



WE are now entering the penumbra of the Champlain Tercenary at Quebec; and most people have decided whether they will make the venture, or stay at home and read about it in the papers. There is much to be said in favour of both plans. Undoubtedly the celebration will be an historic event. The pageant will present to the eye a series of living pictures culled from the most picturesque features of our early history. We will witness the discoverers and founders of Canada at work, and will be able to realise in some degree the sort of world in which they laboured. We will even be shown glimpses of the French courts which these men of courage and restless enterprise left to face danger, hardship and toil amidst savage conditions and savage men. All this sounds very hackneyed to write it; but I rather anticipate that we will get a better sense of the meaning of the words when we see the very figures who did these things playing their roles under our eyes.

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WHILE doing a little reading for the affair, I have been struck, as never before, with the reality of the pioneer spirit. Here was Champlain, for instance, enjoying a pension at the court of Henri Quatre in Paris, the most civilised and luxurious court of the day. He was geographer to the king, and could have lived the life which at that time seemed most attractive to ninety-nine out of every hundred of his fellow-men. But there was a fire in his blood which would not let him rest in the lap of luxury. As soon as he heard of an expedition venturing out to explore the mysterious regions of the New World, he was eager to go with it. Nor was it that he wished to win renown in this way which would advance his position at court. Apparently he did not care two straws about his place at court, except in so far as it enabled him to get the ear of the king and forward his efforts in Canada. He came out to America for the love of the thing itself; and lived through long winters with a handful of companions, so badly fed that they died of scurvy, or even in the tent of an Indian chief.

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THOSE must have been dreary days on Ste. Croix Island, in the "Habitation" at Quebec, in the Huron country in Northern Ontario. Compare it with the festivities and gayeties of the Louvre and Fontainebleau. The winters dragged slowly along with this little company of men wondering whether disease or the spring would reach them first—with less of the interest of the outside world in their lives than so many lumbermen imprisoned in a shanty—with at least nothing to hope for but the final planting of a small and struggling community in the midst of forests and Indians—and, all the while, the gay life went on in Paris and its enviroing chateaux, where the best company in the world was gathered, where the latest play was to be seen, the latest poem heard, the latest picture enjoyed; and these men might have been in the thick of it. But they were thinking of building—not of living. They were carving out for France a new Empire, and preparing the way for the coming to these savages of the Holy Religion.

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SUCH men must be measured by different standards than we are accustomed to apply to life. Their passion is not to get—it is to do. The most of us are hurrying about with our little scoop-nets trying to gather in as much of the flotsam of life as comes within our puny reach; while men of this sort only give our selfish labours and rotting heaps of refuse a passing glance of scorn as they stride on to fields where quarried stone may be laid on quarried stone in solid permanence. They are the architects of the world, while the most of us are only chip-gatherers dodging about between the legs of the Builders. We make ourselves very cosy and warm with our fires of chips, and we are very gay withal as we sit ruddy in the blaze or dance merrily about in the shadows. But, in the morning, there is only a heap of ashes to tell where we have been—and we are a part of it. But up in the morning light rises the stern, grey structure of imperishable stone which the Builders have made; and it will see a

thousand such chip-gathering generations come and go, and cast the flickering light of their casual fires upon the names of the Builders carven over the portals of the edifice that lasts.

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WE have such men in our day; but we can hardly see them for the thronging crowds made up of the rest of us. They never did jostle each other. But Cecil Rhodes was such a man. His accidental wealth may have disguised this fact from us somewhat, but he only got his wealth because it was the chief weapon of the time in which he lived. He was really an Empire-builder. Then Lord Cromer must have had something of that spirit. There are men of this character scattered throughout the country to-day who are thinking more of the future of the nation than of their own little piles of "chips"; but they lack the opportunity or the ability to build high enough for the idlers to see. We stumble over their work on the way to the "show grounds," and heartily curse them for cranks. But they are the "village Champlains" of the present, scorning our ruder Fontainebleaux in this tinsel age, and building as best they can the superstructure of the nation which Champlain died to found.

Nidmporte

A NOVEL WELCOME.

PRINCE ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT is an enthusiastic soldier, and he has had a thorough military training. On one occasion, says M. A. P., when he was travelling by steamer along a Canadian river, he saw a man standing on the bank who was waving a pocket-handkerchief tied to a stick. The Prince immediately pulled out his own handkerchief and waved back again. "Why did you do that?" asked one of his suite. "The man signalled the words, 'Welcome to Canada,'" replied Prince Arthur, "and I signalled back again, 'Thank you.'" It is worthy of note that although there were a number of officers on board, the Prince was the only person who was able to read the stranger's message. It may be remarked, en passant, that Prince Arthur was some time ago awarded a certificate of proficiency as an instructor from the Aldershot School of Signalling.

"THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT."



John Bull (suffering from emaciation due to famine in imported meat). "Butcher, what of the beef?" Butcher (in elegiac mood). "The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the sea."—Punch. John Bull's meat supply comes from the west side of the Atlantic and this year the supply is somewhat meagre and prices are high.