

esque and even dramatic features of the two hundred and sixty years or so that had passed since DeMonts landed at St. Croix, and Champlain founded the ancient capital of Quebec. Dulness and Canadian history were too often considered synonymous, and with some reason, before the publication of his 'Pioneers of France in the New World' in 1865, or fourteen years after the appearance of his 'Conspiracy of the Pontiac,' the first being the beginning, and the latter the end of his series of narratives. The only meritorious history of the French regime that had appeared before 1865 was that by Garneau, a French Canadian; but its circulation was chiefly among his compatriots, and the imperfect and ill-done English translation that had been made did not tend to make him popular among English-speaking peoples. The first volume of Ferland's excellent work had been printed in 1861, and the second in 1865, but it is safe to say that very few persons, even in English Canada, are yet aware of its value. In the United States neither Garneau nor Ferland had any readers except a few historical students. But despite their undoubted merit, these French Canadian authors can never captivate the reader like Parkman with his power of vivid narrative, his charm of style, his enthusiasm for his subject, his remarkable descriptions of historic scenes and places, which are so many pen pictures of the past. To his great work, which he conceived in the commencement of his manhood, he devoted his life with a rare fidelity, industry, and patience that have never been surpassed in the domain of letters. The record of those years during which he laboured to accomplish what he made essentially his mission, is one of struggle—not with ill fortune, or straitened means, for he was happily well supplied with the world's goods—but with physical infirmity to which many other men of less indomitable purpose would have yielded. The story of his life should be often told to animate the youth of our country to patient effort, whatever may be their vocation in life. 'He who shall tell that story of noble endeavour,' writes one who knew him well, Justin Winsor, 'must carry him into the archives of Canada and France, and portray him peering with another's eyes. He must depict him in his wanderings over the length and breadth of a continent wherever a French adventurer had set foot. He must track him to many a spot hallowed by the sacrifice of a Jesuit. He must plod with him the portage where the burdened trader had hearkened for the lurking savage. He must stroll with him about the ground of ambush which had rung with the death-knell, and must survey the field or defile where the lilies of France had glimmered in the smoke of battle. He who would represent him truly must tell of that hardy courage which the assaults of pain could never lessen. He must describe the days and months, and even years when the light of the sun was intolerable. He must speak of the intervals, counted only by half-hours, when a secretary could read to him. Such were the obstacles which for more than fifty years gave his physicians little hope.' But nowhere in the pages of his narrative, so distinguished by bright, graphic description of spirits arising from that suffering which would have daunted so many men and infused a certain vein of melancholy into their writings. The genius of his intellect, stimulated by a deep enthusiasm for the work in hand, always carried him far above

all such considerations of bodily suffering. After all, in a sense, this same spirit of devotion to a worthy object was the influence that animated the Jesuit missionaries whose story he has so eloquently and accurately told. It was the same spirit of patience and endurance that gave La Salle the courage to overcome the difficulties which personal enemies as well as obdurate nature so long interposed as he followed in the path first broken by Joliet and Marquette, and at last found his way down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. A great book—and he certainly wrote such a book—is as much an event in history as the discovery of new land or river. Much happier, however, than the heroic men of whom he writes, he lived long enough to see the results of his laborious life crowned amid the plaudits of the world. It is an opinion now generally entertained that among the historians of the century not one can surpass him in clearness of style, in that charm which he throws around the lightest incident, in the fidelity with which he used the material he accumulated at such great expense and despite so many difficulties, in that disregard of all sentiment when it became a question of historic truth; but there is another and most conspicuous feature of his works which has certainly been never equalled by any historian, European or American, and that is his ability to bring before the reader the true natural characteristics of the scenes of his historic narrative. Every place which forms the subject of his history bears the impress of an enthusiastic student of nature in her varied guise, of one who knows every rock, stream, lake and mountain associated with the incidents he relates. Whilst everywhere in his narrative we see the skill and fidelity of a true historian, at the same time we can note the love of the man for the forest and river, for trees and flowers, and all the natural beauties of the country through which he leads us in the movement of his history; we recognize one who has studied Indian life in the wigwam and by camp fires, who is a poet by the power of his imagination and his depth of admiration for God's creations, who is a political student who can enter into the animating purpose and motives of ambitious priests and statesmen. A great historian must in these days combine all such qualities if he is to raise his work above the level of the mere annalist. It may be said that his love of the picturesque was at times too dominant in his narrative, but if that be a fault or weakness it is one which the general reader of history would wish to see more frequently imitated. At all events, it cannot be said that the imaginative or dramatic faculty of his nature ever led him to conceal the truth as he read it, or to attempt to deceive his readers by obscuring his facts so as to lead us to wrong inferences. He had the love of the Puritan for truth, and none of that narrowness or bigotry that too often made the Puritans unsafe teachers when it was a matter of opinion or feeling. Some of us, especially in French Canada, will differ from some of his opinions and conclusions on moot points of history, but no one will doubt his sincerity or desire to be honest. In paying this tribute to Francis Parkman the Royal Society of Canada, composed of English and French Canadians meeting on a common platform of historic study and investigation, need only add that its members recognize in him a writer of whom not simply New England, but Canada is equally proud, since literature knows no geographical or sectional

limits, and though we cannot claim him as one of ourselves by birth, we feel he became a Canadian by the theme he made his own, and by the elevation and interest he has given to the study of the history of this Dominion."

PARIS LETTER.

Two facts that are producing weighty consequences in France—the Mather eight hours work per day, and the adoption of that principle in the English dockyards, etc. Next, the English Parliament voting the eight hours' work for miners. The old school of political economists seem to have lost their heads in presence of these two facts. Unable to refute them, they simply express no confidence in them, and so destroy the last shred of confidence placed in their judgment. The up-to-date economists accept two principles, that the workman must receive a wage to enable him to live at least as a human being, and to secure this, salaries must fix the price of commodities, and not *vice versa*. The thoroughly democratic character of the English Chancellor's budget has created much confusion among the advocates of the continuance of the clumsy and unsystematic revenue system existing in France, by stimulating public opinion to adopt the income tax, graduated either in poundage or basis of assessment. Indeed France has no other way out of her financial difficulties but that. The Budget Commission unanimously admits she is not rich enough to support the strain of 100 million frs. of new expenses yearly, and that no fresh loan is to be thought of; it said, economy and reforms must be practised; but that cuckoo cry is as old as the cuckoo itself, and as safe for politicians. Acts are wanting, not words, and all that can be gathered consists of words, unsupported statements, and denying what cannot be controverted. This is the great difference between the Gaul and the Saxon. The *Temps* tearfully laments, that the inquisitorial character of an income tax, with all its vexations, would produce next to a revolution; but in other countries, England and the United States, where people are as jealous of their privacy as in France, no revolutionary marches are undertaken, no "Coxeyism" apprehended. "Try it on," it was by essaying the income tax that Sir Robert Peel saddled the nation with the impost; with him the provisional was the permanent.

The unfortunate young man, Emile Henry, condemned to death—aged but 22—as the type of the perfect anarchist, creates pity; not for his punishment—slaying eight persons, wounding several for life, and regretting he could not do more, are not pleas for mercy—but rather what he might have become had he kept straight. He believed in nothing, so had nothing to guide him. He wanted to make his own laws, and to remake society, if relics of it were left, after his own fashion. He avows, he struck at society's heart, and accepts the result that it strike—off his head. But society at which he fulminates did no wrong to him; on the contrary, it bestowed on him many favors. Being a remarkably intelligent youth, he quickly made his way at school; was accorded an excellent sizarship, by means of which he could, had he continued to study, have entered the Polytechnic School, and then he had a military career all opened to him, and where he was certain, by his natural gifts, to rise. Instead, he preferred to read hare-brained literature