

try. The greater part of these Indians are as white as the Canadians; and if we occasionally meet with one of more than usually dark complexion, this is generally owing to their long journeys, extending at times over a period of two or three months, exposed to the heat of the sun; but then a few weeks of repose in their homes suffice to remove completely those traces of exposure. Frequently I have heard visitors express their astonishment, and say they had come to see Indians, when to their great surprise they had found only white men."

The Abenakis of St. Francis, among whom the same missionary was stationed, are now 268 in number. He says of them:

"Many suppose that our Indians are intellectually weak and disqualified for business. This is a great mistake. Certainly, so far as the Abenakis are concerned, they are nearly all keen, subtle, and very intelligent. Let them obtain complete freedom and this impression will soon disappear. Intercourse with the whites will soon develop their talents for commerce. No doubt some of them would make an improper use of their liberty, but they would be few in number. Everywhere, and in all countries, men are to be found weak, purposeless, and unwilling to understand their own interests; but I can certify that the Abenakis generally are superior in intelligence to the Canadians. I have remarked that nearly all those who have left their native village have profited by the change. I know of several who have bought farms in our neighborhood and are now living in comfort. Others have emigrated to the United States, where they have almost all prospered, and where several of them have raised themselves to honorable positions. I know one who is practicing with success the profession of a doctor. Others have settled in our towns with a view to learn the different trades. There is one at Montreal who is an excellent carpenter; but here we see nothing of the kind. Nevertheless, I observe a large number of young men, clever, intelligent, and gifted, with remarkable talents."

Such being the result of his observations, the Rev. J. Mairault urges the emancipation of at least all the more civilized Indians from the condition of minors in the eye of the law; feeling assured that if they were placed in competition with the whites, and allowed to hold and dispose of their property, they would be found fully able to maintain their place in the community.

The Micmacs number 491, and are a small but highly civilized band of a nation numerically stronger in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. They encamp along the Lower St. Lawrence, and manifest considerable industry in making staves, barrel hoops, axe handles, and baskets of various kinds. They usually speak English, and manifest much shrewdness in making their bargains and comprehending the laws of trade in relation to the market for hoops and staves and other articles manufactured by them.

The condition of the kindred tribes of the Montagnais and Naskapees has no parallel in the United States. Their special characteristics arise from the austerity of their climate and the sterility of their soil. They cannot be expected to make much progress in agricultural pursuits in a region where the maximum of labor is required and the minimum of recompense is returned. Owing no doubt to climatic influences, these Indians were always regarded by their fellow-aborigines as the least elevated of their race. They inhabit the cold and barren regions of the Lower St. Lawrence, where the water enters the ocean after passing through the great lakes, whose shores already teem with a civilized population. No inconsiderable portion of the commerce of both hemispheres passes and repasses them. Their territory is nearer