

very just, were they toward us." But with all this facility of adaptation and amenity of character, France would never have become a great Colonial power. A careful observer of human nature has remarked somewhere, "that there is no people like the French for the zeal and rapidity of their enterprise at first, they are almost always successful for a time, but they soon fall off, and others reap the fruit of their early efforts."

Let us look at the progress made by France in the colonization of the American Continent. The colonial and the naval history of every country are so closely connected, that it is impossible in remarking on the one to avoid bringing the other constantly before the attention of the reader for reference or illustration. At the time that the bold spirits under Jacques Cartier first planted the *fleur de lys* on the shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the navies of the European nations had not commenced playing that important part in the political drama which they assumed in subsequent years. No great, distant expeditions were sent forth to traverse oceans, and bombard the capitals of rival powers. Naval architecture had not then produced vessels capable of combining in themselves the requisites for enduring the protracted straining of long voyages, with the adaptation for warlike purposes necessary to produce any great effect on the enemies they were sent to oppose, intrenched on a firmer and more solid element. The French admiral Du Quesne at Algiers, and our own Blake at Teneriffe, were almost the first of their respective nations who ventured successfully to oppose their ships to close combat with land batteries. Not many naval combats producing any great or important effects, with the exception of the destruction of the Armada, had taken place among the northern nations of Europe, till the bitter contests for the mastery of the narrow seas in the days of Charles II., when Tromp and De Ruyter so gallantly strove to arrest the upward flight of England to the Empire of the seas. France had down to the close of the seventeenth century always occupied a respectable position among naval powers, frequently contending on equal terms with England herself—no marked superiority had as yet elevated the reputation of the latter. France started in the great race for Colonial Empire on tolerably fair and equal terms with England. Neither power had spread its conquests to any

extent on the shores of the Indian ocean.—Portugal and Holland were long left to dispute between themselves for that bright portion of the world, while France and England fixed on the western Continent for their scene of colonizing activity. Each nation set about her task in a manner characteristic of her national peculiarities. It would be a tedious and idle delay on our part to attempt to give even an outline of the well-known events that marked respectively the settlement of the Gallic Colonists along the St. Lawrence, or on the Gulf of Mexico, and the spread of the Anglo-Saxon race along the Atlantic shores of America.—The difference between the progress of each strikes even a cursory reader of Colonial annals. One striking distinction we must however notice, viz. Fast as every settlement of the English emigrants was made on American soil, a community was immediately organized, laws were made, rulers appointed, the proper bounds assigned to the two great forces in every body of civilized men, the Executive and the democratic; the liberties of the subject were generally defined, and the extent of the Magistrate's authority; in short, a *Constitution* was framed, suitable, as far as their knowledge and experience went, to the wants and rising interests of an infant settlement. Many schemes of government, faulty, and sometimes impracticable, were designed for the various little communities gradually breaking forth into political existence, from the Bay Colony to the Savannahs of Georgia,—witness the unsubstantial and hyper-theoretical plan devised by John Locke, and other equally crude designs; but still every nucleus of British population had its government,—and this fact we would especially call attention to, as eminently characteristic of the genius, and prophetic of the future destiny of the people.

Now turn to the French settlers, and a different spectacle presents itself. The European emigrant on the strand of the Atlantic proclaimed his power and ability to frame laws for his own guidance and well-being:—on the banks of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes he quietly sat down under the arbitrary rule of a military despotism, and remained the faithful subject of a Government in which he had no voice. And yet old France had not utterly abandoned all popular interference with the management of the State,—the democratic branch had not yet sunk vanquished and ex-