

INTRODUCTION.

ONE of the most remarkable examples of that literary collaboration which has been so frequent in modern French literature (especially in comedy), is that represented by the joint names of Erckmann-Chatrian—a partnership which, in permanence and productiveness, as well as in the mutual adaptation and complete union of its individual parties, is perhaps without parallel. Anything like a complete review of the work produced by this collaboration would be out of place here:—only a few notes will be briefly given.

Emile Erckmann was born at Phalsbourg, Alsace, in 1822; Alexandre Chatrian at Soldatenthal, also in Alsace, in 1826. This nativity in a border province, successively German and French, in which both French and German were still spoken, and which was full of all the traditions of war, its stories and its horrors, has left its deep impression upon their writings. They were both educated at the same Phalsbourg gymnasium. Erckmann was destined for the law; Chatrian for mercantile business; but after some years of hardship and disappointment for each, they met again at Phalsbourg, where Chatrian had become usher in the gymnasium and Erckmann was still pursuing his irksome study of law. Here their common experience of disappoint-