

The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

Vol. 1.]

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1847.

[No. 9.

A TALE OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.*

WRITTEN FOR THE EXAMINER.

CHAPTER II.

Omana, the prophet, was apparently about fifty years of age, and clothed in a robe of Deer skin, on which feathers woven into the uncouth resemblance of various animals, were fastened. His head was surrounded with a fillet of feathers, and he carried a staff, the head of which was carved into a rude resemblance of his own features. Having been informed for what purposes his services were required, he at once fashioned a block intended to represent a human figure, and formally consigned it to the care of Manuawanto, the evil spirit.

In the meantime the warriors of the tribe were not idle. Hastily arming themselves, they proceeded noiselessly and in various directions towards the oyster bed; some through the swamp along the edge of the creek already spoken of, while others hastened to pass round the head of the basin, so as to approach the enemy from the Darnley side.

The tide had now fallen, and the seamen were unable to launch their boat, which, partially laden with oysters, had grounded upon the bed. Unsuspecting of danger, the sailors waded to the shore. Some of them were rambling about the beach—some of them had clambered up the bank, and were strolling among the trees, while one only remained in the boat. Suddenly the imposing silence of the woods was broken by the tremendous, ear-piercing whoop, which rang on all sides; the savages in the forest contracted the semi-circle which they had already formed in the rear of the devoted men, and from a thicket of alders and ozers which overhung the water at the place now distinguished by the euphonious appellation of *Black-Sow's Point*, four canoes, each paddled by four fierce and crafty Micmacs, steered for the devoted boat.

They had not proceeded, however, more than twenty fathoms when the customary ejaculation, "heigh!" from the bowman of the leading canoe warned them of danger. Directly to the northward of them, and not two musket shots distant, the ship's launch was seen coming out of a cove, manned with fourteen men, impelled by the nervous arms of eight stout rowers, and steered by the redoubted Cabot.

The Indians paddled in all haste up the stream into the shoal water, where the launch could not follow, and landed to the support of their companions in the woods. These were now pressing upon the sailors; but they had to deal with men familiar with death in every form, and who, accustomed to battle with the Indians, had at once, on hearing the whoop, betook themselves to cover. One poor fellow, however, in endeavouring to secrete himself behind a tree, had been pierced through the right arm with an arrow, and with piteous moans besought his comrades to assist him. The coxswain of the boat, a gigantic Cornishman, sprang to his assistance just in time to save him from the hatchet of an equally gigantic Indian. The Englishman was unarmed, but with a blow of his fist he sent the Indian reeling ten feet, snatching a knife from his wounded comrade, he stood boldly awaiting the renewal of his attack. The savage had dropped his bow when he rushed upon the wounded man, and having experienced the strength of the coxswain, he looked round for assistance, fearful of again coming into contact with that powerful fist. The Englishman did not allow him to wait for divining his wish, he advanced upon him cautiously. The Indian, pulling a spare hatchet out of his belt, hurled it directly at the brow of the advancing white man, who, mechanically raising his right hand, which contained the knife, to ward off the blow, the hatchet struck the knife, and by that means was turned from its course—but at the same time the weapon was struck from his

hand, leaving him now unarmed. The Indian uttered a shout of triumph, and rushing upon the Englishman aimed a blow with all his strength at his head, but his watchful antagonist, adroitly dodging on one side, caught the descending arm with his hand. The struggle now became desperate. The opponents were well matched for size and strength, but the sinews of the white man, having been more inured to hardship, would have probably conquered. The wounded man, however, seeing the evident danger of his friend caught up the knife, and plunged it to the hilt in the back of the Savage. He fell heavily forward; then with a groan and a few words, seemingly of song, the bold Micmac's earthly career terminated. During this struggle, which has taken us so long to relate, but which did not occupy five minutes, the combat was raging fiercely in other parts of the field. Two of the sailors had fallen, but, in return, four savages had bitten the dust.

CHAPTER III.

A new set of actors now appeared upon the scene. These were Cabot and his boat's crew, who were all armed with the deadly musket. The Indian scouts had, however, noticed this movement, and some eight or ten silently embarked in the canoes before mentioned, and slipping down the river, attacked the boats left in charge of only a single man in each. The boat-keeper of the launch fired his musket without effect upon the advancing canoes, and was immediately transfixed with an arrow—his poor comrade suffering the same fate. The report of the musket reached Cabot, then engaged in the woods. He sent one of his men to the bank to discover the cause, who perceived that the Indians, having already plundered the boats, had set them on fire. This being related to the other men rendered them sufficiently aroused before—perfectly frantic. Eight of the Indians had fallen under their first fire; then clubbing their muskets, they closed with the savages—the butts of the heavy firelocks of the period breaking through every guard, and crushing the skulls of the shrinking red men.

CHAPTER IV.

It was the fortune of Cabot to encounter his previous acquaintance, Wamptook. The white man wore a breastplate, from which several arrows had glanced in the course of the combat, and the superstitious Indian, supposing him proof against his arrows, attacked him furiously with his hatchet. Cabot, having avoided the hatchet which he threw in advance, demanded a parley.

"Will Wamptook make peace with his brother?"

"The Great Spirit clothed Wamptook's brothers with a skin like his own. The white man is not his brother."

Thinking that the white man was off his guard, he aimed a tremendous blow, rapid and flashing as lightning, but the ever ready cutlass of the dauntless seaman intercepted the weapon, and he immediately returned it with interest. The superior activity of the Indian supplied the inferiority of his weapon, and the combat was continued upon apparently equal terms, for some time. Wamptook at last received a severe cut upon his right shoulder, and sinking back, he changed his hatchet to the left hand, and struck Cabot upon the right side of the head. This was not easily warded off, as the seaman was quite unprepared, believing his enemy to be crippled. He had, however, lifted his cutlass in time to deaden the blow, which merely stunned him. Uttering his yell of triumph, Wamptook prepared to finish his adversary and take his scalp, when one of the sailors, hearing his shout, rushed to his master's aid. His heavy musket butt descended upon the naked shoulders of the Indian as he was stooping over his anticipated victim, who, giving a howl of mingled pain and rage, darted under the again raised musket, and fled through the underwood.

There was, then, no more resistance. The sailors

loading as they pressed forward in pursuit, shot down the flying savages, until they were wearied. Returning at last to the shore, they discovered that eight of their men, including the boat-keepers, were missing—a melancholy proof of the prowess of the naked and comparatively unarmed Indians. Fatigued and melancholy, they traversed the shore to the extremity of Darnley Point, from whence, after repeated signals to their vessel, they and their wounded commander were taken on board, and immediately left the inhospitable shore of the Island, where they had received such a rude reception.

Some five and thirty years after the date of the events recorded above, an aged Indian, who had long resisted all efforts of the whites, either to take him prisoner or to kill him, was brought into the settlement by a party of hunters. He was not taken until, after a long engagement, he had been desperately wounded, and was only brought in to die. He was no sooner laid upon the floor of a hut than he commenced his death song. He recounted the battles in which he had been engaged—the wounds he had received, and gloried in the number of scalps he had taken from the great enemies of his race. He continued this mournful recitation for about a half an hour, gradually growing weaker, until, after expressing his utter repugnance to enter the white man's heaven, he expired. Such was the end of Wamptook.

B.

MORE ABOUT THE MALPEQUE MEETING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

Sir—In the course of my reading, some time ago, I fell in with the following anecdote:—A young practitioner at the Scotch Bar had offended the Judges, by saying that he was surprised at a decision they had come to in some case with which he was connected. The Judges, offended with his impertinence, forbade him to plead until he should make a suitable apology. For this purpose he applied to an old advocate, who agreed to do the needful for him. When the Court opened next morning, he accordingly rose, portrayed his young friend's sorrow in very feeling terms, and concluded by saying—"My young friend is very sorry for having said, that he was surprised at your decision, and has desired me to offer his humble apology. He has not had much experience at the Bar, nor much acquaintance with your decisions, for had he known you half as long as I have done, I'll be hanged if he would be surprised at any thing you would do."

Now, Sir, I have known the "Snarler" party in this Island, long enough not to be surprised at any thing they would do, and therefore am not surprised at the tissue of lies and absurdity published in the *Islander* of 7th September, over the signature of "Observer"—said "Observer" being well known to be Duncan McLean, of snarling notoriety. For the amusement and instruction of yourself and readers, I will note a few of the leading bouncers (to adopt his own word), which this letter contains.

Bouncer No. 1—"Coles and Rae beat up for recruits all day long."

Not true. Because Coles and Rae were engaged in conversation within the walls of a house all the forenoon, and after dinner took a walk to see a friend, where they remained until the hour of meeting, from which time (4 o'clock) until the business commenced they remained on the spot.

Bouncer No. 2—"The meeting was a failure, because the house, only six yards square, was but moderately filled, containing only 60 individuals, including boys."

Shame, Mr. McLean! The School-house is a frame building, 26 feet long and 24 feet wide, and not being at present used for its former purpose, but as a house for the Commissioners' Courts, a lecture room and public meetings, it is fitted with benches which will (for it has been measured) accommodate 200 persons sitting in the middle area, and at least 70 on the side benches.

* Concluded from our 7th No.