to verses 7—11, where Our Saviour gives directions for the exercise of humility and courtesy. Paul's habitation happened to be in the neighborhood of a Scotch settlement; but men of any nation would need some knowledge of Indian etiquette, as well as the "Scotch people" in order to avoid giving offence, or being laughed at, on visiting a wigwam. "When they come to our *camps*," said he, "they neither know where to go, what to do, nor what to say; and they commence asking questions, 'what is this? what is this? what is this?' We say nothing to them about it; but we speak of their ignorance and ill-manners among ourselves." "They think us about on a level with the beasts," he continued, "but in reality an Indian thinks as much of his *camp*, as the Governor does of his palace."

In speaking of the customs of domestic life, it may be as well, for the sake of preserving some degree of method, to commence where domestic life commenced, in Paradise at the *wedding*. According to their traditionary tales, very little ceremony, besides a feast, occurred in ancient times, when a man received his wife. The old people had the disposing of their daughters. If the young man's suit was favorably received, the father of the girl thus addressed him as he entered

the "camp," "*kutakumigual n'itlusuk*," "Come up to the back part of the camp, my son-in-law." This settled the matter. A feast was then prepared; all the neighbors were invited; they ate and drank; and danced; and then engaged in various sports, and finally dispersed. The young man then took his bride home with him. They now, of course, call in the aid of the ceremonies of the Catholic Church.

The wigwam is a curious structure. No little skill is displayed in its erection. The frame is first raised and fastened. The rows of bark are carefully put on. In the winter it is lined in the inside with spruce boughs, and a thick coating of the same material put on the outside, to prevent the cold winds from entering. Boughs are neatly spread down inside "the camp," forming an admirable substitute for carpets, cushions, and beds; and the doorway, in winter, is also partly closed with them, placed so as to spring back and forth as you pass and re-pass. A piece of a blanket hangs over the doorway. Every post of the wigwam, every bar, every fastening, every tier of bark, and every appendage, whether for ornament or use, has a name; and all the different portions of the one room, their appropriate designations and uses. The fire occupies the centre. On each side is the *kamigwom*. There sit, on the one side of the fire, the master and mistress; and, on the other, the old people, when there are old people in the family; and the young women, when there are young women, and no old people. The wife has her place next the door, and by her side sits her lord. You will never see a woman setting *above* her husband,—for towards the back part of the camp, the *kutakumuk*, is *up*. This is the place of honour. To this place visitors and strangers, when received with a cordial welcome, are invited to come. "*Kutakumagual, upchelas*," they say to him, "come up toward the back part of the wigwam."

The children are taught to respect their parents. Many a white family might take a lesson from them in this respect. The rod is applied unsparingly, to tame their rebellious spirits, and teach them "good manners." They do not speak disrespectfully of their parents. The ordinary word for being drunk, *katheel*, a child will not use when stating that his father or mother is in that state; but he says *welopskeet*, a much softer term—though it is not easy to express the difference in English. They do not pass between their parents and the fire, unless there are old people, or strangers, on the opposite side.

The inmates of the "camp" have their appropriate postures as well as places. The men sit cross-legged, like the Orientals. The women sit with their feet twisted round to one side, one under the other. The younger children sit with their feet extended in front. To each of these postures an appropriate word is applied. The first is *chenumubasi*, I sit down man-fashion, i. e., cross-legged. The second is, *mamskukugunabase*, I sit down with my legs twisted around. The third is, *sokuwodabase*, I sit with my feet extended.

When a stranger, even a neighbor, comes into the wigwam of another, if it be in the day time, he steps in and salutes them. "*Kwa*" is the usual word of salutation, resembling both in sound and signification the Greek salutation *kaire!* hail! Should it be in the night or evening, this is uttered while standing outside. In that case the response is, '*Kwa wenin kel.*' 'Who art thou.' You give your name. And if

they know you, and are glad to see you, you are invited in at once. If they either know you not, or care not for you, they again ask, "*Kogwa pawotumun?*" "What is your wish?" You must then, of course, do your errand, and go about your business. When you enter, in the day time, you will not "go and sit down in the highest room," or the "most honorable seat,"—that is to say, if you are a *well-bred Indian*, you will not; but you will make a pause at the *lowest* place, the place next the door. The master of the camp will then say to you, "*upchelase,*" "come up higher." It was this striking coincidence between their notions of politeness, and the instructions of Our Soviour in Lake xiv. that led my friend Paul to utter his amusing observations, respecting the rudeness of his white neighbors, "the Scotchmen." As soon as the visiter is seated, the head-man of the "camp" deliberately fills his pipe; lights it; draws a few whiffs, and then hands it to the other. If there be several, they pass it round. Conversation goes forward. All the new and strange things, are enquired after, and related, and the greatest respect is mutually shown. When the business of eating is going forward, all who are in the wigwam assist. To withdraw during the process of cooking, would be rudeness. It would be a most disreputable thing not to invite a stranger to partake; it would be a grievous offence for him to refuse. There are usually a crowd of neighbours in every "camp" at meal time, when it is known that there is food there; and what there is, is divided among the whole. It may require a visit to several "camps" in succession, to obtain a full meal. I have reason to believe that this hospitality is more the result of custom than any extraordinary generosity. Measures are sometimes adopted to evade it; and they do not hesitate to say they are tired of it, when it has been exacted beyond due bounds.

The women are still accounted as inferiors. They maintain a respectful reserve in their words when their husbands are present. "When Indian make bargain, squaw never speakum." Thus was a merchant's lady once coolly, but pointedly, reproved, by an indignant son of the forest, when she objected to her husband's giving him his full price for his feathers. She sometimes heard the remark afterwards from a quarter nearer home, perhaps to her profit. The Indian woman never walks before her husband, when they travel. The men at *table*, are helped first. When one comes into your house for a cup of water, he drinks first himself, and hands it next to the other man, and last of all to the woman. When she is passing from one part of the wigwam or canoe to another, however crowded it may be, she must not step over a man's feet. Such a "step" would be deemed the grossest insult, and would probably be avenged by such an application of his foot as would send her reeling, and teach her to be more careful in future. nor must she ever step across his fish spear. His mechanical implements, of whatever kind, and whatever work he may be making, are all as important in this respect as his feet. A woman must never step across them. "Take up your feet," she will say to him when she wishes to pass; or, "take up your spear," or "your work," if she cannot well get round them. This he does, and she goes on.

The Indian is lazy, and improvident. He cannot understand the necessity of laying up a supply for the future. While he has the means

he lyes like a prince; and when he has it not he does without. He can bear hunger and cold, and neglect, without repining. But he had much rather be well-fed, and warm, and kindly treated. I have not discovered a word in the language either for *patience* or *impatience*. A Frenchman, who speaks Micmac well, and English better, assured me that there are no such terms in the language, and that an Indian never "gets out of patience," and is never anxious about the future. He often appears stupid, and vacant, when it arises merely from his not understanding you. Could you address him in his own tongue, you would see his countenance light up, and find that he has an eye that can flash, a heart that can beat, and a soul that can be stirred. He loves excitement. Hence his inveterate fondness for tobacco, tea, and what is infinitely worse, strong drinks. An exciting employment rouses him. However he may dislike chopping wood and hoeing potatoes, he has no objection to the chase. He makes buckets and baskets, and carries them to town on his own back, because he must do so or starve. But let a shoal of porpoises heave in sight, and then see him! All other business is suspended. The women and children line the bank. The men gird on their belts, overhaul their guns, get ready their ammunition, launch their canoes, and away, away, with the speed of an arrow, towards the scene of attraction. The very dogs catch the enthusiasm, and amidst the din of women's voices, and children's shouts, they yelp and howl in most melodious concert. And what if they kill nothing! They do not in that case return cursing their stars, and uttering imprecations against the fish or themselves for having had their run for nothing. Not they. Canoe after canoe returns. The women are again at their work; the children at their play; the dogs lie down in the camp and snore; the men light their pipes; and you go quietly home. Such a scene I lately witnessed at the Strait of Canso; and I would not for a trifle have missed it.

And they can be moved on other occasions. They can raise their voices in anger. They can describe an exciting scene, with every muscle in motion, and with gesticulation so perfect, that you would scarcely need to understand their language, in order to know what they are telling. And the Indian mother loves her babe, nurses it as carefully, and cherishes it as fondly, as any mother; and weeps as bitterly when it dies. And so does the father. He will kiss his little daughter, and sing to her, as she presses her tiny lips to his "*uktruncheeju,*" "your dear little mouth," with all the affection imaginable. And his little son comes bounding to meet him when he returns home, climbs over his head, and hangs upon him; and both father and son appear to enjoy it, for all I can see, as much as those of any other nation or rank. And I have been affected in hearing a sick Indian refer to the hardships his poor wife had to suffer, during a severe winter, while he was unable to do anything himself, and she had been obliged to cut the wood, and travel through the deep snow, until she was "*suel nepk,*" "almost dead." And I was still more affected when his aged, widowed mother, related to me, after his death, how feelingly he had referred, in his last moments, while taking an affectionate farewell of his little ones, to my kindness, as he called it, in visiting them, and interesting myself in their behalf. Poor fellow! May God Almighty take care of the

little orphans and bless them! Here may be mentioned their exercises of devotion. They regularly say their prayers; attend mass; go to confession, and cross themselves. Every morning and evening, and on Sundays and Holidays, they assemble in their Chapel, when residing in its neighborhood, or in the wigwams, when far away from the Chapel, and perform their devotions. One person is appointed to lead. They are summoned at the proper hour, by an individual shouting at the top of his voice, and calling them to come to prayers. The greater part of the service is sung, or rather, *chanted*. They have tenor, bass, and treble voices; and, save and except a most disagreeable "nasal twang," their singing is not unmelodious. They sing responsively, each part chiming in at the proper time. They shift their position several times during the performance, which lasts for nearly an hour; at one time, sitting on their heels and holding up their heads; at another, bending forwards; and they conclude with an act of prostration, bending forward, and touching their foreheads to the ground. Then, if in the Chapel, they "bow to the graven images," or pictures, and slowly retire. And they also repeat their private devotions, and cross themselves before retiring to rest at night, and immediately after rising in the morning. They always take off their hats and cross themselves when they eat. In their prayers there are many repetitions. They address the Trinity; and call on Jesus (*Sasus*) to have mercy upon them; they invoke the Virgin Mary, and the Saints; repeat the Creed and portions of the Commandments, and say the Lord's Prayer. They have also Psalms and Hymns, and parts of Scripture history. "And could you tell them this," said a young Indian, who was assisting me in translating portions of the New Testament, "I think they would attend to it; for as far as they know, they do." And my young friend proposed it, as a capital plan, that I should translate the Gospel into Micmac, and tell them that the Bishop had done it, so that they would receive it without hesitation. "And do you think," said I to another, "that were I to preach in your language, the Indians would come to hear me." "Come?" said he, "to be sure we would; we would come a hundred miles to hear you."

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE MICMAC LANGUAGE.

The language of the Indians is very remarkable. One would think it must be exceedingly barren, limited in inflection, and crude. But just the reverse is the fact. It is copious, flexible, and expressive. Its declension of Nouns, and conjugation of Verbs, are as regular as the Greek, and twenty times as copious. The full conjugation of one Micmac Verb, would fill quite a large volume! In its construction and idiom it differs widely from the English. This is why an Indian usually speaks such wretched English. He thinks in his own tongue, and

speaks in ours; and follows the natural order of his own arrangement. He commits such blunders as the following: "Five hundred musquash killum my father." "Long time ago, when first Indians makum God;" for, "my father killed five hundred muskrats;" and, "when God first made the Indians." There are fewer elementary sounds in Micmac than in English. They have no *r*, and no *f* or *v*. Instead of *r* they say *l*, in such foreign words as they adopt. And droll enough work they sometimes make in translating back and forth, from one language to the other, and in attempting not to confound *r* and *l*, while speaking English. The name of an *hour* is in Micmac the same as that of an *owl*, (*kookoogues*) because when they first attempted to say it, they had to say *oul*, and then they could think of the name of that nocturnal bird in their own tongue, more readily than they could recal a foreign term. And Mr. Lord is called *Elsahkudaygun*. "the *Ramrod*," because *Peter Joe* drops the *r* in *Lord*, and changes the *r* in *rod* into *l*, which thus becomes the same as the former—*lod*. Taking it for granted that it is the same word in each case, we translate it accordingly.

There is no Article in Micmac. The Verb *To Be*, is "Irregular," and is never used for the purpose of connecting a subject with its predicate. They have a *dual* number, like the Greek. They express the different *Persons* and *Numbers* by the termination of the Verb, and like the Greek, have a great number of *Tenses*. There are also some words in the Language, which resemble Greek. The Micmac word *Ellenu*, an Indian, is not very different from *Ellen*, a Greek. *Ellenu esit*, he speaks Micmac, is strikingly like the Greek *Ellenesei*, he will speak Greek. But in other respects the language resembles the Hebrew. Especially in the "suffixes" by which the Personal Pronouns are connected in the Accusative Case, with the Verb. There are words evidently derived from the English and French; but *wellae*, *I am well*, appears in so many compounds, and occurs in some form so constantly as to make the impression that it is original Micmac.

The following are the Personal Pronouns. *Neen*, *I*; *Keel*, *Thou*; *Neggum*, *He* and *She*; *Neenen*; *We*; *Keenu*, *We*; *Negumou*, *They*. The *Gender* is not distinguished either in the Singular or Plural of the Pronouns. The distinction between *Neenen* and *Keenu*, is this. The former, signifies *He* and *I*: the latter *You* and *I*. This distinction obtains in all the Indian dialects, so far as I have been able to learn. And it extends through the declension of Nouns, Adjectives and Pronouns, and the Conjugation of Verbs.

They have various methods of marking the *sex* of animals. Sometimes by different words as *cheenum*, a man; *abit*, a woman. Sometimes by an additional word, as *keegulleeguech nabao*, a cock; *keegulleeguech esquao*, a hen. The word *Squaw* is not Micmac; but a termination something resembling it, is added to epithets denoting rank, station, or employment, to distinguish the female sex. Thus: *Eleegevait*, a king; *Eleegevawesqu*, a queen. *Sakumou*, a chief; *sakumasqu*, a chief's wife. But as neither Adjectives, Verbs, nor Pronouns, are varied to denote the Gender of Animals, there is no necessity for the distinction of Masculine and Feminine, for any Grammatical purpose. But there is a broad distinction between things which have life and those which are inanimate. This requires the distinction of the Animate and Inanimate Gender.

The plural of these two classes of words, is formed in a very different manner; *k* being the termination of the Animate, and *l* of the Inanimate. *Cheenum* a man; *cheenumook*, men. *Soon*, a cranberry; *soonul*, cranberries. The Adjectives, Pronouns, and Verbs, are varied to agree in Gender. \**Kaloosit abit*, a pretty woman; *kaloosit cheenum*, a pretty man. But *kahuk koondou*, a pretty stone. *Nemeek cheenum*, I see a man. *Nemedu koondou*, I see a stone. By varying the termination of Nouns, they distinguish the Nominative, Genitive, Dative, Accusative and Vocative Cases. This makes the same number as in Greek. But they are in advance of that elegant Language. They have two more terminations, one denoting that the person, or thing, spoken of, is *absent*; and the other, that the word ends the sentence. The former may be called "the Case *Absentive*," and the other, "the Case *Terminative*." It is proper to state that these additional endings may be added to each of the real Cases.

The *Verb* is emphatically *the word* in Micmac. Whole sentences, and long ones too, occur constantly, formed wholly of Verbs. All Adjectives of the Animate Gender, are real Verbs, and are conjugated through Mood and Tense, Person and Number. There being no such thing as the Verb †*To Be* used as a *copula*, the *copula* is in the Adjective itself. I know not how to distinguish the two ideas, *a good man*, and, *the man is good*. Even the *Numerals* are Verbs. And any Noun can assume the form and nature of a Verb without any difficulty.

The following are the Numerals: *Na-oook*, One; *Tah-boo*, Two; *Seest*, Three; *Na-oo*, Four; *Nahn*, Five; *Ussookum*, Six; *Ellooiggunuk*, Seven; *Oogunmoolchin*, Eight; *Peskoonahduk*, Nine; *M'tiln*, Ten.

The Indian can count as far as he pleases. The prevalent notion that he can only count *ten*, is an error. It is true, he enumerates by *tens*, as all other nations do; and often, like the rest of mankind, uses his fingers in counting; and he happens to have, as others have, just that number of these convenient appendages. *Naookt-inskak*, is another word for ten. *Tahbooinsskak*, twenty. *Naseinskak*, thirty. *Naoo-inskak*, forty, &c.

The above are used when counting objects, whether Animate or Inanimate. But when expressing a number, as *three apples*, or, *three men*, the Indian uses a different termination. Thus: *nasiskulwenjoo-soonul*, three apples; *nasijik cheenumook*, three men. This is a *second* word for *three*. But *this* variety applies only to *three*, and *ten*. *Tahbooseyek* there are two of us. *Tahbooseyok*, there are two of you. *Taboosijik*, there are two of them. *Taboosijik abijik*, two women. *Taboogul kumoojul*, two trees.

An Indian once boasted to me of the variety of his language, and affirmed that he had at least two words for every idea. "Always, everything, two ways me speakum," said he. But this is not literally true; though I will not affirm that it is not as correct as some of the "General Rules" we meet with in other Languages.

\*Compare *kaloosit*, with the the Greek *kalos*, pretty.

†They have a Verb corresponding to the Verb *To Be*, but it always denotes place. *Ayum*, I am here. *Aik wigwomk*, he is there in the wigwam.

A specimen of the Conjugation of a Verb must be given. It must be on a limited scale. I premise that they have the Indicative, Imperative, Subjunctive, Potential, and Infinitive Moods, and in the Indicative, the forms of *eleven Tenses!* They have the Active, Passive, and Middle Voices; and by a slight variation of the termination, they add to, take from, and vary the original idea, almost endlessly.

In order that the inflections may be distinguished from the root, I have chosen a word which has been adopted from the English. It is the verb *to witness*, in the sense of *to give testimony*.

## INDICATIVE MOOD.

## PRESENT TENSE.

<i>Sing.</i>	1. *Witness-awe.	I witness.
	2. Witness-awin.	Thou witnessest.
	3. Witness-awit.	He witnesses.
<i>Dual.</i>	1. Witnessaweyek.	He and I witness.
	1. Witnessawewekw.	Thou and I witness.
	2. Witnessaweyok.	You witness.
	3. Witnessawijik.	They witness.
<i>Plural</i>	1. Witnessawoolteyek.	
	1. Witnessawoolteekw.	
	2. Witnessawoolteyok.	
	3. Witnessawooltijik.	

\* The number and person being marked by the termination, the *Pronouns* are seldom used with the verb, except for emphasis—then it would be *Neen witness-awe*, &c.

## IMPERFECT TENSE.

<i>Sing.</i>	1. Witnessaweap.	I witnessed.
	2. Witnessaweep.	Thou didst witness.
	3. Witnessawip.	He witnessed.
<i>Dual</i>	1. Witnessaweyegup.	He and I witnessed.
	1. Witnessaweegoop.	Thou and I witnessed.
	2. Witnessaweyogup.	You witnessed.
	3. Witnessawibunik.	They witnessed.
	* 3. Witnessawibuneeek.	They witnessed.
<i>Plural</i>	1. Witnessawoolteyegup.	They and we witnessed.
	1. Witnessawoolteegoop.	You and we witnessed.
	2. Witnessawoolteyogup.	You witnessed.
	3. Witnessawooldibunik.	They witnessed.
	* 3. Witnessawooldibuneeek.	They witnessed.

\* This *second* form of the *3rd pers. dual* and *plural* is used if you are speaking of *absent* persons. If they are *present* you use the first form.

## FUTURE TENSE.

<i>Sing.</i>	1. Witnessawedes.	I will witness.
	2. Witnessaweduks.	Thou wilt, &c.
	3. Witnessawedou.	
<i>Dual.</i>	1. Witnessawedesenen.	
	1. Witnessaweduksunoo.	
	* 2. Witnessawedoksup.	
	3. Witnessawedak.	
<i>Plural</i>	1. Witnessawooltedesenen.	
	1. Witnessawoolteduksunoo.	
	2. Witnessawooltedoksup.	
	3. Witnessawooltedak.	



These are the principal Tenses. They use an *Auxiliary Verb* for the rest. This is a part of the Verb *kesedu*, I finish. This prefixed to the Present, forms the Perfect; thus: *Kese witnessawe*, I have been witnessing. *Kes kese witnessawe*, I have witnessed; that is, I have done witnessing. Prefixed to the *Imperfect* it forms the *Pluperfect*. *Kese witnessaweap*, I had been witnessing. *Kes kese witnessaweap*, I had witnessed (i. e. I had finished witnessing). Prefixed to the Future it forms the Second Future, or Future Perfect. *Kese witnessawedes*, I shall have witnessed. In the *Imperfect* and all these Tenses which are formed from it, there are *Interrogative* forms. *Witnessawees!* Was I witnessing? *Witnessaweesup?* Wast thou witnessing? &c., &c. This makes up in all, the *forms* of eleven Tenses.

A curious feature of the language is the *double negative*, and this extends to Nouns and Adjectives, as well as to Verbs. It doubles the labor of learning the conjugation, as it consists in placing a negative before the word, and then changing the termination. Thus *Witnessawe* I witness. *Moo witnessawe* I do not witness. *Moo witnessawikw* He does not witness.

They have a remarkable facility for compounding words. Here again there is a resemblance to the Greek. The particular mentioned last before this, reminds one also of the double negative sometimes in that language. The terrible long words of the Indians, are compounds, and while they lengthen *words*, they shorten *speech*, and render it more effective. These seem to be common to all the Indian dialects. Cotton Mather said they looked as though they had been growing ever since the confusion of Babel; a remark which, perhaps, contains as much philosophical truth as it does wit. The following *specimen* occurs in their Prayerbook, in the account of the "Last Supper." It contains fourteen syllables, and when spelled with English letters, can be made, without much exaggeration, to occupy *forty* characters.

Najdejemouweeoolowguoddullaolteedissuneega, "*They were going to eat supper together.*" In the Prayerbook, written in symbols, *one small character*, represents this formidable word. It is compounded of several by taking their principal parts, and dovetailing them into one. The *roots* are tied together, and they become one *long tree*.

Some people are astonished to hear us speak of the *Grammar* of the Micmacs. They did not suppose these people had any such thing, or that they ever trouble themselves about "Orthography, Etymology and Syntax." Nor do they. They are like the man, who beginning to learn late in life, expressed his astonishment on ascertaining that he had been speaking in *prose* all his life, without knowing it. Grammar is the "art of speaking and writing a language correctly." But what is it to speak or write correctly? It is not just this, "to speak and write like those who understand and speak the Language best?" Were the English Language spoken no where but in Devonshire, then all the rules of English Grammar would have to be constructed in accordance with that fact. The way in which words are pronounced in that place, would be the correct mode of pronunciation. Their manner of constructing sentences, would form our Rules of Syntax. And so of any other language, or any other place. Now the best usage of Micmac, is the only usage which prevails. And although they have neither Grammars

nor Lexicons, in use among them, yet they have higher authority, one on which these, wherever they exist, are based, the Micmac *usus loquendi*, the authority of the *best usage*. And it is interesting to hear them appeal to this authority. "They dont say it so," you will be told, when you mispronounce a word, or construct a sentence improperly; or, "*net na*," "that is it:" "*teleketusultijk*," "that is the way they speak" when you succeed in expressing yourself correctly. You will not catch them confounding the *Dual* with the *Plural*, the *Animate Gender* with the *Inanimate*, the *Present Tense* with the *Past* or *Future*; nor the *Positive* form of words, with the *Negative*. Some diversity it is true, exists in the Language as spoken in different places. It extends merely to the use and pronunciation of a few words. The Indians of Cape Breton, amuse themselves occasionally at the expense of the Nova Scotians; and are themselves laughed about in turn, by the latter party, for their improper or uncouth utterances; and the Indians on Prince Edward Island and at Miramichi, are as susceptible of the ludicrous, as their brethren, and as conscious of their own superiority. And I confess it requires some nerve to endure being laughed at to one's face, even by a company of Indians. To hear them catch up your bad pronunciation, or awkward sentence, and repeat it from one to another amidst roars of laughter, inclines you sometimes to read them a lecture on "good manners." But you may as well make the best of it. It is not in human nature, learned or unlearned, civilized or savage, for a word in common use to be pronounced differently from what one has always been accustomed to hear it, without its attracting notice, and provoking a smile. I now generally get out of the difficulty by taking advantage of a lull in the storm of ridicule, and then saying to them, in Micmac, "When an Englishman speaks Indian, the Indians laugh; and when an Indian speaks English, the Englishmen laugh." This turns the tables upon them, puts them into a good humor with themselves and with me; and makes them a little more cautious.

I close these remarks on their language by a few sentences of the tale related in Chapter II, interlining a very literal translation, in order to show their method of arranging their words. As they have no Article, this also is neglected in the translation, except where it is implied in the Verb.

Na meskek	udun	bopak.	Neduguledijk	chenumuk
Now great	Indian	settlement	down a	river.
Go a	hunting	men		
toguaq	tuchu	mugu	ankuouwa	kelulk.
Autumn	then	now	for	good.
They	go	up	the	river.
Ababejit	ak	wedabala	nenkadijk	kudiiga;
nadal	etuldugulijk.	Ababejit	and	his
comrade	stop	half	way;	there
they	go	a	hunting.	Ababejit
u'tabtiemul	seguskwol;	naselije	unejunta.	Sikwa
tuchu	seboo	his	wife	a
widow;	three	them	her	children.
Spring	then	river	elodasijk	Ababejit
ak	wedabala	tan	kogua	nabadudich
nauk-	bring	down	to	Ababejit
and	his	comrade	what	things
they	kill	one	tebuga,	eskatumedich
kakimetpegasin	sebooa.	winter,	they	wait
for	its	breaking	up	river.

Nothing would be more unfair or absurd than to translate good Micmac into bad English, were we professedly acting as an interpreter or translator. But the above is given for the purpose already specified.

English rendered literally into Micmac would be as unintelligible and ridiculous to them, as the above appears to us. Some knowledge of the idiom of their language is essential in order to understand them when speaking English.

#### CHAPTER IV.

LITERATURE OF THE MICMACS—THEIR METHOD OF WRITING—THEIR SYLLOLIC PRAYER-BOOK—THE SCIENCES—EXCELLENT GUIDES—THEIR TRADITIONS.

AND what can be meant, it may be asked, by the *Literature* of the Micmacs. We have been in the habit of looking upon them as miserable, ignorant, stupid looking beings. We have been aware that there have never been, to any extent, schools established among them, and that no effort, except on the smallest scale, has been made by the whites, to teach them. We have treated them almost as though they had no rights, and as if it were somewhat doubtful whether they even have souls. And have they a Literature? By what effort of imagination can it be made out? And truly the term must be taken with some restriction in its meaning. They possess, however, some knowledge of the Arts and Sciences. They have a book which they read. Some of them can write both English and Micmac in a very fair hand. Some of them have a knowledge of arithmetic. An instance has occurred in Prince Edward Island, of an Indian who prided himself on being able to add up the longest and most complicated sums, as rapidly as the most expert accountant. They are in the constant habit of corresponding among themselves by letter. I have obtained a couple of letters, written by an Indian who has been several years at Quebec; one addressed to his father, and the other to the chief in Cape Breton; and the hand-writing would be no discredit to any body. The method of writing and spelling is curious. The letters for the most part resemble the English, but are sounded like the French. Their *book* is written in peculiar *characters*. They have nothing in Roman print. Most of them are acquainted with the contents of this book; but few, however, can read it correctly. Copies of it are multiplied indefinitely, by transcribing. And it embraces important matter. It enters into some of the most elevated regions of knowledge and thought. I cannot approve of it as a whole. It states things which are false in fact, and ruinous in tendency; but it also states much that is truth, and truth of the most momentous import. It is their *Prayer Book*. It contains condensed extracts from the historical portions of the Bible; a Catechism of Religion; Psalms and Hymns, and Prayers. The contents are early instilled into their memories. The children are taught by their parents, and many a Protestant family might take a lesson from them in this respect.

But they are also versed in other subjects. They have studied Botany from Nature's Volume. They know the names of all the trees

and shrubs, and useful plants, and roots, in their country. They have studied their natures, habits, and uses. They have killed, dissected, and examined all the animals of North America, from the *meštugepegajit* to the *guluwakchech*, from the "buffalo" to the "mouse." They have in like manner examined the birds and the fish. They are therefore somewhat acquainted with Natural History.

The Indian has studied Geography. Not, however, that of Europe, Asia, and Africa. But he knows all about America. And most especially does the Micmac know about Nova Scotia and the places adjacent. Shew him a map of these places, and explain to him that it is "a picture of the country," and although it may be the first time he has ever seen a map, he can go round it, and point out the different places with the utmost care. He is acquainted with every spot. He is in the habit of making rude drawings of places for the direction of others. One party can thus inform another at what spot in the woods they are to be found. At the place where they turn off the main road, a piece of bark is left, with the contemplated route sketched upon it. The party following examine the *luskun* as they term it, when they come up, and then follow on without any difficulty.

An Indian is a first rate hand to give you directions respecting your road. He marks it out for you on the ground, and you cannot have a better guide, especially through the woods. When roads were fewer and more difficult in Nova Scotia than they are now, the Indian's aid was frequently called into requisition. And "here," said the tawny guide, who was years ago directing a party in their travel from Nictaux to Liverpool in the winter, "here just half-way." When the road was afterwards measured it was found that the Indian was correct. Arriving at another spot, he informed them that the preceding winter he had killed a moose at that place. Digging down through the deep snow, he immediately showed them the horns. Their services should always be obtained in searching for persons who are lost in the woods. Besides their accurate acquaintance with the face of the country, they are able to track you with all ease over the leaves in summer. They can discern the traces of your foot, where you can see nothing. You have bent the leaves and grass under your feet, and the impression remains. And your upper extremities have left an additional track behind you, on the trees, and on the moss, which, brushed along as you passed, was not wholly elastic; it remained in a measure as you left it. So that whether he looks up or looks down, he sees your track, and can follow you at full speed. Now where there are habits of such close observation, there must be mental improvement.

And they have some knowledge of Astronomy. They have watched the stars during their night excursions, or while laying wait for game. They know that the North star does not move, and they call it "*okwo-tunruwuwa kulokuwech*," "the North star." They have observed that the circumpolar stars never set. They call the Great Bear, "*Muen*," *the bear*. And they have names for several other constellations. The morning star is *ufadabun*, and the seven stars *ejulkuch*. And "what do you call that?" said a venerable old lady a short time ago, who with her husband, the head chief of Cape Breton, was giving me a lecture on Astronomy, on nature's celestial globe, through the apertures of the

wigwam. She was pointing to the "milky way" "Oh we call it the milky way—the milky road," said I. To my surprise she gave it the same name in Micmac.

Besides these branches of knowledge, they have among them historical facts, as already intimated, and facts mingled with fable, and fables apparently without any mixture of facts, treasured up carefully in their memories, and handed down from generation to generation. These singular tales display some talent in their composition, and many of them, all things considered, are exceedingly interesting, as the genuine compositions of a primitive race, just as the wildest or most ridiculous tales of the nursery (some of which, by-the-bye, they very much resemble), such as Sinbad the Sailor, Beauty and the Beast, Jack the Giant-killer, or Cinderella and the glass slipper, would be, could we but be certified that they were the genuine compositions of the ancient Britons, in the days preceding the Roman conquest, when our forefathers were barbarians. And viewed in a similar light why should not the traditionary romances of the Micmacs be worthy of attention? They are, no doubt, genuine. They must have been composed by Indians, and many of them by Indians of a former generation. Some of them are composed with great regularity. One event occurs out of another, and the story goes on with a wildness of imagination about magicians and giants, and transformations, and love, and war, and murder, that might almost rival the metamorphosis of Ovid, or the tales of the ancient Scandinavians. Children exposed, or lost, by their parents, are miraculously preserved. They grow up suddenly to manhood, and are endowed with superhuman powers. They become the avengers of the guilty, and the protectors of the good. They drive up the moose and the "carriboo" to their "*camps*," and slaughter them at their leisure. The elements are under their controul. They can raise the wind; conjure up storms or disperse them; make it cold or hot, wet or dry, as they please. They can multiply the smallest amount of food indefinitely; evade the subtlety and rage of their enemies; kill them miraculously, and raise their slaughtered friends to life. Huge serpents are occasionally introduced "as big as mountains." A monstrous bird called the *kulloo*, the same possibly as the fabled condor, often makes its appearance. With a dozen slaughtered fat buffaloes on its back, and several men, it goes off through the air as though it bore no burden. A whole quarter of beef serves it for a mouthful. It has human properties; can speak; and is endowed with prophetic powers. It is a powerful friend or terrible enemy to the Indians. When the former, it saves them from all sorts of troubles, and furnishes them with every good. When the latter, their condition is sad indeed. In a tale which lies before me, a *kulloo* is described as having depopulated a whole village; having carried the inhabitants all off alive, to his own territory. He occupies a central wigwam; his prisoners are all around him in a circle. One whole family furnishes him with a meal, and he takes them in rotation, each family knowing when their turn will come. The same tale relates the destruction of the old tyrant. A child, picked up in the woods by an old squaw, has been reared by her, and after a long series of marvellous events, he arrives just as his parents are in expectation of being devoured on the morrow. But he

proves their deliverer. The old *kulleo* falls by his hand, together with all the brood, except the younger one, who by great persuasion and rich promises, obtains permission to live. Henceforth this bird attaches himself to the young hero, and faithfully does he reward him for sparing his life. Such are their tales, and they seem to have scores of them. Five of them from the mouth of an Indian, I have written down, each being the length of a tolerable sermon, and I have heard many more. I prize them chiefly as furnishing me with the means of studying the language.

Now all these facts relate to the question of the intellectual capacity of the Indians; the degree of knowledge existing among them; and the possibility of elevating them in the scale of humanity. If such be their degree of mental improvement, with all their disadvantages, what might they not become, were the proper opportunity afforded? Shame on us! We have seized upon the lands which the Creator gave to them. We have deceived, defrauded, and neglected them. We have taken no pains to aid them; or our efforts have been feeble and ill-directed. We have practically pronounced them incapable of improvement, or unworthy of the trouble; and have coolly doomed the whole race to destruction. But dare we treat them thus, made as they are in the image of God like ourselves? Dare we neglect them any longer? Will not the bright sun and the blue heavens testify against us? and will not this earth which we have wrested away from them, lift up its voice to accuse us? And when they shall have passed away, and their very name is forgotten by our children, will not the voice of our brother's blood cry unto God from the ground? and in the Day of Judgment when all past actions will be brought to light, and the despised Indian will stand on a level with his now more powerful neighbour, then as poor and as helpless as himself; when the Searcher of Hearts shall demand of us, "Where is thy brother?" how shall we answer this question, if we make not now one last effort to save them! We will make such an effort. We are doing so, and God is with us. He will crown our labours with success. We will implore forgiveness for the past, and wisdom and grace for the future.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF OF THE MICMACS.

THE various tribes of North America seemed to have differed but little from each other in their ideas of religion when they became known to the Europeans. With scarcely an exception they were without images. They believed in a Supreme Power, a Great Spirit, the Author of Good; and also in an evil spirit the author of evil. The latter is said to have been their principal object of worship. The Indians of Canada call the Great Spirit Manitu, or Menedu—different tribes probably making some difference in the pronunciation—and they add the epithet *good* or *bad* to indicate which one they mean. The

Micmacs have several names for God. They call him *Nickam*, which intimates that "we are all his offspring." *Nickamich* signifying a grandfather or progenitor. Another word, so used, is *Kesulk*, which is a form of the verb *kesedu*, to create; and literally means, *He makes us*. *Our Maker*, is, of course, the correct translation. They also call him, *Ukhesakumou*, which signifies, The Great Chief. *Mundu*, which is evidently the same as the *Manitu* or *Manedu* of the tribes of Canada, mentioned above, is the Micmac word for *devil*.

Every where the Indians believed in necromancy. *Boowoin* is the Micmac word for a "wizard." The present generation appears to be as firmly rooted in the belief of supernatural powers exercised by men as ever their fathers were. It was owing to this belief that their *pouows*, "medicine men," or priests, were formerly able to exercise so much influence over the others. These men were every where the most formidable opposers of christianity. It is so the world over. The Indian of Nova Scotia now believes *mundu abogunumuaeje*, "that the devil helped those fellows;" but he has no doubts of the reality of their powers. The devil, he will assure you, is very strong. The ancient *boowoin* could—he firmly believes—fly through the air—(even without a broom stick)—go down through the earth; remain under water as long as he chose; transform himself into an animal—and do all the other feats of witchcraft which our forefathers, as well as learned divines of Salem, in Massachusetts, attributed to the poor old women of their day.

But the most remarkable personage of their traditions is *Glooscap*. The Indians suppose that he is still in existence, although they do not know exactly where. He formerly resided in Nova Scotia; but, of course, shifted his habitation. He was, to say the least, almost an object of worship. He looked and lived like other men; he ate, drank, smoked, slept, and danced along with them. But he never died, never was sick, never grew old. He lived in a very large wigwam. Cape Blomidon still bears his name, *Glooscap-week*, "Glooscap's home." The Basin of Minas was his beaver pond—for he had every thing on a large scale. The *dam* was at Cape Split; and we are indebted to this wondrous personage—so goes the tradition—for the privilege of sending our ships down this passage. For there he cut open the "beaver dam"—and the fact is established by the name which it still bears.—The Indians call it *Pleegun*, "the opening made in a beaver dam." Spencer's Island was his kettle, made of a stone. This is still its name; and two rocks, somewhat resembling dogs, seated on their haunches, near *u' toowome* "his kettle," are called *u' teek* "his dogs." The kettle is now bottom upwards, and the dogs were transformed into rocks when he went away. His canoe was also of stone.

Glooscap was unmarried. A venerable old lady, whom he called "grandmother," kept "house" for him, and a little fellow named *Abistanauch*, or "Marten," was his servant. He could do any thing and every thing. The moose and the cariboo, came around his dwelling, as tame as cattle; and the other beasts were equally obsequious. The elements were entirely under his control. He could bring on an intensity of cold when he chose, which would extinguish all the fires of his enemies, and lay them stiffened corpses on the ground.

Glooscap frequently figures in their legends. He seems to have been, on the whole, a noble-minded, generous sort of personage. You do not often meet with any mischievous exercise of his power. Strangers were always welcome to his wigwam, and the necessitous never failed to share in his hospitality, until some act of treachery on their part, or some distrust of his ability, called for castigation. His bounty, however, did not cost him much. When hungry travellers arrived, there was no necessity for slaughtering a moose, or killing the "fatted calf." The old lady would hang on the kettle; "Marten" would make up the fire, and pour in the water. She would then pick up a piece of an old beaver bone, and scrape it into the kettle. As the boiling commenced these scrapings would thicken up, and the huge kettle would be soon full of fat pieces of flesh. If the necessity of the case required, a very small piece of this meat would satisfy the most hungry visiter—for as fast as he cut off one piece, it would immediately appear again.

Glooscap, they say, got offended at the encroachments of the whites; but what displeased him most of all, and drove him away, was their treachery. By the direction of the king, an attempt was made to take him prisoner; an attempt, as it proved, quite as foolish as it was wicked. Little "Marten" was decoyed before the mouth of a loaded cannon. The match was applied, the powder blazed; but no sooner had the smoke cleared away, than the astonished spectators beheld the boy astride on the gun, composedly smoking his pipe. A second attempt was made; this had of course, it was pretended, been a pure accident. "Marten" was induced to enter the cannon's mouth—he must have been small, or the cannon very large.—The gun was again discharged. Nothing was to be seen this time of the boy. No doubt was entertained of his annihilation. One of the by-standers after a little while peeps into the gun, and behold there sits the little gentleman, as easy as possible, quietly puffing away at his pipe as though nothing had happened. But unavailing as were these attempts, Glooscap gave vent to his anger, and in his rage abandoned the country, turned over his kettle, as he went off, and changed his dogs into rocks. There the faithful sentinels still keep watch, and when he returns he will be as able to restore them to their former life and vigor as he was at his departure, to fix them where they now are.

Now what sense or meaning there may be at the bottom of all this nonsense, I leave to the speculations of others. Some allusion to these fables appeared necessary, in order to a correct understanding of the cast of mind and prejudices of the Indian.

All these extraordinary powers, and still greater than these, they now believe their *priests* to possess. "The priest," they say, "is next to God." They do not doubt his ability to work any miracle. One of the easiest of this sort of things for him to do is, as they suppose, to call up the devil from the pit below, and set him at his appropriate work. An intelligent Indian lately proposed gravely to me, to go with him to the Bishop, and decide the question by an appeal to his miraculous powers, whether popery or protestantism be the right religion. I had read in the Bible to him, and he had been interested in its contents. He had seemed anxious on the subject of his soul's salvation. I had explained to him the doctrine of salvation by grace, and of the power



of faith and love to God, to produce good works. I had prayed in his wigwam in his own language, and pointed out to him what I conceived to be his errors, and those of the system to which he was attached. He had told all this to his family, and neighbors—for what *one hears all bear*. Some of them, I learned from another quarter, had intimated that I might be correct, while others thought it advisable for him as well as for themselves, to be on their guard. He admitted the sincerity of my intentions in studying their language, translating the New Testament, and seeking to do them good; but this only led him as earnestly to wish my conversion, as I did his. "Were I convinced that the Roman Catholics are right, would I join them?" asked he. I assured him that I would. "Well, should the Bishop work a miracle, would that convince me?" Undoubtedly it would, if I were sure there was no deception, but a genuine miracle. The poor fellow was well pleased at this reply. We accordingly, at his suggestion, made an agreement, and he was as sincere about it, to all appearance as possible. "My wife," said he to me in Micmac on his return next day, "is pleased with the proposal, and so are my comrades." The agreement was this. We are to go, with a suitable number of witnesses, to the Bishop—provided his lordship will agree to it—and my friend is previously to sound him. The Bishop is to summon the devil into his presence, and ask him which belongs to him, the catholic or the protestant—my Indian friend, or myself. If his infernal majesty does not come, at the Bishop's bidding, this settles the question in my favor. The Indian is to become a convert to my opinions; and his family, and many more of them, he assures me, will follow his example. If the devil comes, and lays claim to me, and I cannot master him, I am to take shelter under the Bishop's wing, become a faithful son of the only true church, and devote myself, without any opposition, to the welfare of the poor Indians.

I have never yet met with an Indian who supposed he had himself seen the devil, or a miracle wrought. But I have been assured by some that their grandparents, or some other old people whom they had seen or heard of, had done so. It is commonly reported among them that the first priest who came among them, learned miraculously to speak their language. He was a Frenchman. By means of an interpreter he informed the Indians what his object was. They readily assisted in the erection of a chapel, being paid for their labor. They did not refuse to receive baptism. Not that they understood its import—I relate the story substantially as stated to me—but they thought it could do them no harm, and *paboltjik*, "it was capital fun" for them. Having finished the chapel the priest shut himself up alone, and spent the time in prayer. On Sundays, and when the sick or dying required his attention, he came out, attended to these duties, and then immediately shut himself up again. This course he continued all winter, until Easter. He then gave notice that if the people would assemble, he would preach to them. They did so, and to their astonishment, he spoke Micmac as well, and as fluently as any of them. And it is especially related of him, as a proof his *purity* as well as of his power, that *he had learned no bad words*. And it further happened that ignorance in this case answered all the valuable ends of knowledge. For the only reason why he might desire a knowledge of the meaning of "bad

words," was, that he might reprove those who used them; and knowing every other word, the moment he heard an individual use a word which he did not understand, he at once knew that it was a "bad word," and could take the offender to task accordingly. I was informed by the Indians in Cape Breton that he resided chiefly among them in that Island; that he made their Prayer-book, taught them what they know of letters, and that he died at Halifax. A venerable old man related, with much animation, how bushes bearing beautiful flowers, sprang up over his grave, testifying, as I took it, to his virtues and his worth.

His miraculous knowledge of their tongue, it is said, deeply impressed the Indians, and led them to attend to his instructions, with seriousness and faith. Another event soon occurred which urged on the work of conversion. An Indian died, or was supposed to be dead. After a while he revived again. He called the rest around him and related where he had been, and what he had seen. He had visited heaven, and hell, and purgatory, and could testify to the existence of all the three places, and united his warning voice to that of the priest, urging them to embrace the new religion without delay. This brought great numbers over; and the story is still gravely told, as proof not to be evaded, when questions are raised respecting the existence of such a place as purgatory.

Other miracles are related. Three officers, somewhere in Canada, fell upon a priest, with drawn swords, and threatened to maltreat him as an imposter, unless he could prove himself a true servant of the Lord, by working a miracle. The priest took out one of the consecrated wafers, placed it on a plate and presented it before the officers, one of them had the audacity to gash it, when lo! the blood spouted out, and continued flowing until it had filled the plate. The priest, however, made no difficulty of swallowing the whole, as though nothing had happened to it. He then kneeled down and prayed. The poor officers, overcome and abashed, stood pale and trembling with fear. Their idle weapons dropped from their hands. They craved the forgiveness and prayers of the priest; and fled into the arms of the church.

Another man once pretended to be a good Catholic, kneeled at the altar, and received the wafer on his tongue from the hand of the priest. He then took it out of his mouth, and slipped it into his pocket. But the priest saw him. At dinner time, in his own house, the miserable man drew out the wafer, passed some profane jests upon it, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the horrified company, gashed it with his knife. The same fearful result followed, as in the former case. The priest was sent for in haste. As soon as he arrived he fell on his knees. As he prayed, the flowing of the blood ceased. The inmates of the house, at his admonition, fled out of it. Fire immediately consumed the house, and the wretched trifer with holy things along with it.

One more recital, and I spare the reader. An Indian had run away with another man's wife. Remonstrance had been lost upon him, until sickness and the near approach of death, terrified him into submission, and he sought to be reconciled to the church. The priest came at his request. Absolution could only be given on one condition; he must put away this woman, who was the wife of another man. This he promised. The priest then returned to his house, a distance of seven

miles, to fetch the materials for the performance of the mystic rites. As he reached his threshold he distinctly heard the Indian, seven miles off, promise the woman, who had been besieging him with tears and entreaties, that he would not send her away. The priest without having entered his dwelling immediately retraced his steps, and charged the relapsed offender with the deed. He denied it, but denial was of no avail. The other Indians were summoned to witness the punishment about to be inflicted. The guilty man was delivered over to Satan. Nor was this a mere idle ceremony. At the direction of the priest the wigwam, where the sick man lay, was partially uncovered. The priest then took out a book and read. The object of this reading was to bring the devil. Hereupon the spirit made his appearance, rising slowly out of the ground, and keeping his eye steadily fixed upon the priest, as if in the greatest terror. When he had risen as far as his waist, he paused. His attention was then directed to the sick man, and he was quietly informed that this man was his property. The priest then raised the cross over him, and the obsequious devil immediately retired. Next day at the same hour the man died.

Such are the idle tales, the "old wive's fables," by means of which the chains of what we firmly believe to be a galling superstition are riveted upon these poor creatures. May that God who is rich in mercy, hasten the hour of their deliverance; and bring them into the glorious liberty of the children of God!

It has been stated that the Indians have, in connection with their Prayer-book, a Catechism of Religion. This contains some good things, as the existence and character of God; the Incarnation of the Son of God; his sufferings in behalf of mankind; the doctrine of the Trinity; with other important truths. But along with these are false and puerile statements. A translation of a few of the questions and answers are here given. They are taken from the beginning of the book in order as they occur. *Ques.* How is it known when any one prays? *Ans.* It is known by his crossing himself correctly. *Ques.* How does he cross himself? *Ans.* First, he brings his right hand to his forehead, then to his breast, then to his left shoulder, then to his right shoulder, and at the same time he repeats, the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. *Ques.* For what purpose do you cross yourself? *Ans.* It reminds me of our Saviour who was thus crucified. *Ques.* For what other purpose do you cross yourself. *Ans.* I do it for the purpose of preventing the devil from injuring me when engaged in any matter, for the devil is afraid of the cross. *Ques.* For what else do you do it. *Ans.* Should any one be about doing evil to me, or should anything troublesome befall me, crossing myself would make all well." The pointed question soon follows, "do you pray aright?" and the child is directed in the answer to reply, that "God enables him to do so."

I have not often found an Indian who appeared to have any correct ideas respecting the plan of salvation. I have, however, seen them affected almost to tears at the story of Christ's sufferings and death; and I once met one who appeared overjoyed to find a Protestant who knew and cared any thing about the blessed Redeemer. "I really believe," said he, raising his hands with emotion, "that we think alike

after all;" and he seemed to think that it was of little consequence whether I crossed myself or not, provided I loved Jesus Christ and prayed to him. I had just read to him in his own tongue, the three last chapters of John's Gospel. On one occasion poor Jacob Michel, of whom I have spoken in a previous chapter, heard me read one of the Penitential Psalms. He assured me that he sometimes felt that way—that is, like the Psalmist—when he thought about his sins. "When I am alone in the woods," said he, "I think of my sins, and pray, and weep." I assured him I was glad to hear that. "I suppose," said he, "you thought an Indian never cries about his sins." "Well Jacob, do you pray to God to forgive your sins?" "Oh yes I pray," he replied, "I pray to God, and I pray to God's mother." He listened with attention while I endeavored to point out the folly of praying to a woman, or to any other creature. Poor fellow! It is not for me to say where his departed spirit has gone. But I am glad that I read the story of the cross to him. I am glad I was enabled to visit him constantly during his last illness; that I could kneel by his side in his wigwam and ask the Saviour to bless him, in a language which the poor fellow could understand. The last thing I remember to have heard him say was, *that he loved Jesus* and was not afraid to die.

In general, so far as I can discover, they seem to be trusting to their own doings and the doings of other men, for salvation. They say their prayers regularly; they attend mass; go to confession, and when death approaches, the priest is sent for, who administers the rite of extreme unction, and after death their gun and other scanty effects are sold, and the proceeds given to the priest, in order that masses may be said for their deliverance from purgatory; and then, they doubt not, all will be well.

The ideas of religion entertained by the Micmacs, as sometimes elicited, are calculated to provoke a smile, were not the subject so serious. "If my good deeds only balance my bad ones," said to me on one occasion an intelligent fellow, who appeared really in earnest about his soul's salvation, "then all will be well;" and to assist in conveying his meaning, he balanced a piece of wood, and laid his finger on either end, where the good deeds and the bad ones, were represented as respectively lying. "And suppose," said he, "this end comes nearly up, why, God is merciful, and will help me." Alas! how many there are who boast of their knowledge, and of their protestantism, whose expectations of salvation are based on the same sandy foundation. But the poor Indian illustrated his idea further. "Suppose," said he, "you swear twice a day, and pray three times, why then keep up a good heart." In this case it was evident to him that the balance would be in my favor. When I explained to the same man that we are pardoned, not because of our good deeds, but through the atonement of Jesus Christ—that he pays all our debts, and expiates all our sins, and forgives us without any merits of our own; and that then, being freely forgiven, we "love much," and serve the Lord more earnestly, a good deal, than we would do if we expected to balance our sins by doings; he looked at me with an eagerness which I shall not soon forget.—There was something in his countenance which seemed to say, "O that is just what a miserable sinner wants; that is a gospel just adapted to

my case, if I only *dare* to believe it." It was evidently a new idea to him. He told me afterwards that he could not get it out of his thoughts; but the antagonist principles in which he had been trained—could they be false? May the Spirit of God conduct him into the way of truth, and holiness, and heaven!

At another time I got a lecture on practical theology, which greatly interested me. It was on "charity," and designed to have an immediate practical effect upon my pocket. As the family were tolerably comfortable, and neither of the worthy old people, who were making their appeals, were either sick or in want, it required some cogent arguments to convince me of the propriety of giving them money. "Ulla outee," said the old lady, very spiritedly, "this is the road," and she laid down a long stick to represent it. "Allah vasaok," "there is heaven," placing her finger at the end of the stick. "Ullah keela," "this is you," and she took up a piece of chip and made it represent a man walking along the road. And she went on to show me how I, as a Minister, should walk ahead of my flock—I must do every thing which they were expected to do. "Pee-ail kakumet kakunega," "Peter stands at the door" of heaven. And I was further informed of the cross-examination I would have to undergo at the gate of heaven before *Pee-ail* would think of unlocking it; and, be assured, one of the most searching enquiries would be respecting my *benevolence*. I would find it difficult to enter, depend on it, if I had not been ready to assist the poor Indians. I heard the old lady through; and then took occasion to dispute some of the sentiments advanced. "Peter does not hold the key of heaven," I said, and went on to explain that it is Christ who admits us into heaven. They heard me with respectful silence, and then the venerable old man looked at me, very gravely, and enquired, "Don't you know that Peter holds the key, and opens the door of heaven?" "Indeed I dont," I replied. "Well," he said, in measured accents, "*if you don't know that, you don't know much.*"

Let no one mistake the design of those statements, they are neither intended to expose these poor creatures to ridicule, nor to cast odium on their religious guides, No! heaven forbid! I, for one, rejoice to know that they are in possession of as much information in the momentous concerns of salvation, as they do possess; and the thought that the only men who have cared at all for their souls, and told them any thing of Jesus Christ, and heaven and hell, are the Romanists, would I trust remove all bitterness of feeling towards that sect, if there were any in my bosom. But why should there be bitterness here? or in any of our bosoms, towards the Roman Catholics? Are we by nature better than they? "No in no wise." Is it owing to our superior goodness that we have the light placed on the candlestick—the word of God blazing around us, while with them it is put under a bushel? Certainly not. 'Then where is boasting?' "It is excluded." We owe it to the super-abounding goodness of God, that we are not grovelling in all the darkness, superstition, and bigotry, of Romanism. This does not render their errors innocent; but it ought to make us humble. It should disarm us of all unkindness; it should wrest the sword of persecution, in any form, out of our hands. But it should not make us idle, it should not prevent us from wielding "the sword of the Spirit, which is the *Word of God.*"

We should labor to convert the Catholics; but in doing this, *our* danger, as Protestants, from Catholic ascendancy, should be a matter of small moment in comparison with *their* danger. Thus Paul felt, respecting the unbelieving Jews. Thus the Redeemer felt towards all men; and thus should we feel towards the poor Indians.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### A PROTESTANT MISSION TO THE MICMACS—ORIGIN OF THE MISSION—PROVIDENTIAL AIDS—THE OBJECTS AIMED AT—ENCOURAGING PROSPECTS.

There is at length a mission commenced for the purpose of evangelizing the Micmacs. Its object is to give them the pure Word of God, in their own tongue, to instruct them in the great truths of Bible Religion, to lead them into the paths of experimental and practical piety and, in every way, to seek their good. It has enlisted the sympathies and support of all denominations of evangelical Christians. The plan adopted in the prosecution of this mission hitherto, was suggested by the course pursued with so much success in France, in Germany, in Ireland, in Canada, and in various other countries; in order to enlighten the Romanists, and to bring them to a saving acquaintance with the Truth as it is in Jesus. It is that of going among the people, in the spirit of kindness; *speaking to them in their own tongue*; reading the Scriptures in their houses; conversing tenderly with them respecting their soul's salvation; distributing copies of the Bible and other good books, as opportunity offers, and aiming in every way to remove their prejudices and lead them to the feet of Christ. The thought was suggested, 'Why may not the poor Micmac Indians be reached in the same way?' Who knows but they would listen to the wondrous story of redeeming love, if addressed to them in terms of christian affection, and in their own tongue? It was surely worth while to try, the chief difficulty in the way was their language. How could this be acquired? It had always been represented as very formidable. We knew of no books in Micmac. We knew of no one who possessed either the ability or the will to give assistance; and we had forgotten that hard as the language might be, a little child can learn it, without books, and under every other disadvantage. And from what source could pecuniary assistance be expected? People would hardly believe that any one was in sober earnest about undertaking such a task as that contemplated; and if he really were in earnest, they would be much more likely to think of a strait jacket, or a Lunatic asylum, than they would to think of giving money to such an object. And even were the public to be convinced of its necessity, and practicability, the churches of all denominations, were pressed out of measure already, to sustain their various religious and benevolent objects.

But how easy it is to start objections. Shame on our unbelief! shame on our slothfulness! He who says to us "go forward," can supply all the necessaries. He can rain down bread from heaven (if need be); bring water out of the rock; or open up a passage through the

very midst of the sea. Difficulties vanish as we approach them, we find a highway around the hill, and a bridge over the stream, and some way of surrounding all difficulties.

Without any reference to this object, so far as either I or my brethren were aware, I was appointed on a mission to Charlottetown. thither I repaired in the summer of 1846. On my way I took my first lesson in Micmac. It was about twenty words, written down with great difficulty from the mouth of an old Indian in Windsor. In Charlottetown I found, where probably I only could have found it, in a preserved file of the Royal Gazette, the outlines of a Micmac Grammar. It was published some years ago by a Mr. Irvin, who died shortly after my arrival in Prince Edward Island. Meagre as this Grammar was, it was of incalculable service, I cannot help thinking now, when I recal to mind how eagerly I transcribed it, lest the precious boon might slip out of my hands.

I soon found a greater prize than this. It was a man who had been thirty years among the Indians, who spoke their tongue well, and understood it better than he spoke it; and who spoke English as correctly as tho' he had never been among the Indians. This was not all.—He had no prejudices against my Protestantism; he was in possession of a Bible—the gift of a Presbyterian minister,—and was quite well acquainted with its contents. He was also both able and willing to render me all the assistance I could possibly expect in the case.

One thing more was needful. I could not pay my teacher nor meet other incidental expenses, without money; this was supplied from a quarter I had little dreamed of. Several officers of Her Majesty's Navy, were engaged in surveying and making charts of the coast; and were now residing at Charlottetown. From the business in which they had been for years engaged, they had often been brought in contact with the Indians, they had pitied their condition, and being themselves men whose hearts the Lord had touched by his grace, they had long desired to see some plan in operation for their spiritual good. I knew nothing of them until I came to Charlottetown. They were Episcopalians, and without any undue imputation of sectarian prejudice, on either side, it would not appear *very* probable that they would take any great interest in a Baptist minister. But no sooner was the whisper conveyed to their ears—I hardly knew how—that I was giving some of my time and attention to the poor Indians, then they sought me out, encouraged me greatly by the interest they manifested in the object, and without interfering at all with my plans, save to forward them by every means in their power, they gave me all the money I needed for the object.

And I must here record another Providential event. I have spoken of the traditionary *tales* of the Indians. The first time that it seemed to me a reality that I should ever make sufficient progress in acquiring their tongue, to answer any valuable end, was when I had succeeded in writing down one of these tales. There are but few who can rehearse them, my teacher, already referred to, could not; but there was, he informed me, somewhere in Nova Scotia, a relative of his wife, who could. Unexpectedly I met this woman in the summer of 1847 at his "camp," she told one of the tales, and he interpreted it. I was two

long days in reducing it to paper; but when done it afforded me the means of studying the language at my leisure, and my success in writing it down, had removed all my fears lest the language might prove too difficult to be learned.

Here then were a series of events, concurring to urge the matter forward. Certainly they were not the result of any schemes formed by the individuals who had embarked in the work. Would it be right to overlook the hand of Divine Providence in this chain of circumstances? Surely, whatever be the result, very little credit on the one hand, and very little blame on the other, for what has been done ought to be attributed to those who have interested themselves. But we deserve blame for what we have not done, the Lord graciously forgive us. May we all be more diligent for the future, more humble, and more believing.

But little has as yet been done. It has been felt, on all hands, that the most important matter for the present is to lay a good foundation.—The work, all will see, ought to be so carried forward, that were the present Missionary called away, or laid aside, others abler and better could take it up, without being compelled to go over the whole ground anew. To reduce the language to writing; to collect words into something that might be called a dictionary; to reduce it to grammatical rules; lay at the basis of all. Then to translate portions of the Bible, and to compose a few prayers in Micmac, that the visitor to their wigwams might have something which would attract their attention, and do them good, while he could be at the same time making himself more familiar with their language; was of primary moment. To teach some of them to read and write, ought not to be overlooked; and to set before them the great truths of christianity, and to urge them to an immediate compliance with the demands of these truths, would be the great end itself, for which all the other means were to be sought.

To all these points, attention has been given. With what imperfections of every kind, he knows who knows all things. But those christian ministers and friends, who have so kindly taken up the subject, ought to know, and therefore I must tell them, that during the last three years, this matter whether I would or not, has absorbed the greater portion of my time and thoughts. And I never felt a greater interest in it than I do at this moment. My feelings almost overcome me when I think of those precious seasons of evangelical union, which we lately enjoyed in Halifax. I did not dare to hope for so much. When I penned the first advertisement, announcing a meeting in the Granville Street Chapel on behalf of the Micmac Indians, I first wrote down that I was desirous of devoting myself *wholly* to this blessed work. I then drew my pen through the sentence, as too much to ask, either of God or man. O when shall I fully believe that a "God of all grace," can do for us "above what we can ask or think." But I forget myself, not declamation, but facts are here called for.

The different objects, above referred to, have all been carried forward, so far as possible, not separately, but conjointly. For one whole year we kept two little Indian boys at School in Charlettetown. The oldest who had tolerably good English, made considerable progress. I succeeded in teaching an older boy to read a little, and to write and



cipher, while he was at the same time instructing me. I never knew a scholar to make such rapid progress. The family then removed to Nova Scotia, or we would have continued our efforts on their behalf. I have succeeded in collecting a large number of words, and grammatical forms in the Micmac. Different portions, both of the Old Testament and New, have been translated, among which is the whole Gospel of Luke. These translations will, I need not say, need much revision before they will be sufficiently correct to print. But in the meantime they exhibit the doctrines of the Great Teacher, and afford the means of carrying on the other departments of the Mission more efficiently.

And now it may be asked, what prospect is there of success. I reply in a few words. Were there none, would it change the meaning of the "Great Commission?" "Go teach all nations;" or alter the sense of the promise, "lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!" Would our obligations be lessened? Surely not.

Again what is meant by "a prospect of success?" When we speak of encouraging prospects of missions among the Jews, the Mahommedans, or Heathen, are we supposed to mean that these people have been petitioning for Christian Missionaries? that they are waiting to receive their instructions; that their own superstitions have but a slight hold upon their minds; and that there are no hindrances in the way of the Missionary? Seldom indeed do we look for such encouragements as these. But when we hear that the Missionary, after months, if not years of toil, has at last so far mastered their language, that he can converse with those perishing immortals, and read the Bible to them, we thank God for this and take courage. And then comes the pleasing intelligence that he can go about among them without danger of being killed—that they will permit him to enter their houses and will listen to his conversation—this, when we hear of it, especially in reference to the Jews, we look upon as a great matter. Finally they come to him with questions on the subject of religion, and listen to him with attention while he answers those questions. Then we look for more pleasing results; and while these facilities remain, though we may be compelled to wait long and anxiously, to hear of the actual conversion of souls, yet we never think of discouragement.

Then if these things are prospects of success, we have every encouragement in prosecuting a mission among the Micmacs. I have never found the slightest difficulty or danger in going among them. Again and again my heart has been moved at witnessing the pleasure and gratitude expressed for the attention shown them; and the deep interest they appeared to manifest in the truths of the New Testament, when read to them in their own tongue. I carefully avoid provoking controversy; but never fail to point out their errors kindly, when an opportunity offers, and I never knew this give offence. Questions on the New Testament, and upon religious subjects are frequently put; and the answers are listened to with candour and attention. And all this has continued even after the most strenuous exertions have been made to put a stop to it.

But I need not continue these details. And after the deep interest which has been manifested on the subject, by the community generally, any further arguments or appeals, intended to arouse the feelings, would be felt to be altogether out of place. But let those who are familiar

with the Mercy Seat, not forget to pray for this object. Bring the case of the poor Indian to the throne of grace, and forget not the Missionary. In your best moments, when you get the nearest to your Heavenly Father's bosom; when faith lays hold upon the promises; and praying is felt to be a matter of asking and receiving, then "brethren pray for us."

I do not know that a single convert has yet been made. It is *possible* that all the labors which may be expended upon them, may fail in being instrumental in saving one soul from death. But it is not *probable*. And even if it were, that is not so much our affair, as to see to it that the failure result from no neglect of ours. "I can do all things," says an Apostle, "through Christ strengthening me." And so can we; while without Him "we can do nothing."

There is no reason why the Micmac Indians, may not be blest, and elevated and saved by the gospel, equally with any other people. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" No race of human beings has ever been discovered, impervious to the Spirit's power; nor has man been found in any condition on this side of eternity, in which the gospel could not find its way to his heart, and bring him clothed, and in his right mind, to the feet of Jesus. Missionary labors among the American Indians, have been abundantly successful. Who does not know of the labours and successes of Elliot, and Brainard, and the Mahews, of Roger Williams, and the Moravians, and a host of others both of former and later times? The second sermon which Elliot preached to the Savages, about the year 1646, brought an aged Indian to him, enquiring "whether it was not too late for such an old man as he, who was now near death, to repent and seek after God." Elliot translated the whole Bible into the language of some of the tribes. This was published in 1664, and was the first Bible ever printed in America\*. Through his labours fourteen towns of "praying Indians," as they were designated, rose up as if by miracle, in the wilderness.

Brainard was equally successful. And so were the Moravians. In spite of the roving habits of the Indians, in spite of their prejudices against the whites, in spite of their ignorance and barbarism, in spite of the opposition of their *powows*; in spite of the scattering demoralizing influence of war; in spite of the wicked examples of men bearing the christian name; in spite of the ruinous effects of ardent spirits; in spite of every thing, the zealous Moravians persevered in their labors, nor did the God of all grace withhold his approbation, and blessing. Multitudes were converted and saved. The poor converts as well as their devoted teachers, were often called to endure severe hardships, and suffering. It is enough to make ones blood boil with indignation, or curdle with horror, to read of the treatment they suffered at the hands of the white man, especially in times of war. But "what could separate them from the love of Christ?" "Could tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "As it is written, for his sake they were killed all the day long, they were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things they were more than conquerors, through Him who had loved them." Let the reader peruse the book just referred to, and he must acknowledge that this application of the above impressive passage of Scripture, is not an

exaggeration. Read the statement commencing in page 134, of that work, there were scalped and murdered in cold blood, ninety-six persons, among whom were five of the most valuable assistants, and thirty-four children. Thus were four villages of christianized Indians destroyed. Not by other savages; but by white men,—or rather white demons. Not the shadow of a crime was imputed to these poor creatures. The band of murderers got them into their power, by the most consummate treachery and villainy. They afterwards confessed that the sufferers behaved with wonderful patience, “for, said they, they prayed and sang with their last breath.” And these whitemen called themselves christians! But they had the same views respecting the Indians, which many among us seem to hold, that they are a doomed race, and that they are to be destroyed, and not saved. *They* indeed pushed the doctrine to extremes. They thought themselves, in the heat of their fanaticism, called upon to be the executioners of the decree of heaven. *We* would shudder at this. But, after all, where is the great difference between killing a man, and letting him die—between starving a man to death, and allowing him to die of hunger, without attempting to relieve him, when we have it in our power? Why not kill the Indians outright, and rid the land of them at once, rather than compel them, by our avarice, and our apathy, to die by inches—to waste away and suffer, and perish eternally, while we put forth no effort to save them? But why do I write thus? Surely there is no heart so callous, as not to feel for their wrongs. Surely there is no one who would not rejoice at the opportunity of redressing those wrongs, and of doing them good.

We have no reason for desponding. There are now many flourishing missionary stations among other tribes of Indians. In the United States, and in Canada, the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Baptists, and other denominations, are labouring among them with great success. Large flourishing settlements, with farms, and houses, and cattle, and schools, and places of worship, and educated Indian preachers, and industry, and order, and bright example of christian character, and bright hopes, and joy, and triumphant death beds are among the obvious fruits of those missions. Why may we not look for the same here?

The number of Micmacs cannot be far short of 2000. They are scattered over Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and the Eastern and Northern portions of New Brunswick. In most of those places they have large tracts of land. In Cape Breton government has secured to them 14000 acres, of an excellent quality. Few therefore as they are in their dispersions, what a host they would form, collected into one village, or district. And even to be the means of “saving the soul of *one*” of them, would be a large reward for all the labor and expense which can possibly be employed. May He who is the author of all good, give wisdom and grace to us all, and crown our efforts with success.

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\*V. “Missions to the North American Indians,” published by the Religious Tract Society, page 21. This is an exceedingly interesting little work, and ought to be in every ones hands.

