

GARNEAU, François-Xavier. Histoire du Canada. (Bibliothèque France-Amérique.) Cinquième édition, revue et annotée, publiée avec une introduction et des appendices par son petit-fils Hector GARNEAU. Préface de M. Gabriel HANOTAUX, de l'Académie Française. 2 vol. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1913-1920.

This book is unique as the combined work of two French-Canadian historians belonging to the same family, but separated by two generations. François-Xavier GARNEAU, the original author (1809-1866), was a liberal of the early victorian era. His views upon the history of his race took the color of his own patriotoc nationalism; yet, devout catholic though he was, upon questions of Church and State (a very engrossing subject in French-Canadian history), he shared with contemporary Liberals an enlightened disapproval of extreme clericalism. The better part of his life he devoted to a study of the material of Canadian history, and, adopting the style and method of Michelet, he achieved the distinction of writing, in point of time, the first national history of French Canada, and certainly, as yet, the best.

It seems appropriate that his history should be selected by M. HANOTAUX for the Comité France-Amérique as the initial number of their Bibliothèque a series planned by the Committee with the object of furthering mutually the cultural relations between America and France. The republication of the work in Paris, under such patronage, points anew to the historical interest of France in America--not only as a past field of colonial enterprise, but also as the present home of some millions of French people, retaining vigorously their national distinctiveness, and preserving a national culture, of which the scholarship of GARNEAU is such an eloquent testimony. On this side, a history dealing with the place of France in the beginnings of America is always welcome; but the Comité France-Amérique has placed the reception of this work beyond a doubt by means of a new edition, the fifth, in which the original acquires an altogether different value.

By offering the revision of the work to M. Hector GARNEAU (a grandson of F.-X. GARNEAU), the Comité France-Amérique secured an editor who desired, as a tribute to the memory of the first historian, to enhance the usefulness of the book by making it accord with the requirements of recent historical scholarship. M. Hector GARNEAU has brought to his task a very extensive knowledge of the sources and literature of Canadian history; and, as editor only, he has been content to use for bibliographical references and appendices material which might well have made a work under his own name. By relating the text of the original, to all the material now available for study and research, he has, in effect, transformed a classic of the early nineteenth century into a model of critical thoroughness. It would be difficult to say whether the volume at hand owes more to the excellent narrative style and philosophic grasp of the author, than to the critical revision and annotation of the editor: for what is editorial in form has often a substantive value that can hardly be dissociated from authorship. In its present edition the combined work of author and editor makes the most complete general history of French Canada that we have; and one which, while always acceptable in earlier editions, has now become invaluable.

Prof. C.E. FRYER.

McGill University, Montreal.