

de Mainenon, and impelled the King to the Dragonnades, was enabled to make himself ecclesiastical, and to a great extent political dictator of New France. It is needless to say that the founder of Laval University is still the hero and almost the Patron Saint of Catholicism in Quebec. But under the free though judicial treatment of Mr. Parkman, the aureole of the Saint certainly grows dim. The religious leader of New France happened to be born a Catholic; had he happened to be born a Protestant, he would have been as bigoted a Puritan as he was an Ultramontane, and his grim form would soon have been seen among the witch-burning fanatics of New England. He was, in fact, a Catholic Cotton Mather. How often, in reading history, do we recognize the same character under uniforms of different colours and in opposite ranks? There are several portraits of Laval. "A drooping nose of portentous size; a well-formed forehead; a brow strongly arched; a bright, clear eye; scanty hair, half hidden by a black skull-cap; thin lips, compressed and rigid, betraying a spirit not easy to move or convince; features of that indescribable cast which marks the priestly type; such is Laval, as he looks grimly down on us from the dingy canvas of two centuries ago." He belonged to one of the first families in France, which gave an immense leverage to his Saintship under the old régime. He had been trained in what the preacher of his funeral sermon calls "the terrestrial Paradise" of Bernières, the head of a religious establishment called the Hermitage, at Caen, and had there drunk the lees of a fanaticism which rivalled not only in self-torture, but in filthiness, the practices of the Indian Fakir. A party of enthusiasts, men and women, marched along the highway in a phrenzy of self-mortification, the priests with the skirts of their cassocks drawn over their heads and tied about their necks with twisted straw, the women with their heads bare and their hair streaming loose

over their shoulders. "They picked up filth on the road, and rubbed their faces with it, and the most zealous ate it, saying that it was necessary to mortify the taste. Some held stones in their hands, which they knocked together to draw the attention of the passers-by. They had a leader whom they were bound to obey: and when this leader saw any mud hole particularly deep and dirty, he commanded some of the party to roll themselves in it, which they did forthwith." The main object of these displays seems to have been to excite popular feeling against the Jansenists. Laval himself, when Bishop of Quebec, thought it meritorious to sleep on a bed full of fleas; and his admiring, or rather worshipping, servant deposes that he had known him keep cooked meat five, six, seven, or even eight days in the heat of summer, and when it was all mouldy and wormy, wash it in warm water and eat it, saying that it was very good. Fanatic and enthusiast as he was, however, Laval had a strong practical character, with great tenacity of purpose, and was in every way fitted for the struggle with rival powers, political and ecclesiastical, in which a large part of his life was passed. His ascetic humility by no means prevented his being extremely fond of power, which he of course always seemed to himself to be using in furtherance of the Divine will. It is thus that ambition finds a seat in the breasts of those who have most ostentatiously renounced the pomps and vanities of the world. Fanaticism had told on him in another respect, as it told even on the essentially social as well as lofty character of Cromwell, by confusing his moral sense and making him think that all means were good provided they conduced to objects identified by his religious egotism with the service of God. When empowered to name a Council, he put in not merely incompetent men, because they were his tools, but men charged with grave offences, and by so doing left himself, in Mr. Parkman's impartial judg-