

48 THE IRON MINES OF THE ST. MAURICE TERRITORY.

bar iron of every kind is hammered out. In each department of the forges the workmen observed the old ceremony of brushing a stranger's boots, and in return they expect some money to buy liquor to drink to the visitor's health. This establishment is very extensive, employing upwards of 180 men. Nothing is consumed in the furnaces but charcoal, which is made in the immediate vicinity of the post. The ore is rich, good, and tolerably clean ; formerly it was found on the spot, now the Director has to send some little distance for it. The management of these forges is economical. It must be readily understood that, owing to the numerous branches in which expenditure must be incurred, unless a competent man be at the head of affairs, many abuses would be the consequence. Among other employées, His Majesty the King supports a Recollet Father at this establishment, with the title of Aumonier. This iron is preferred to the Spanish iron, and is sold off at the King's Stores in Quebec at the rate of 25 to 30* per hundred pounds weight. In order to obtain a better knowledge of the position of these works, I would refer to notes sent to the Court of France on this subject, wherein will be found all details of their management. I may say however in conclusion, that they are unprofitable to the king, and I am assured that if they were offered on lease at public sale, one hundred pistoles per annum might be procured for them. After a splendid dinner at Monsieur de Rouville's mansion, we returned to Trois Rivières, highly pleased with our visit, and took supper at Mr. de Tonnancours. The distance from town to the forges is nine miles."

The above is a translation of a portion of a French manuscript account of Monsr. Franquet's visit to the different posts in La Nouvelle France during the year 1752. The notes addressed by him to the French Court, to which he alludes in the above narrative, are annexed, but contain little worthy of translation ; he dwells upon the nature of the management, the necessity of greater economy, the advisability of sending out competent operatives and furnace men from France, and he lays down in general terms a plan for the successful working of the mines. We have every reason to believe that many of his suggestions were acted upon by the French Government, as a marked improvement was effected in the manufacture of iron work at the forges from 1752 to 1759. Of the period of which we have hitherto treated from the discovery of the mines in 1667, to 1752 the date of Monsr. Franquet's visit, we could give many narratives and historical facts collected from the "*Relations des Jesuites*" and the old French manuscripts, which

*Castors.