

IV.—*The Death of Dulhut.*

By WILLIAM McLENNAN.

(Read May 19, 1903.)

The Anglo-Saxon constantly asserts with much self-satisfaction that France is no colonizer and points his moral as he unfolds his tale of the fall of French Canada, or French India, with a description of the corruption of the home government, the vileness of the colonial officials and the failure of the King to send help in the hour of need. The inference of course is that England succoured her colonies—and hence the difference.

The true reason of her failure was that France busied herself altogether too much over her distant settlements. She not only attempted to order every detail of their internal government but even their policy towards their neighbours. She provided India, Canada and Louisiana with priests, soldiers and settlers. The officer who had gained his pension and retirement was offered a seigneurie with many dignities, the soldier found no difficulty in taking up a respectable farm from his old commander at a ground rent of a few sous for each acre. The King provided the start in life, even up to the important part of a wife with a modest dowry of provisions, clothes and a few livres in good white money.

Every officer who settled in Canada must needs have a title or at least his "lettres de noblesse" and these were bestowed with a generosity which went far to make up the long despaired of arrears of pay.

The home government curbed the governor, the intendant, the bishop, and invited all the tittle-tattle they could write of each other. Without a permission (congé) you could not return to France, you could not go into the English colonies to the south, least of all could you go into the woods and you could not even change your place of residence, say from Montreal to Quebec. Were you a soldier you could not marry without due submission to and permission from your colonel. Were you a tavern-keeper you must have your pewter-pots regularly stamped, must not open before a certain hour or close your door before another. If a "bon bourgeois" you had many duties from that of keeping your ways clean of weeds and briars before your gates to that of being in your own pew in the parish church, upholding your share of the many charities of the town and of taking your place in any expedition which might be put a-foot under proper authority against those cruel devils.