

**PARKMAN AND THE JESUITS.**

**Characteristics of his Series of Histories.**

The death of Francis Parkman, the historian, at Jamaica Plain, Boston, on November 8th, directs attention anew to the value of his contributions to historical literature. While a freshman in Harvard, he planned the life-work which, despite the obstacles of life-long delicate health and impaired eyesight, he achieved in his historical series "France and England in North America."

The series includes "The Conspiracy of Pontiac," "Pioneers of France in the New World," "The Jesuits in North America," "The Discovery of the Great West," "The Old Regime in Canada," "Count Frontenac and New France Under Louis XIV.," "Montcalm and Wolf," and "A Half Century of Conflict."

On the whole, alike from the standpoint of Catholicity and human progress, the most remarkable of these books is "The Jesuits in North America." A modern Catholic realizes, with horror, and a modern educated non-Catholic with blended amusement and shame, what was the popular American Protestant conception of a Jesuit even a few decades ago. It ran in their blood, for had not New England been colonized as "a bulwark against the kingdom of Antichrist, which the Jesuits labor to rear up in all places of the world?" and were not the Jesuits forbidden its soil on the pain of death?

Even from the mirror of Whittier's pure and upright mind, the Jesuit is reflected in distortion, as in that early poem of "Mogg Megone."

In Francis Parkman, however, the passion for historical truth struggles so hard and in the main so successfully with inherited prejudice and natural pride of intellect, that the Jesuit missionary explorers and martyrs stand out from his pages so true to noblest life as to compel the homage of the Protestant and even of the infidel. They are seen, it is true, through the dust of the conflict in the historian's own mind; but nevertheless, to adapt his own phraseology, one may pierce through the mist and the clouds, and find behind them all a solid nucleus of saint and hero.

He estimated with astonishing accuracy the place of the Jesuits in religious history.

"It was an evil day for new-born Protestantism," he says, "when a French artilleryman fired the shot that struck down Ignatius Loyola in the breach of Pampeluna."

Though Parkman, in a spirit worthy of Endicott and Cotton Mather, sees in the destruction of the Jesuit missions by the fiendish Iroquois a distinct intervention of Providence in favor of "Liberty and England," he still credits the Canadian Jesuits with eyes single to the salvation of souls, as distinct from all political interests and ambitions.

Nay, more; he sets forth the wisdom and humanity of their methods with the Indians so strongly as naturally to suggest comparison with the English policy of extermination. He even grants that in spreading Catholicity among the savages they spread also Christian morality!

He depicts the martyrdom of the heroic Brebeuf—whose soldierly sainthood has, as can be easily seen, overmastered him—and the double martyrdom of Jogues—with almost the sympathy of an old-time compiler of the Acts of the Martyrs. Similar sympathy is evident in his estimate of the character of these men, and of Lalemant, Garnier, De Noue and the rest of the glorious band.

But the why and wherefore of it all is a mystery to him, as to all who have not the Faith of Christ. The Jesuits' zeal for the baptism of little children and dying captives seems to Parkman only a "benevolent persecution" of the subjects of it. But why marvel at this? To speak of the value of a soul to men deficient in faith is like explaining the glories of light to the blind or of music to the deaf.

Much of Parkman's works are painful reading to Catholics, because of his misconception and unintentional misrepresentation of Catholicity itself and of some of the noblest characters in the early history of New France; but on the whole, like other New England men of letters, he has done much to abate the old prejudices, less religious than political, which this section of the United States especially, received from England

with the name it bears. It is simple justice to say that he was always honest and wrote only what he believed to be the absolute truth.—Boston Pilot.

**YULE TIDE.**

**Celtic Origin of the Poetical Name Used by the English.**

The word "Yule" has puzzled many antiquarians. It is simply an abbreviation of "Yule-ice," which means all-heal, the Celtic name of Christmas, "Nuadhulig" being the Irish name for Christmas. It is an abbreviation of "Nuadhulleiceadh" which means the new all-heal, that is the new mistletoe. At that period when the new year was about to commence, the Druidical priests assembled in a large body outside the dwellings of the people, and set up the shout of "Nuadh-ulle iceadh!" "New all-heal!" This was the thrilling note which announced that they were going to the woods in search of the sacred plant, "the mistletoe." Immediately the people joined in solemn procession. On reaching the forest they made the most diligent search for the plant, and when it was found, especially upon their favorite oak, they gave expression to their joy in loud shouts of exultation. Then with much ceremony and form the priest highest in dignity amongst them ascended the tree, and with a golden pruning knife cut from its branches the divine plant, which was received by these below in a large cloth of unspotted whiteness. Two white bulls, which had been conducted to the place for that purpose, were sacrificed to the gods; after which the mistletoe, or wonderful "all-heal," was brought home in solemn procession, amidst shouts of joy, mingled with prayers, incantations and hymns.

The mistletoe is a graceful branchy plant, which grows like wood fern on the branches of the oak, the apple, the pear, the hazel, the elm, and various trees. It will not grow on beech, holly or walnut. Climate affects it much. It is seldom found in some localities, though abundant in others; but under the care of the Druids, it was made to root in almost every orchard and forest. It grows to about the height of two feet. It is of an olive green color, assumes a yellow or golden hue, and looks very pretty with its white berries in winter. It is now, perhaps, impossible to account for the veneration in which it was held, and the wonderful qualities which it was supposed to possess. Religion, legend and poetry threw a halo of power and mystery around it. Even the tree on which it was found growing was not without its reputed virtue. It appears that it, too, was cut down and distributed in small logs to people for their fires, and that no small virtue was attached to the half-burnt fragments of them. Of all these proceedings and ceremonies we have still living traditions in Ireland. Persons proceed to the woods to bring home the Christmas tree and Christmas branches, and as all heal cannot be found, its place is abundantly supplied by the holly and ivy. With these the cottage is adorned, as also the temples of religion. Even the "mistletoe," "the mistletoe," or "all-heals" is brought from foreign countries, and bought in our cities by those whose circumstances enable them to procure it in that way.

But what was once in honor of Paganism is now in honor of Christianity, and to celebrate the great festival of Christmas.

Nor is the famous 'log' ever forgotten, for we see them carried around and eagerly bought up, all appreciating at this time the 'yule log.'—Cork Examiner.

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