

common country far in the scale, and to render it respected by others, and happy in itself.

We have deemed it necessary to enter upon these brief remarks, for, called upon from many respectable quarters for some statement of our political sentiments, we feared that our silence might be misconstrued into an unwillingness on our part to lay before the public a statement of our own views upon the subjects which in this colony have so long agitated the public mind.

JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE—BY M. DE CHARLEVOIX.

THERE is, perhaps, no subject which has afforded a wider field for discussion, with more unsatisfactory results, than the original settlement of the American continent. Theories innumerable have in turn had their advocates, and the opinions advanced by each seem only to have been like men of straw, to be demolished by his successor, whose hypotheses in turn fall before the more acute perception of some newer antiquarian.

It is almost a matter of regret that so much laborious research should have been expended to so little purpose, for, admitting that the question had been definitively settled, we confess that we do not see what corresponding benefit the world would derive from it. It assuredly must be of very immaterial consequence whether the "original" of the American Indians may be Europe, Asia or Africa, or any particular country of the three; whether they may have sprung from the barbarous hordes of Arabia or the sea-roving traders of Tyre and Carthage. Small indeed must be its import to the Christian world whether, with the Persian fire-worshippers, their fathers may have knelt to the burning sun, or offered their homage to the ridiculous idols of India or Egypt; whether they may have bent to the more poetical, but no less false gods of Greece and Rome, or learned from the druidical superstitions of ancient Gaul, to offer up sacrifices of blood to their tutelary "demons," for such only could it have been designed to propitiate with offerings so horrible. Traces of these—aye, and more than these—of the religion, customs, and tongues of almost every country of the world, may, indeed, be found in some region or other of the vast and immeasurable extent of the western world, and the industry which shall trace them to their foundation, will far exceed in its untiring perseverance any thing of which we can believe humanity capable.

It seems to us, however, that besides the hopelessness as well as inutility of the research, it implies something more than a want of faith in the wisdom and foresight of the great founder of the universe, to suppose that he should have formed so vast a continent, almost, if not entirely equal to one half the habitable globe, without having a settled purpose of peopling it, or that he should have left it to chance to decide with what race it should be inhabited.

These remarks have been suggested to us from a re-perusal of a discourse with which M. de Charlevoix prefaces his "Journal of a Voyage," made in the beginning of the last century through the then French Canadian colonies. This book is not by any means sufficiently known in these Provinces, for though the whole continent has changed its rulers since the Journal was penned, the genius and character of their people, remain virtually the same, or with only such modifications as time has forced upon them. The Voyage was undertaken by command of the French King, and the Journal is written in a series of most interesting letters. It ought to be in the hands of every Canadian student. conveying, as it does, remarks descriptive of the geography and natural history of the country, as well as graphic and simple sketches of its original inhabitants. The portraiture of Indian character is, as far as our reading has afforded the means of judging, true to life and nature, and the reflections with which the whole is interspersed might not be unprofitably read by those whose duty it is to govern the destinies of this vast dependency of the British Empire.

We take the liberty of inserting here a short extract on the subject of a project which upwards of a century ago, the French Government had in view, to approximate these colonies more nearly to their nominal and ostensible character, as dependencies of the parent country, leaving the application of the quotation to the judgment of the reader.

"For that purpose, it was designed to make some settlements in proper places, where it would be easy to assemble the Indians, at least for certain seasons of the year. By this means, this vast country would be insensibly filled with inhabitants, and perhaps, this is the only method by which that project which the court has so long had at heart of *Frenchifying* the Indians, that is the term they make use of, could be brought about. I believe, I may at least affirm, that if this method had been followed, Canada would have been at present much better peopled than it is; that the Indians drawn and kept together by the comforts and conveniencies of life, which they would have found in our settlements, would not have been so miserable, nor so much addicted to a wandering life, and consequently their numbers would have increased, whereas they have diminished at a surprising rate, and would have attached themselves to us in such a manner that we might now have disposed of them as of the subjects of the crown."

Now, without any design of comparing the Canadians of French origin to their Indian predecessors, it seems to us altogether natural, that similar causes would now produce similar effects, and that the formation of English settlements among the French population, by introducing an improved system of business in general, and agriculture in particular, would materially assist in the *Anglicisation* of the colony.

The following extract, as exhibiting the different characters of the French and English colonists, as well as affording a clue to their apparently disproportion-