

of other nationalities, I proclaim with pleasure that ours are in this respect preferable, they have a warm and sympathetic heart. From the first they make a friend of you, if you are worth the trouble; and if you are a superior man, they respect as well as love you. Nothing has given me more pleasure or has more encouraged me than the invariably cordial reception which I have met with among these brave fellows during the summer. Although poor for the most part, and severely tried in various ways, these miners offer you always a respectful and beaming countenance. Only to see them and hear them speak strengthens your heart like a cordial! They know how to bear their trouble in an unexampled manner. Long live the Gaul.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE CANADIAN FRENCH.

In approaching the subject of religion with them, I have been struck with the marked difference between them and the Canadians. The latter are all, with very few exceptions, real devotees, and that without constraint. Religion is to them necessary, indispensable; and although the enlightened in some points of view, they have, notwithstanding, a tolerable knowledge of their religious system; they are, moreover, a zeal which can stand all proofs; and they obey blindly the instructions of their priests. When a Protestant missionary visits them, they rush upon him as on a wild beast and drive him away, without being willing even to listen to him. I am found quite the contrary among these Frenchmen, but in another point of view. As soon as I opened my mouth on the subject of religion, I experienced what I consider as the most crushing check, and, in fact, an inconceivable hatred of religion. This is easily explained when you penetrate a little below the surface, into the heart of religious administration in France. Their shameful intrigues the clergy have needed in extinguishing religious belief among the people; and now, more or less cynical, they refuse the advances of the clergy, which are meanwhile enforced by the civil arm, the secular authority. What a shameful state of things! I am not surprised that these poor people should nourish an implacable hatred against the clergy, against religion also, since the priest is their representative. Thus, in considering facts and many others, I have said to myself that there is no cause for despair, no heart, common sense, and a pretty education are not wanting.

FIRST GLIMPSE OF LIGHT.

After some fruitless efforts among them I discovered that the only means of conciliating them, was to render all the services

possible. By this means a good many believed that they had in me a friend—a being whom they had not yet met with since their departure from France—and very soon appeared disposed to listen to what I had to say to them. The work has always appeared to me one of the most difficult, because of their surprising religious ignorance. In general, in Canada this obstacle is unknown—to a certain point. Before building up the truth, I had to pull down:

- 1st. The total indifference of some.
- 2ndly. The icy scepticism of others.
- 3rdly. The hatred of religion, Catholic or Protestant, of all.

4thly. Finally, the ignorance also of all. An easy task, is it not? Thus, more than once, discouragement has seized me; with this mountain of difficulties before me, I have felt myself without strength or courage. Thanks to God, He has been with me and upheld me.

THE PRIEST.

About the 10th of May the Reverend Curé thought it his duty to make a pastoral visit to his dear French flock. As they received him very well, he thought he might at once make known the purpose of his visit. "You know," said he, "that it is your duty to support the Church; you are getting on very well with your business since your arrival here, you are going then to give me, every father of a family 25 francs, and every grown up son 10 francs a year." "Go to,"—exclaimed, with some reason, these Frenchmen, who were thus insulted in a foreign land. Father Mac made himself scarce for a considerable time; and it was well for him. Some days later one of these poor immigrants was accidentally killed on the railroad. The friends write to Father Mac and invite him to come to render the last duties to the unfortunate man. Father Mac replies, that he must have 15 francs or no funeral. The friends threaten an appeal to the Protestants. It was useful to yield. The service was short and sad. When ended, I assembled the 45 Frenchmen who had attended, and in a warm discourse followed by a fervent prayer, I made palpable to them the errors and falsehoods of Rome. All listened with the greatest attention, and seemed moved. Rome, thou art slaying thy children!

PRIVATE MEETINGS AND PUBLIC.

Three weeks after my arrival I opened private meetings at their houses. From 10 to 15 constantly listened with attention and respect to the reading and exposition of the Scripture and to prayer. But after some weeks it seemed to me that public meetings would have more success. My opinion was combated, but after mature reflection, on the 14th of June, 1874, I