

INTRODUCTION.

I.

„ SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE REV. SILAS TERTIUS RAND.

I KNOW of no more satisfactory way of presenting to my readers a brief account of the life, viewed especially from the side of its philological achievement, of the Rev. SILAS T. RAND, than to repeat here the vivid sketch which the reverend gentleman himself gave in response to one who asked him to tell the story of his life.

“I was born,” said Dr. Rand, “at Brooklyn Street, Cornwallis, six miles from Kentville, Nova Scotia. My grandfather came to this province after the expulsion of the French-Acadians. He was one of the English pioneers. I do not know how much land he obtained, but my own father and his youngest brother were allotted one square mile of woodland, — now some of the finest land in the Cornwallis valley. I was the eighth in a family of twenty-two children, and was born on the 18th of May, 1810. My father was married three times. By his first wife, Amy Tupper, he had three children. His second wife was Deborah Tupper, a sister of the late Rev. Dr. Tupper (father of Sir Charles, who is consequently my cousin) ; and by her he had five children, of whom I am the youngest. My father married, thirdly, a Miss Schofield, who bore him fourteen children. The mother of this Miss Schofield lived to be one hundred and six years old, and when she was one hundred, her memory was as clear as a bell. My father died at the age of seventy-four ; and of the family of twenty-two, only five now survive. Whatever talent I

have been blessed with, I have inherited from my mother. My mother never went to school two weeks in her life; but she was a beautiful reader, and was a poetess of no mean ability.

I was educated in the greatest university of all time, ancient or modern, — a building as large as all out-doors, and that had the broad canopy of heaven for a roof. My father taught me to read — and he taught me more thoroughly to work on the farm — when I was a small boy. My father and grandfather before me had been bricklayers; and when I was eighteen years of age, I commenced a seven years' apprenticeship to that honorable and muscle-developing profession. When I was a small boy, I went to school, such as schools were then, for a few weeks to Sarah Beckwith, Sarah Pierce, and Wealthy Tupper, respectively. None of them amounted to much as teachers, and Wealthy Tupper could not write her own name; but there was one thing she could do, — she could and did teach and show us the way to Heaven. During the evenings of three winters I went to school taught by a man, and 'graduated' when eleven years of age. Seven years later, I determined to study and master the science of arithmetic. This I did with the aid of a book.

"I took my first lesson in English grammar when twenty-three years of age from an old stager named Bennett. I paid him three dollars for the lesson, and after learning it, started and taught a couple of classes of my own at two dollars per pupil. Next, I studied Latin grammar four weeks at Horton Academy, when Rev. Dr. Pryor, now living in Halifax (1886), was principal of that institution. Then, in the spring of 1833, I returned to the work of a stonemason and the study of Latin. There was then no "ten-hour system" in existence. It was manual labor from sunrise to sundown. But I took a lesson in Latin before going to work, studied it while at work, took another lesson at dinner, and another at night. I should have told you that my first lesson in Latin was taken the first night of the four weeks I spent in Horton Academy. I heard a fellow-student, the late Rev. Wellington Jackson, repeat over and over again: 'The words *opus* and *usus*, signifying "need," require the ablative, as, *Est opus pecunia*, "There is need of money."' That rule, and the truth it contained, was so impressed upon my memory and was such a perfect illustration of my own circumstances, that I never forgot it. In 1834 I was ordained a Baptist minister by Father Manning, and took charge of the

church at Parrsboro, where I preached and continued the study of Latin, as well as of Greek and Hebrew. In 1836 I went back to Horton Academy for a few months; and from that time the study of languages became a passion."

Upon being asked whether he could speak and write a dozen languages, Dr. Rand replied: —

"I could twenty years ago, but perhaps I should have to refresh my memory somewhat to do it in my seventy-sixth year. Twenty years ago I knew English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Modern Greek, Micmac, Maliseet, and Mohawk; I am a little rusty now, as I said, but I could then read Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish almost as well as English. And even now I am reading through, for the second time, Buchanan's Latin History of Scotland. Do you ask which is my favorite language? Micmac. Why? Because it is one of the most marvellous of all languages, ancient or modern, — marvellous in its construction, in its regularity, in its fullness, — and it is the language in which I have, perhaps, done the most good. It is a language into which I have translated the Bible, and in which I have been privileged to preach the gospel to thousands of semi-savages.

"After leaving Parrsboro, I was pastor of the Baptist churches at Horton, Liverpool, Windsor, and Charlottetown, respectively, until 1846, when, just forty years ago, I dedicated my life to missionary work among the semi-savage Indians of Nova Scotia. A wonderful foreign mission sentiment had swept over Nova Scotia. The Baptists had sent Mr. and Mrs. Burpee to Burmah; and John Geddes and Isaac Archibald, two young Nova Scotians in the Presbyterian ministry, had devoted their lives to work among the savages of the South Sea Islands. Prof. Isaac Chipman, who was afterwards drowned with a party of students returning from Blomidon, was then at Acadia College; he remarked one day that we should look after the heathen at home, and suggested that I should learn the Indian language. I took hold of the idea, and determined thenceforth to devote my life to the work of civilizing, educating, and christianizing the semi-savage Indians of the maritime provinces. I resigned the pastorate of my church, — that comparatively easy way of earning a livelihood, — gave up all the comforts, conveniences, prospects, and social happiness of

a pastor, and devoted a large portion of my life to association with savages, having such comforts as were to be derived from association with them, and spending portions of a lifetime in wigwams and in the woods. Of course, my first task was to master the language, which I can assure you was no easy matter. Fortunately I made the acquaintance of a Frenchman, named Joe Brooks, who had lived among the Indians nearly all his life, and could talk both French and Micmac very fluently; he was also an intelligent man. His father was a French man-of-war sailor, who was captured by the British during the wars between those two empires for supremacy on this continent, and was brought as a prisoner to Halifax. He did not return to France with his confrères, but went up to Digby and settled there. The son lived among the Micmacs, married one of them, and translated his name, Joseph Ruisseaux, into Joseph Brooks. He rendered me great service in mastering the Micmac language, and it was from his lips that I first learned of the wonderful legends that, after confirmation by many old Indians, I subsequently gave to the world.

“At that time (1846) the condition of the Indians was not materially different from what it was two hundred years previously. It was the policy of that day to keep them in ignorance and degradation. They were taught to preserve the traditions of barbarism, and on no account to become like white men. But, thank God, all this has been changed in forty years, in spite of bitter opposition and difficulties that were apparently insurmountable. They are now treated not only as human beings, but as citizens. They have the Gospel and other books in their own language; they live in houses, dress, work, and eat like other people, and have property and schools of their own. Forty years ago the power of caste and prejudice against the Indians was so strong in Nova Scotia that even such a good man as Isaac Chipman did not dare to allow me the use of an unfinished and unoccupied room in Acadia College in which I could obtain lessons from one solitary Indian, for fear of affecting the prosperity of the college in which his heart was so bound up. But to-day not only are the doors of that institution thrown wide open to boys and girls, and Indians and negroes, and all other nationalities, but Indians and negroes will be found sitting side by side with whites in the common schools and academies all over the provinces. Of the present condition of the Indians of this province, eighty per cent of the improvement has taken place within the past twenty-five years.

“The Indians are not dying out, as some believe ; on the contrary, they are increasing. Here are the census statistics of the Indian population of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for the past thirty years : —

Year.	Nova Scotia.	New Brunswick.
1851	1,056	1,116
1861	1,407	1,212
1871	1,666	1,403
1881	2,125	1,401
[1892	2,151	1,511]

“This shows that the Indians in Nova Scotia have more than doubled in one generation. There are, besides, 281 on Prince Edward Island, which gives us 3,807 Indians in the maritime provinces at the present time. People are deceived by the fact that, whereas they were formerly accustomed to see large numbers of Indians encamped in one place, they now generally find them scattered and broken up into small settlements.

“As regards my support, that was provided for in the early years of my work among the Indians, by the Micmac Missionary Society, which agreed to pay me two hundred pounds a year. That was a nominal salary ; but it was saddled with one condition, — provided I could get it. Of course that was a very unsatisfactory method. Twenty-two years ago I adopted the Müller system of living by faith. George Müller is one of the most remarkable Christian philanthropists of the age ; he maintains more than five thousand orphan children at Bristol by public charity, and never asks any man for a dollar. Since 1864 I have had no fixed salary, made no public appeals for money, demanded no collections, and never asked any man for a dollar. For twenty-two years I have lived by faith in God, — that my bread would be given me, and that my water would be sure, — and during the whole of that time I have never had a demand which I could not meet. Indeed, I could relate to you many wonderful instances of answers to prayer. The good Lord has always supplied my wants, — not always in the way I looked for it, but in his own way.”

From November, 1853, until his death in October, 1889, Dr. Rand resided in Hantsport, Nova Scotia. One who visited

him in his home at that place thus describes the venerable missionary and scholar: —

“One mile back of that pretty little village of Hantsport, stands the home of Dr. Rand. His study is filled, mostly, with old musty books of ancient languages and literature. On his writing-table, and piled on the shelves, are manuscripts of his unpublished Indian works. The sight of this veteran missionary in his study, surrounded by his twelve thousand manuscript pages of Micmac Scriptures, Dictionary, Grammar, and Legends, is a picture worth going to Hantsport to see. He sits at his desk as straight as an arrow; his marvellous memory is still unimpaired; and his remarkable energy and ability to work are apparently as great as ever. For fifty years he has kept a personal journal, and in it are recorded many racy passages on men and events in Nova Scotia during the past half century. But the ordinary man who undertakes to read it is met by one great drawback, — it is written in English, French, Latin, Greek, Micmac, and shorthand, respectively. Dr. Rand devotes about ten hours a day of his time to the preparation of the manuscript of his Micmac-English Dictionary for publication, which has been assumed by the Dominion Government. When he tires of literary work, he seeks recreation with the axe and wood-saw. “I learned to use the axe,” said the almost octogenarian, “at the age when a certain piper’s son is said to have become proficient in the art. I would like to have a race with Mr. Gladstone with the axe; I think I could compete with him as well at chopping as at Latin versifying.”

Dr. Rand inherited his passion for versifying from his mother. He published a volume containing about one hundred “Modern Latin Hymns.” These Latin hymns were constructed, not according to ancient rules of prosody, but according to the modern English methods of rhyme and rhythm. Among the familiar hymns thus turned into Latin are “Abide with me,” “A mighty fortress is our God,” “From Greenland’s icy mountains, “Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,” “Jesus, refuge of my soul,” “Rock of Ages, cleft for me,” and many others. Frank Leslie’s Sunday Magazine for December, 1885, published the Latin trans-

lation of the hymn "Rock of Ages" of Mr. Gladstone and that of Dr. Rand, side by side. Speaking of the circumstances under which his translation was made, Dr. Rand said: "When I saw Mr. Gladstone's translation, I thought a better one could be made. He had omitted the word 'rock' altogether; and I thought he had poorly translated the line, 'Simply to thy cross I cling.' Several other lines were not literally translated. So I made an attempt myself, and in sending Mr. Gladstone my translation, freely criticised his own. He acknowledged my letter in a proverbial post-card, which I finally deciphered as follows": —

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for the kind terms used in your letter, and I at once admit that your version of the "Rock of Ages" is more exact than mine. Indeed, I can scarcely say that I aimed at a literal translation throughout. The verse you quote is quite accurate, and so, I have little doubt, is the rest that you have seen.

Your faithful serv't,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

Aug. 22, '78.

Dr. Rand has been called the Elihu Burritt of Canada; and he well deserved the name. He possessed a marvellous memory and wonderful linguistic power; he was a man of remarkable energy and ability. The work which he accomplished was unique. The value of that which he has done in the Micmac and Maliseet languages will become more and more apparent as the attention of philologists turns more and more to the investigation of the aboriginal languages of America. He has translated into Micmac almost the entire Bible; he has compiled a dictionary in that language of more than forty thousand words, and he has, in addition, furnished to the philologist a large amount of other valuable linguistic material. He was the discoverer of Glooscap, that mythological character which Mr. Leland calls "the most Aryan-like of any ever evolved from a savage mind;" and he has saved from oblivion the mythological lore of a people that are losing with every generation their hold upon ancient customs and manners.