

INTRODUCTION.

IN Canada there is settling into shape a nation of two races ; there is springing into existence, at the same time, a literature in two languages. In the matter of strength and stamina there is no overwhelming disparity between the two races. The two languages are admittedly those to which belong the supreme literary achievements of the modern world. In this dual character of the Canadian people and the Canadian literature there is afforded a series of problems which the future will be taxed to solve. To make any intelligent forecast as to the solution is hardly possible without a fair comprehension of the two races as they appear at the point of contact. We, of English speech, turn naturally to French-Canadian literature for knowledge of the French-Canadian people. The romance before us, while intended for those who read to be entertained, and by no means weighted down with didactic purpose, succeeds in throwing, by its faithful depictions of life and sentiment among the early French Canadians, a strong side-light upon the motives and aspirations of the race.

In spite of the disclaimer with which the author begins, the romance of *Les Anciens Canadiens* is a classic. From the literary point of view it is markedly the best historical romance so far produced in French Canada. It gathers up and preserves in lasting form