

Christian empire, whose people, or their ancestors, should be the converted aborigines. Thus, it is not surprising that, where the Indians of this province occupied territory surrounded by that of the whites, they have become Catholic and nearly French, as, in the settled portions of Ontario, the tendency usually is to become Protestant and Anglo-Saxon.

Where opportunity offers, they prefer engaging as raftsmen or pilots on the St. Lawrence, or entering into the service of the Hudson's Bay Company to laboring steadily on farms.

Some of these tribes now present characteristics in marked contrast to those of others, the chief point being that while in lineage and language some are almost French, others, near the Lower St. Lawrence and north of it, are yet in a state of primitive and wandering barbarism. With the exception of the latter, the native population of Quebec is not only numerically increasing, notwithstanding some emigration to this country and to different parts of Canada, but is advancing towards civilization and adopting agricultural occupations, and also several others of the employments useful to such communities as those of Canada and the United States. Regular, steady, manual labor, without ample remuneration, is seldom relished by those of either race whose wants can be satisfied without it; and there is no doubt that one of the reasons why the Indians of Lower Canada do not take more readily to the farm is, that the severity of the climate prevents them from realizing more than a very moderate reward from their labors on it. Whether right or wrong, the French population of this province is characterized rather by a willingness to enjoy life as it passes than by the desire prevalent among our own people to accumulate large material possessions, and the civilized Indians of Quebec have naturally been influenced by the ideas of the white neighbors who lived around their villages.

Under the old *régime* the French considered themselves the sovereign possessors of the land, and thus in consequence of the insufficiency of the provision made for these aborigines, a moderate grant is allowed by the government to aid in their support.

The Rev. J. Maurault, a resident Roman Catholic missionary among the Abenakis tribe at St. Francis, evinced an intimate knowledge of the Indians of Lower Canada, when he wrote the following summary:

"We have," said he, "in Lower Canada, the Montagnais, the Têtes de Boule, who are true savages, and who could not possibly live as white men do. It would be utterly useless to extend to them, for the present at least, privileges which they would be unable to appreciate, which would in no way benefit them, and which they would in all probability abuse. But this is not the case with the Indians living together in villages—for instance, the Micmacs, the Hurons, the Abenakis, the Iroquois, and the Algonquins; these Indians are civilized; they are aware of the inferiority of their position, they know what it ought to be, and they see themselves entangled in the meshes of a net they are unable to break. In speaking of the Hurons, the Abenakis, &c., how many figure to themselves the cruel and ferocious savages of former days, scalping their enemies and living upon human flesh! How different is this from the true state of the case! We have nothing to fear from them; they are savages only in name. Their manners, their customs, their habits, their modes of eating, &c., are precisely similar to those of the Canadians. They nearly all speak both French and English. The Hurons have completely lost their mother-tongue. Our Indians of to-day are nearly all *Métis* or half-breeds. Here I do not know one Abenaki of pure blood; they are nearly all Canadian, German, English or Scotch half-breeds. The dress of the men is exactly similar to that of our gen-