

"l'Apothéose de Franklin," "l'Immortalité de l'Ame," "Mariage d'Enée et de Lavinie," "Treizième Chant de l'Eneide," Histoire des Quinzes Semaines ou le Dernier Regne de Buonaparte," and finally his "History of the Crusades."

The very title of this work was an earnest of its usefulness. Thus far no lengthily relation had ever been written of the gigantic expeditions of our ancestors to wrest from the Saracens the possession of Palestine with its many cities hallowed by the memories of our Lord's life. What Michaud undertook to give to the world was a true, exact account of the Crusades based on authentic documents. Before his day France had produced—with the exception of Bossuet and Voltaire—no historian of the first rank. The manner of writing history was detestable; it was not truth but fiction. Facts were taken and dressed up in a certain pomp of language without any regard to historical accuracy. Every king was a Louis XIV; every soldier a Turenne. Michaud possessed the fundamental qualities of the historian, veracity and impartiality. Indeed he spent twenty years searching out and studying authentic documents, and his impartiality was remarkable, especially to a man so given to the contrary defect in politics.

Michaud fully succeeded in the end he had in view. These Christian expeditions had been derided and condemned particularly by the irreligious school of the eighteenth century, while the ignorance of history was wide-spread and profound. But Michaud let light in on one period by truthfully portraying the valor and glory of the Crusaders. Of course he is an admirer of them, as who would not be, at the sight of their oft-repeated and heroic endeavors? But the author does not philosophize, does not even try by dissertations to convince us of the grandeur of these expeditions. He is satisfied with what is, after all, far more persuasive and irrefutable, the mere record of the facts. These were sufficiently eloquent to plead their own cause. Michaud thus combatted perhaps more successfully than any other single man, all the prejudices and falsehoods that had for so long clustered around the much-maligned Middle Ages, and he removed completely and forever

many an unmerited stain that had long rested on the memory of brave men.

Yet he did not find all to praise in the Crusades. Excesses of all kinds had been committed; disorders and petty rivalries entailed inevitable failure; desolation and misery too often followed; whole generations buried themselves in the sands of Palestine and failed to attain their object. But the fact that the Holy Land remained in the hands of the Saracens by no means justifies us in denying that the Crusades rendered important services to the civilized world and to the Catholic faith. It is consoling to return to those ages in which so much enthusiasm was displayed for the maintenance of our religion.

If Michaud admired the Crusades, it by no means follows that he always justifies them. We have his own words to disprove any such contention:

Without believing that the Holy Wars did all the good and all the evil that was attributed to them, we must agree in saying that they were a source of tears for the generations that saw them and took part in them, but like the evils and storms of human life which render man better and often serve the progress of his reason, we may say that after having shaken society, they made it firmer in its foundations.

While praising the patriotism and valor of the Crusaders, their religious enthusiasm and entire submission to the authority of the Pope, Michaud is not blind to the abuses that existed nor is he sparing in his condemnation of them. He is equally impartial in dealing with the deeds of his own ancestors. A spirit of national pride might easily have here glided into the author's remarks, but nowhere is it visible.

Yet with all his undoubted qualifications Michaud can scarcely be called a great historian; he has been entirely eclipsed in his own nation by the historical school that has recently risen to such enviable prominence. Michaud is simple, uniform and always correct, but there is nothing in him to excite enthusiasm; no vivid pictures, no bold figures, no elaborated style. One might read him for knowledge but never for pleasure. Not that his history is uninteresting; on the contrary there is throughout a certain grace of expression, but there is nothing to keep him from becoming monotonous after the perusal of a few hundred pages. As a text-book, Michaud's "History of