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It is the rarest thing to find that any famous prima donna ever "created" a new role of any artistic importance or associated herself with the interpretation of the music of any young composer, no matter how gifted. Her choice of songs in the concert room alternates between hackneyed favorites and absolutely worthless novelties. Alone among the great executants, the prima donna has been conspicuous for her abstinence from any efforts to achieve distinction as a composer.

Handel had a short way with the prima donna, and threatened to throw her out of the window if she would not sing what he had written for her. Wagner went further, and refused to write for the prima donna at all. And Verdi in "Falstaff," did throw her out of the window and gave the leading part to a baritone. To the music lover the prima donna is a nuisance, and a very expensive one.—"Diversions of a Music Lover."

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OLDTOWN.

BY SAMUEL D. IRWIN.

For natural beauty, scenery and location there is no place on the Tionesta that equals it. The great flats on the north side of the creek, are an ideal agricultural situation, the bold and rugged hills on the south side of the stream, covered with the green hemlocks is beautiful scenery to behold. The situation naturally was delightful, the forests before the underwood was browsed over by herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, and the luxury of the wild flowers and shrubs were repressed by the beasts of burden and toil, or the labors of the husbandman—the streams seemed to run clearer, and were certainly more abundant, the cultivation of the soil there uncovered the valley and let in the rays of the sun, which drank up the natural moisture, opening the fissures of the earth where streamlets flow, while the natural moss on the margin of the natural fountains and grass was greener and more romantic, shaded as it was by the umbrage of the forest, broken here and there by the patches cleared many years before by the Aboriginies for the raising of Indian corn and beans. Such, I imagine, must have been the appearance of Oldtown to the eye of the pioneer.

OLDTOWN.

This is the name by which the fine body of land on Tionesta creek three miles above Tionesta is designated and known. Was it ever a town? if so, when? are questions that naturally arise. After these two queries are answered the inquiring mind goes further and hopes to know what kind of a town it was—who lived there?—what is its history?—who gave it the name? These various inquiries I shall endeavor to answer as well as I am able, having in the past given the subject some attention.

What is known as Oldtown was an early Indian settlement, or village. The particular tribe that built the village or town, was undoubtedly the Seneca tribe of the great Six Nations, who had it until about 1750, when they were driven from their possessions by the warlike Monseys, who it is said by Zeisberger and other Moravian writers drove out the more peaceful Senecae, along the upper Allegheny and held the lands until 1769, when they all left the upper Allegheny in canoes, and the lands came into the possession of the old rightful owners, the Senecas, once more, who held these lands under their peaceful chief, Cornplanter, until they became the possession of the white man. So it appears that even in the times of the Aborigines, the lands around here were held by a kind of "scrambling possession." The Senecas early perceived that they could not live by wild meat alone—that is by hunting and fishing—so their legends say they adopted agriculture the most extensively of any of the Indian tribes. It was not strange then that they built small towns, near fertile and productive creek and river flats, cleared small patches of ground and raised corn and beans, and bequeath to us that most excellent dish known as succotash, which if made right is composed of two thirds corn and the balance beans. Cornplanter by precept and example, it is said, encouraged the raising of these crops—hence his name we are told. The peculiar kind of beans which the Indians of western Pennsylvania raised, we are informed by Schoolcraft, are what is now known as the Mohawk beans, which are now sold by every seedsman. They are very prolific, perhaps the most so of any of this class of vegetables. The earliest white settlers have left their testimony that the large Oldtown flats abounded with cleared patches of land which had been cleared by the Indians, and cultivated by them; also the fact that the foundations of mud and stone cabins were quite frequent at Oldtown along the slight raise or bluff extending from above where the present bridge crosses the old mill race far down below where the present farm house on the place is located. So the town part was on what would be called the first bench, while the ancient cleared patches or corn lots of the Indians were on the lower lands mostly, where the ground was fertile and mellow, perfectly adopted to the raising of corn and lentils, the favorite agricultural food of the Indians of N. W. Pa., as it had been of the Pequots, Delawares and all the sea coast tribes. But the Seneca saw the smoke "in the morning breeze, and the white man's cottage rise above the trees."

KINGSLEY.

For in the year 1802, Ebenezer Kingsley, who was one of the first pioneers upon the waters of the Tionesta first came to Oldtown. He had wandered from Genesee Co., N. Y., came down the Allegheny on a rude raft, with his large family, stopping at the mouth of Tionesta creek, went up the creek as far as Oldtown, and being a hunter—more of a hunter than a farmer—was not slow in perceiving that all kinds of desirable game abounded. As stated he first settled at Oldtown but soon removed to what is now called Newtown, because he found better hunting grounds there. As a township of this county was named in honor of Mr. Kingsley, a few more remarks about him may not be foreign to this article. He was a man about six feet in height, well proportioned, possessed of good judgment, but lacked education. While hospitable he wanted no neighbors, for as soon as neighbors came to Newtown he sold his clearing and moved twelve miles away to the mouth of Blue Jay, where he took up another place, and lived there until he sold his right in the farm to C. J. Fox, and then moved to the southwest portion of Missouri, in that wild section where the Ozark mountains reach up from Arkansas, where it is said he died.

GATES.

Another of the early settlers in the upper part of Oldtown was Henry Gates, who came to this country and settled there in 1806. That year was a very cold one throughout,—crops were a failure, the settlers being obliged to dig up their seed potatoes to subsist on. Henry Gates came from Centre county, and with him his son John, and his son-in-law, Anthony Coursin, and for many years in conjunction with the Holemans and Hunters supplied the surrounding country with corn, which gave the Tionesta settlement the name of "Egypt." Henry Gates died and was buried on the hillside near Oldtown, where some of the early settlers were afterwards buried. This grave yard in the grove can be located today by a few small markers of slate stone and small mounds, over which in time trees have grown. But neglected as has been said, it is a sacred spot to the relatives and friends of those who sleep there. Under a leaning oak tree, according to Mr. Wolcott, lie the remains of Henry Gates, whose descendants are very numerous. As has been stated, his daughter, Elizabeth, was married to Anthony Coursin One of the daughters of Anthony Coursin married Joseph Lindsey, father of Hon. W. M. Lindsey, Prest. Judge of the 37th judicial district. Another daughter, Nancy, married Wm. Wolcott, the father of Silas J. and William Wolcott. Other children of the Wolcott branch were Catherine, who married Daniel Noble; Eliza, married to Luther Bennett; Sarah, married to Philo Barnes; Malvinia, married to Joseph Grove; Mary J., married to Hon C. A. Hill; Hannah to Wm. Church. Mary, another daughter of Henry Gates, married Joseph Dale in Centre Co. Their children were John A. and Joseph G. Dale, and Susan McClatchey, a daughter. She came to this section with her two little boys, her husband having died in Centre county and she married David Hunter. By her second husband she had two sons, Dr. Wesley F. Hunter and David G. Hunter. The following are the names of their daughters, giving their names as married: Nancy Watson, Catherine Lynch, Margaret Brown. Of the Wolcotts, Mary wife of Rev. James Perry, a Methodist preacher; Jane, wife of Paul Wolcott; Sarah Forbes, who with her husband, moved to Wabash, Ind., and died there. Two sons of Henry Gates, George and Jacob, moved to Rockland township, near Emlenton, where they lived and died, raising large and useful families. Mrs. C. A. Hill, already referred to, tells me she well remembers her grandfather, that the Corn planter Indians used to come down and trade with him, when she was a little girl, and that he was good to them, so they regarded him a friend to their race, and inquired of his descendants, at the same time declaring him to be a good man. Seneca, the Roman philosopher, declared "that ingratitude is the basest of all crimes." Ingratitude never was an Indian vice. They were always grateful to their benefactors, with whom they smoked the calumet, or pipe of peace. Grateful to Penn, though painted with red ochre and decked out in savage pomp, of wild skins and feathers there simple children of nature called Penn the good Onas, and the woods resounded with his praise. But there were local Penns all over the state in the early days.

(To be continued.)

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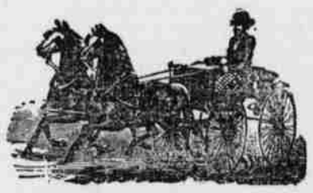

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IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER

The Daisy.

In French the daisy is called la Marguerite. It was the device of Marguerite of Anjou, and also of Marguerite of Valois, a much more appropriate emblem of the latter princess, who withdrew from the glitter of courts to become a recluse, than of the ambitious Lancastrian queen of England. The daisy is the national flower of Italy, chosen in honor of Queen Marguerite. In the language of flowers it signifies innocence, peace, hope. In the age of chivalry it was the emblem of fidelity and worn by knights at tournaments in honor of their ladyloves.

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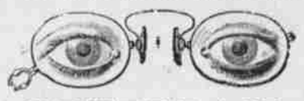

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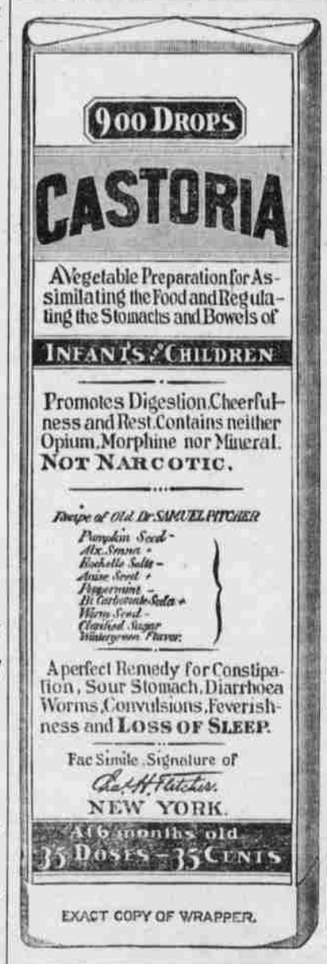

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