

two youths amuse themselves with the liveliest of college "chaff," the intervals of their talk being filled by references to popular superstition attaching to a part of the road along which they are passing. This mode of telling a story is not new, but M. de Gaspé handles it neatly, and it serves well the purpose he has in view. On another part of their road, the travellers are made witnesses of a thrilling spectacle, and one of them, the young Scotchman, a principal actor. An over-venture some *habitant*, or farmer, trusting to the solidity of the ice of the South River, which he had safely crossed on the previous day, is in imminent peril of being carried helplessly down the rapids, when he is rescued by Archy Lochell. The scene is described with no small graphic power, and is as exciting as many a chapter in recent so-called "sensation novels," besides affording a distinct and very interesting view of the social habits of the Canadian villagers of old. Then follows a description of a "Supper at a Canadian Seigneur's," which we are almost tempted to transcribe, such a picture of solid comfortableness, as well as picturesque grace, does it present. Equally pleasant is the description of a manor-house, with the owner exercising his seigniorial right of exempting his tenants from payment of their rents—that is to say, such of them as can concoct ingenious excuses:—

"What, you rascal!" says the landlord, "for the sake of a pitiful six months' beast you want to evade the seigniorial rights, established by your sovereign as solidly as those mountains to the north which you are looking at are established on their rocky bases. *Quos ego*," "I think," says the tenant, in a low voice, "he is talking wild Indian to frighten me;" and aloud he added, "You see that my silly would, in four years' time, have been (according to those who are judges of horseflesh) the best trotter in this south coast, and would have been worth a hundred francs if she were worth a sou." "Be off to the devil," answers my uncle Raoul, "and tell Lisette to give you a glass of brandy to console you for the loss of your silly. These rogues," adds my uncle, "drink more brandy than they pay rent!"

The description of the ceremonial of dedicating the May-pole is a most interesting passage, illustrative of the peaceful life of the old Canadians. It is strikingly contrasted with scenes of battle. The conquest is effected. On the bloody fields of Abraham, the two friends, Jules and Archy, fight on opposite sides—Jules under General Montcalm, Archy under General Wolfe. There are some love-passages between Archy and Blanche the sister of Jules, in which the young lady patriotically refuses to ally herself with one of her country's conquerors, and remains to the end unshaken in her resolution, in spite of the close bonds of friendship which unite the rest of her family to the young Scotchman. In a note, M. de Gaspé says:—"A Canadian young lady, whose name I will not mention, under similar circumstances refused the hand of a rich Scotch officer in General Wolfe's army." Among his notes, which are extremely copious, will be found a vast deal of curious and valuable information,

verified in many instances by authentic documents, or from the report of actual witnesses.

The chapter entitled the "Shipwreck of the *Augustus*" is a striking supplement to the written history of the Canadian conquest:—

"By recording the misfortunes of my own family," says M. de Gaspé, "I have tried to give some idea of the distress of the greater part of the Canadian nobility who were ruined by the conquest, and whose reduced descendants vegetated on the same soil that their ancestors had conquered and watered with their blood. Let those who accuse them of want of talent and energy remember that with their military education, it was difficult for them to devote themselves to any other occupations than those they were already with."

History generally fails to record the minor circumstances of the great events it recounts, and, but for writers such as M. de Gaspé, the tests by which alone it can be judged would be lost.

"The terms in favour of the French residents," says the writer of a History of Canada now before us, "were faithfully, and even liberally, fulfilled by our Government. All offices, however, were conferred on British subjects, who then consisted only of military men, with not quite five hundred petty traders, many of whom were ill-fitted for so important a situation. They showed a bigoted spirit, and an offensive contempt of the old inhabitants, including even their class of nobles, General Murray (the then Governor), notwithstanding, strenuously protected the latter, without regard to repeated complaints made against him to the Ministry at home; and by his impartial conduct he gained their confidence in a degree which became conspicuous on occasion of the great revolt of the United Colonies."

*Audi alteram partem* M. de Gaspé gives a very different view of the feeling inspired by Governor Murray's measures for the pacification of the country, one of which was the deportation of a large number of persons on board the *Augustus*, a vessel utterly unseaworthy, and the wreck of which caused the destruction of nearly every soul embarked in her. An account of the circumstances of this frightful event was published in Montreal, in 1778, by almost the only survivor of the catastrophe. In M. de Gaspé's volume this gentleman, a M. de St. Luc, is made to tell the tragical story immediately after his escape from the wreck, and, says M. de Gaspé, "After M. de St. Luc's narrative, my aunt Bailly de Messein would say, we passed the rest of the night weeping and lamenting the loss of our relations and friends who had perished in the *Augustus*." It is as a picture of Canadian society as it existed in the days of the author's boyhood, however, that his book is most valuable and interesting. This picture he professes to paint without exaggeration, and we are inclined to trust him for the most part unhesitatingly.

—(London Review, 29 Oct. 1864, No. 226.)