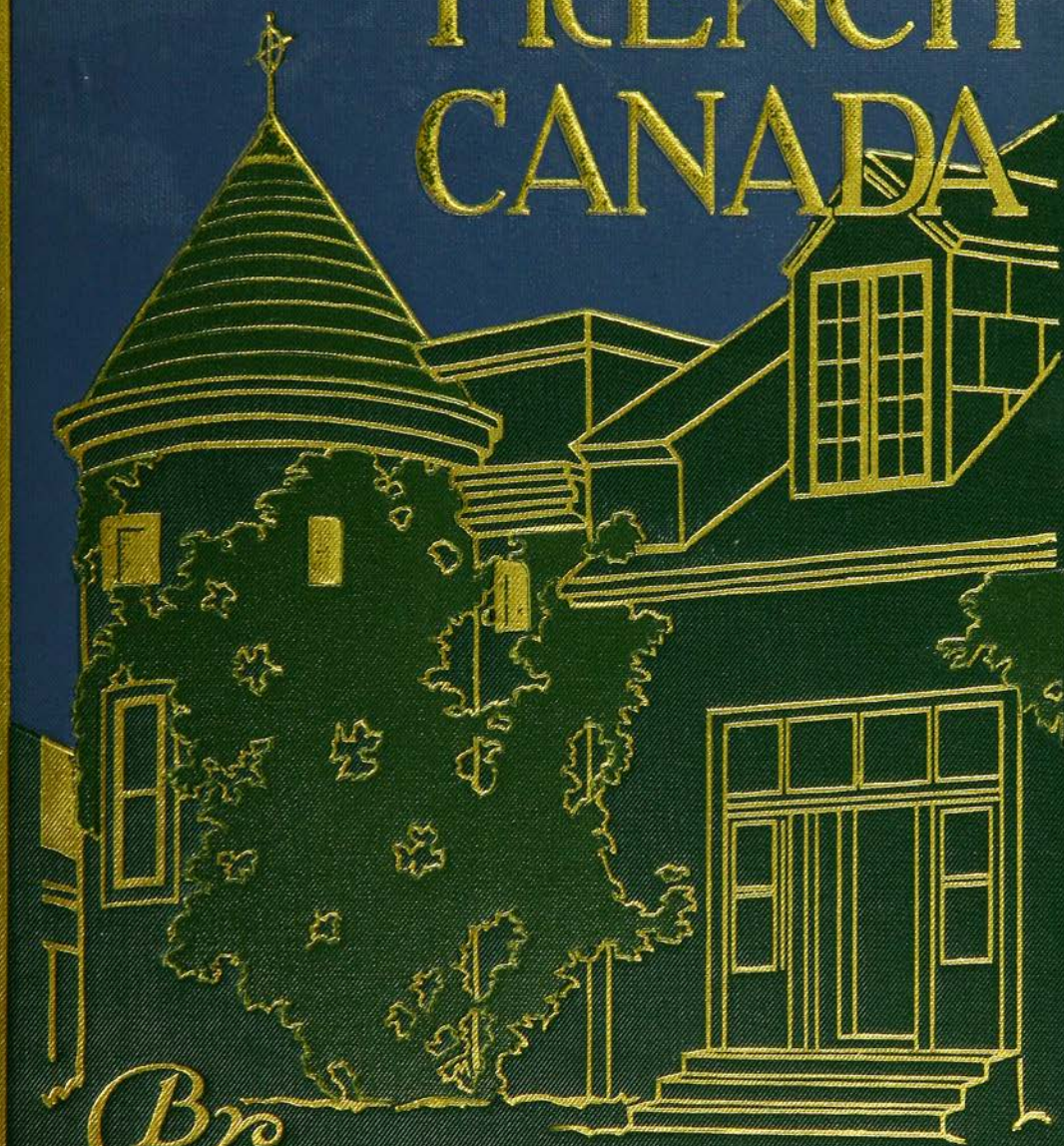


The SPELL of
FRENCH
CANADA



By

Frank Oliver Call

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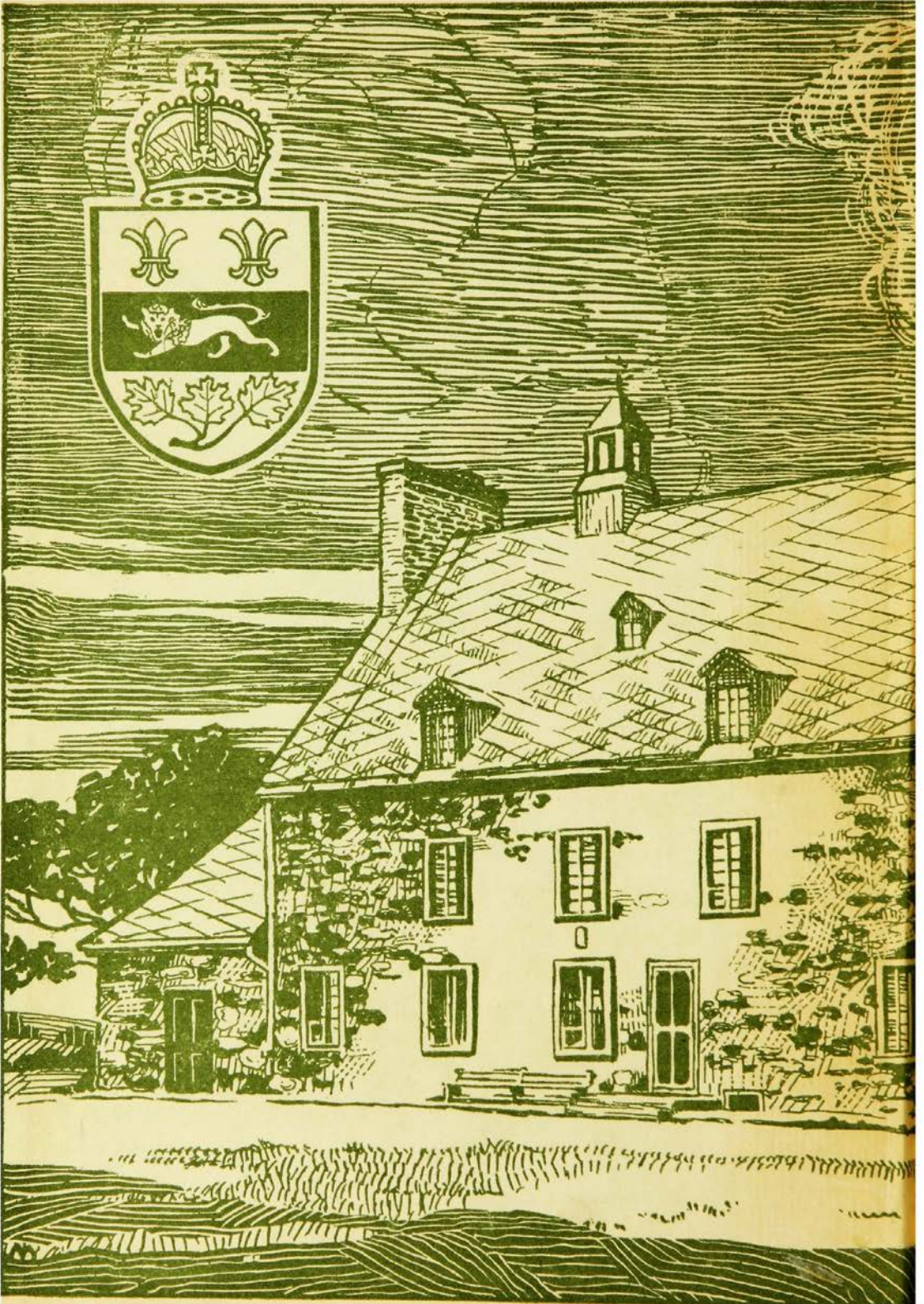
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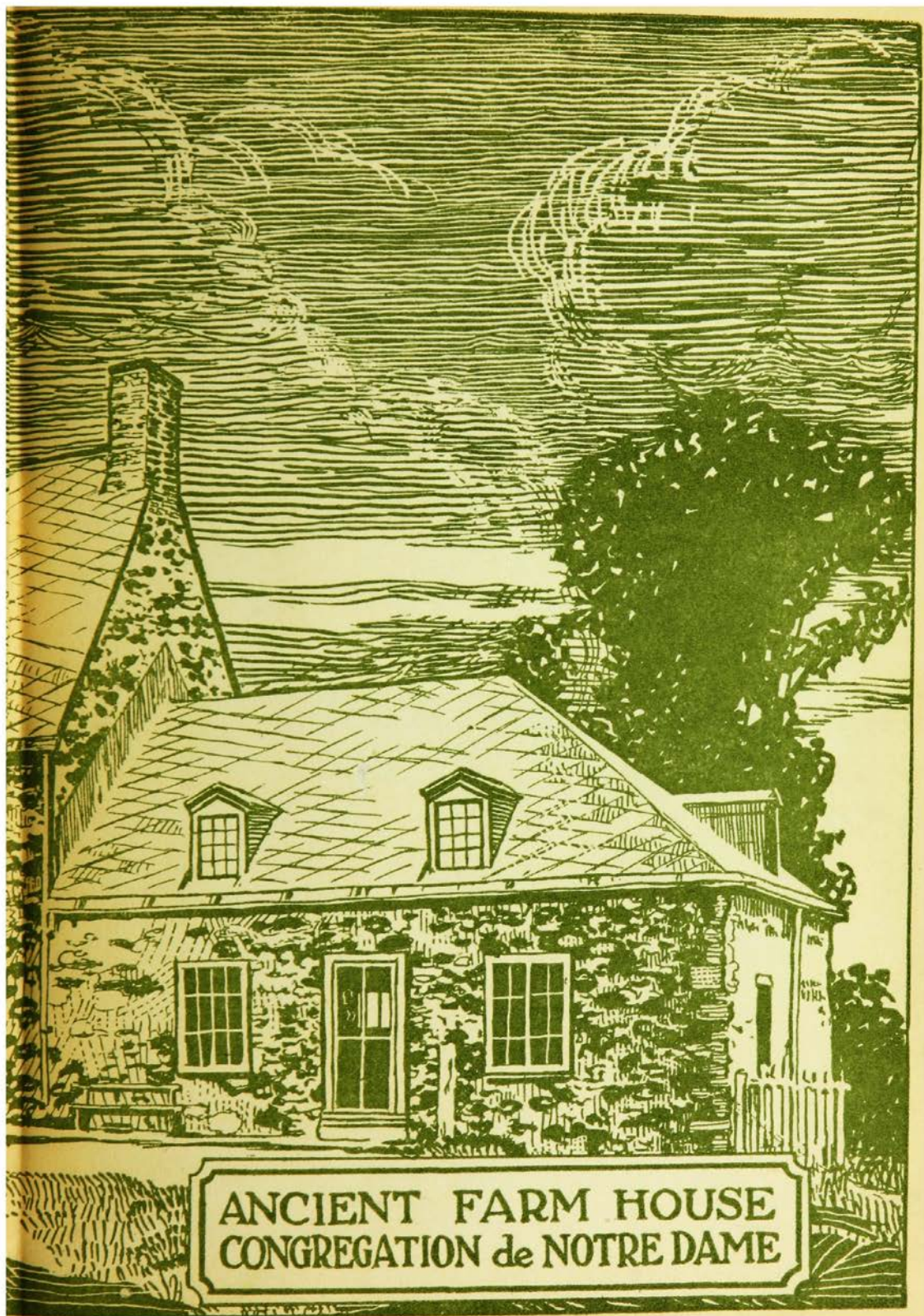
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CONGREGATION de NOTRE DAME

**THE SPELL
OF FRENCH CANADA**

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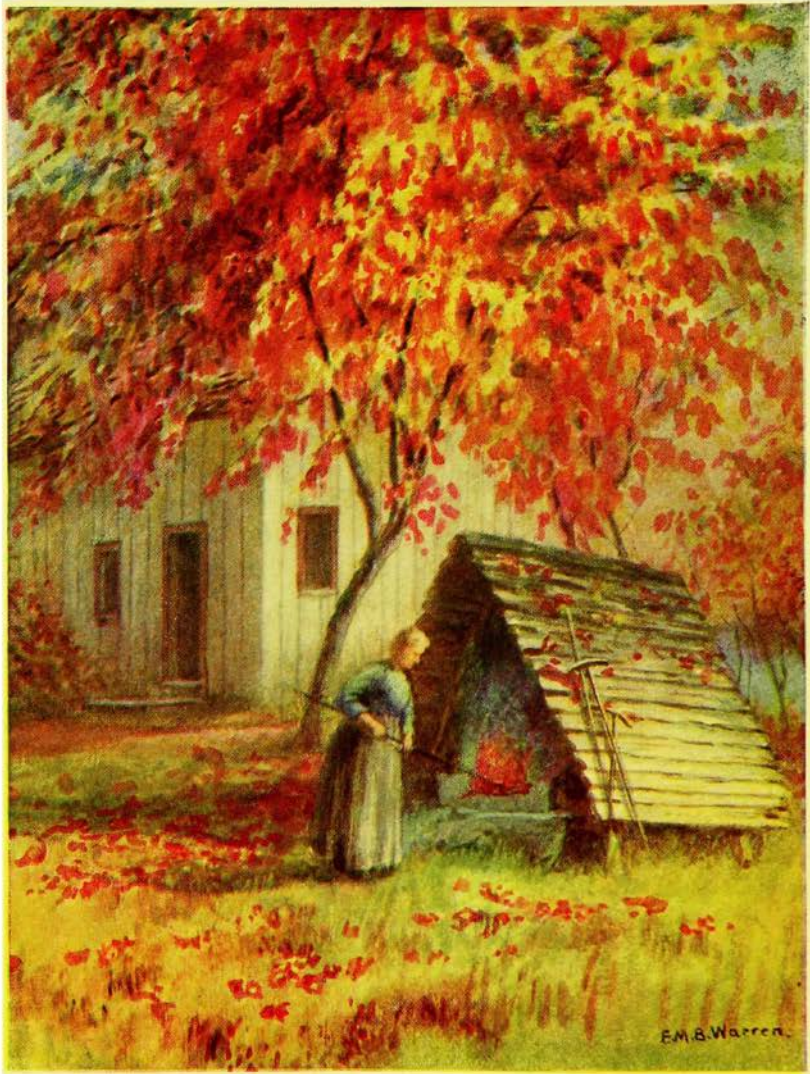
By HENRY C. SHELLEY

THE SPELL OF OLD PARIS


L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

53 Beacon Street

Boston, Mass.



AN OUT-DOOR OVEN, RICHELIEU VALLEY
(See page 355)
From a Painting by E. M. B. Warren



The SPELL of
FRENCH CANADA

BY
FRANK OLIVER CALL, M. A.

Professor of the University of Bishop's College

Author of
"In a Belgian Garden," etc.



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PREFACE

The spell which French Canada exercises over those who visit it for the first time is a potent one. To those who have long lived within its borders it is stronger still, and its strength increases with the passing of the years. At least, that is the experience of the author, who has tried to show in these pages some of the reasons for the potency of that spell.

In doing this work the author has received the most valuable assistance from the French Canadian people themselves, particularly from the following: Mr. C. M. Barbeau of the Department of Anthropology at Ottawa, Mr. E. Z. Massicotte of the Montreal Archives, Mr. L. R. de Lormier of Montreal, Brother Marie-Victorin, of the Université de Montréal, Mr. Paul Morin, and from Dr. William Douw Lighthall, and Colonel William Wood. He also owes much to the courtesy of many habitants, monks, and priests, with whom, in the course of more than three thousand miles of travel through French Canada, he has had much pleasant and interesting intercourse.

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The SPELL *of* FRENCH CANADA

CHAPTER I

A PILGRIMAGE TO ST. HILAIRE

FOR days St. Hilaire had been calling me, holding a wonderful vision before my eyes, and for days I had turned a deaf ear to the call. It is always thus when a saint condescends to reveal a vision to a mortal.

Saint Hilaire, or rather Saint Hilarius, to use his Latin title, must have been in life a person of happy disposition, or he would have chosen a less euphonious name than the one that designates the stately mountain rising from the plain, with its lower slopes covered with blossoming apple-orchards, and the prim village clustered around a silver-gray spire at the water's edge. Add to these a lake of turquoise blue in a setting of dark firs, a forest starred with white trilliums and yellow columbine, and a view of the whole river valley from the mountain top, and you have something of the vision that Saint Hilarius revealed to me.

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It is no wonder, then, that at last I followed where he beckoned.

I had determined that my visit should be a real pilgrimage, which, I believe, must be made alone, or in the company of another pilgrim who possesses the rare gift of sympathetic silence, and who will not divert one's mind from the real object of the journey.

It is a unique experience to leave the English atmosphere of a college where Oxford ideas prevail, and where the Oxford accent may be heard in all its purity and obscurity, and in the space of a few minutes to be transferred to a French atmosphere. This is, however, exactly what happened to me. As soon as I boarded the train—for I am a modern pilgrim, and do not scorn to use such aids to locomotion as our progressive age affords—my ear caught the first French note in hearing the news-agent designate that humble but popular comestible—salted peanuts—by the name of "*peanuts salés.*" He did his best to turn chewing gum into French also, by giving it a foreign accent, but chewing gum is obdurate stuff and it remained stubbornly American. I had hardly taken my seat, when I saw through the car window two black-robed nuns with flowing white veils, going towards their little school-house; and further along, some bare-headed tonsured monks in brown habits, wending their

way sedately down the hill, at the top of which stands their grim monastery. I now felt that the right note had been given, and that my pilgrimage was fairly well begun.

The train, which was of the slow and leisurely kind that is in keeping with a pilgrimage, wandered along the lovely valley of the St. Francis River, stopping at every station and at most of the crossroads, and remaining long enough at each place for one to become fairly well acquainted with all the inhabitants. It had rained the day before, and the sun had turned the river mists into that kind of luminous haze that is rare in Canada, but which in summer hovers over the rivers of France, and which Corot alone could put upon canvas. I have often seen it along the Seine and the Rhone, and it was very easy to imagine that I was wandering through the valley of some old-world river.

At times the train travelled slowly enough for me to identify the masses of flowers along the way, and the birds that flew over them, or rested on the fences. Here one could see small orchards in full bloom—a promise of greater loveliness at St. Hilaire—and white hawthorn and wild cherry bordering long stretches of the river. Lilacs, too, in “many a dooryard bloomed.” But what struck me as peculiar was that most of the houses seemed to prefer

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to face the road and the railway, and to turn their backs to the water. Nevertheless, the lilacs and bird-houses that were to be seen beside the meanest cottages compensated for the lack of appreciation of the river on the part of the inhabitants. The St. Francis did not seem to mind, but went busily and swiftly on its way, bathing the lower branches of the trees as it passed by.

We now left the fruitful river-valley and crossed a rather barren stretch of country, where the axe of the lumberman had recently been busy. I was prepared for an uninteresting and unlovely half-hour, but my eyes were soon dazzled by great splashes of violet colour bordered with many shades of green. Never have I seen a more brilliant patch of wild-flower colouring, except, perhaps, the heather of the Forest of Fontainebleau. Here, again, was a suggestion of Old France, set amid the white birches and dark firs of the new land. This was not heather, however, but the Canadian rhododendron in full bloom.

Soon we left behind the stretches of waste land; and whitewashed houses and barns, gaunt well-sweeps, wayside shrines, and long narrow farms, enclosed with straight rail fences, told that the valley of the Richelieu had been reached.

While we were passing through this quaint

and picturesque country, I took a look at my nearest fellow-travellers. In front of me were two old French women who watched the panorama of level farms and neat villages that passed before the open window. Across the aisle a young man, probably a commercial traveller, was reading "Snappy Stories." He looked bored and discontented—a contrast to the animated French women opposite, who continually exclaimed at the luxuriance of the young oats or the promise of the hay crop.

Suddenly the trainman called the magic name: St. Hilaire. We had arrived.

I had placed myself under the special protection of Saint Hilarius when I set out, and I soon had reason to believe that this had not been in vain. On alighting from the train, I went immediately to the little hotel to have lunch. It began with *Soupe aux pois*, and ended with *Tarte aux fraises*, and was served in a red-walled dining-room that looked out upon a row of rustling Lombardy poplars. After lunch I told the inn-keeper that I was going up the mountain, and it was then that I experienced a moment's doubt as to the efficacy of the protection of Saint Hilarius. I was informed that the whole of the mountain was now privately owned, and was kept closed to the public, to prevent forest fires. "But," added the inn-keeper, "the guardian of the place is right here

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—ask him,” and he pointed to a tall man drinking his glass of beer at a little table. With a hurried prayer to St. Hilarius I approached the guardian. At first he was adamant. Strangers were on no account allowed on the mountain. Only last week a fire had been set by some visitors who had a permit—alas! I had no permit, except my faith in Saint Hilarius which, I confess, had begun to waver—and many acres of valuable forest trees had been threatened. I argued that I was no stranger, that my acquaintance with Saint Hilarius dated back nearly twenty years, and that I must pay him my respects by climbing his mountain. This seemed to touch the guardian’s heart, who, no doubt, loved his forests, and only wished to protect them from vandalism. He not only consented to let me visit the mountain, but also offered to drive me in his little car to the end of the mountain road where his cottage was situated. O good Saint Hilarius, why did I doubt?

Leaving the village and river behind us, we ascended a well-kept road winding among tall elms and maples. Soon the forest trees disappeared, and I found myself in an enchanted land of apple-orchards in full bloom. The feats of the Magic Carpet in the fairy tale were no more wonderful than those performed by the panting little car. I was transported into a

world of white blossoms, quaint gray houses, and wide vistas ever broadening as we ascended, all over-arched by a soft blue sky. Soon (too soon!) we turned from the main road and entered a narrow lane, leaving the apple-orchards behind. This lane led steeply up for a short distance; then, with a cough and a wheeze, the car stopped abruptly before a small stone cottage that clung to the mountain side.

It was here that my real pilgrimage began, for I now went on foot along an ever-ascending path, through one of the most beautiful forests that I have ever seen. Oaks, maples and silver-stemmed beeches grew in profusion, and underneath them shrubs and wild flowers gleamed in the sunlight that filtered through the branches. Among the flowers, the most conspicuous were the yellow and red columbine and the giant white trilliums faintly touched with pink. A moment more, and I caught a glimpse of blue between dark pine branches, and the lake lay before me. I had almost feared to find the lake, which had been the admiration of my boyhood, changed by the years; but Lac Hertel de Rouville, to use its full, aristocratic name, was still the same as it was when I first saw it long ago. The same limpid blue water, the same dark green hills and gray rocks rising on all sides about it; but best of all, the same mysterious music playing among the pines at the water's

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edge. I sat down beneath a wide-spreading tree to rest and enjoy the view. It was then that I remembered that I had a book in my pocket which I had put there to ward off the boredom of the return journey that must be performed after nightfall. I drew out the book and opened it at random. It was the Greek Anthology—in translation I must confess—and it seemed strange to read the words of some long-dead poet whose very name has been forgotten for hundreds of years, while listening to the murmur of a lake in a new land from which the red Indian had, comparatively speaking, scarcely departed.

It seemed even stranger to read:

“Shrill piping gnats, who drain the blood of men,
You heartless monsters winging through the air,”

while holding the book in one hand and fighting off swarms of gnats with the other. There are, in truth, some things in this world which never seem to change.

Leaving the lake behind me, I followed a path that leads across a stream, and winds to left and right through the forest. The ascent is an easy one except near the top, and the path is densely shaded. In fact, when I emerged from the green shadows and came out into the dazzling light, upon a bare smooth rock with a miniature world beneath me, I felt rather like

the Pope's mule in Daudet's immortal story, when she climbed the bell-tower of the choir school and looked down upon fantastic Avignon. To lend a semblance of reality to this fancy, there was the river flowing far below, crossed by a minute bridge; but there was no room for dancing there, as upon the famous Pont d'Avignon; and instead of "mad drums playing the farondole," I heard the echoing sound of a whistle, and saw a train creeping across the bridge like a great red snake.

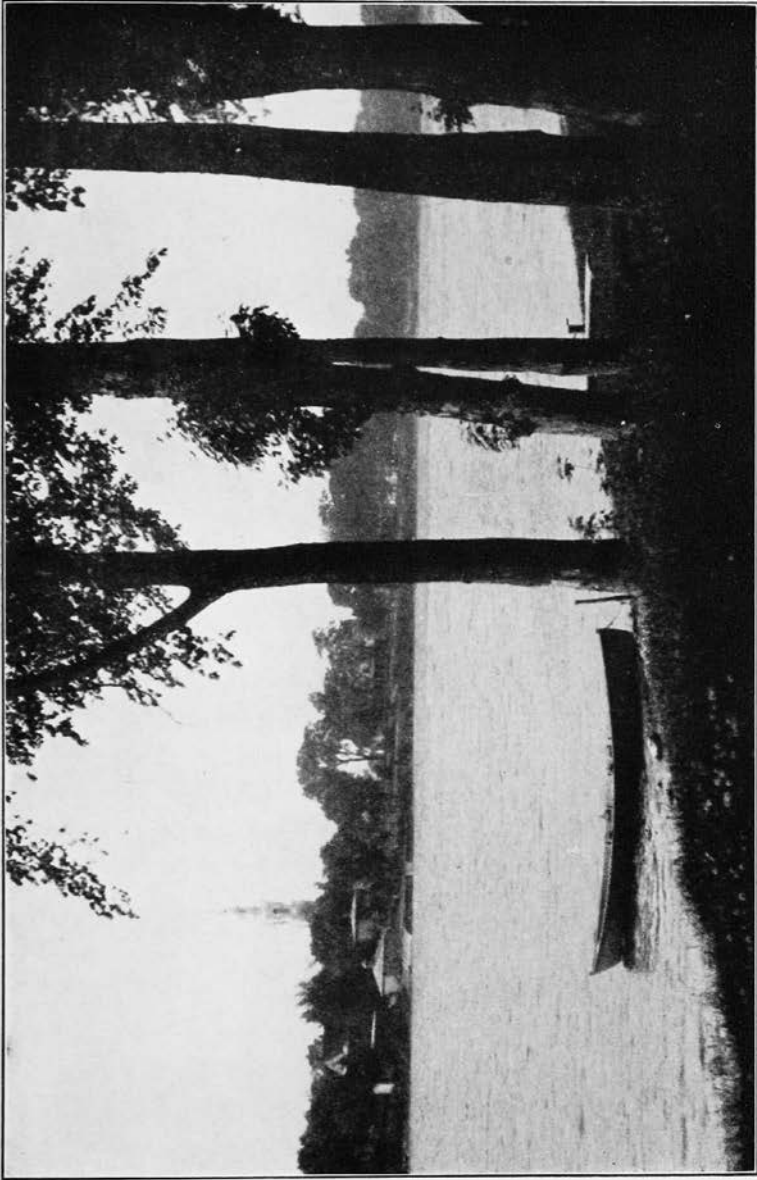
The scene before me was like an immense picture from a child's fairy book. The broad Laurentian plain, cut by the gleaming Richelieu, lay far below, like a gigantic carpet of native Canadian *catalogne*, with a design of squares and oblongs in yellow, green and brown. Mount St. Bruno, Rougemont and Yamaska, those ancient brothers of St. Hilaire, rose from the level lands—colour symphonies of blues and grays. The habitant houses of stone or whitewashed wood, scattered among the rectangular farms, were mere dots in the picture; forests and villages were only irregular patches of dark green or gray. From each of these villages and hamlets rose a tall silver church spire, linked together by slender threads of roads—the warp of the carpet. Behind me lay the lake, resting among its green hills like a feather fallen from the wing of a giant bluebird. I really think that

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St. Hilaire brings one as close to fairy-land as a mortal can come. On the mountain-top there is a grotto said to be still haunted by the fairies, and I can imagine no better home for them. Close beside, are the remains of a wooden cross and a chapel, to which, in former days, the pious people of the countryside came to follow the "Way of the Cross."

One can scarcely believe that this country, which now seems to be the very abode of peace and contentment, was for many years the scene of bloody struggles between savages and white men, and French and British. It is probably true that the very spot on which I was standing had many times served as a lookout for the red men, as they watched the river below for signs of approaching enemies.

It is remarkable how quickly the hours pass upon a mountain-top. It was now time to plunge into the shadows overhanging the homeward way. Taking a farewell glance at the lake in passing by, I soon reached the lane, and before long had gained the highway. I was admiring a quaint house with a stone chimney, and a white wayside shrine just beside it among the apple trees, and trying to invent some excuse to speak to the old woman knitting on the porch, when I heard a tooting and rattling behind me, and the guardian of the mountain drew his car up alongside. He insisted on tak-



THE RICHELIEU RIVER AT ST. HILAIRE

ing me back to the village. Saint Hilarius be praised! Three miles of country road after my climb would be more enjoyable in a car than on foot; besides, I should have time to see the village which I had neglected for the mountain and lake.

St. Hilaire was once the typical Richelieu town, but it is fast becoming a summer resort with smart villas and well-kept lawns facing the river. The long main street, coming seemingly from nowhere in particular, runs parallel with the river, commanding a fine view of the village of Beloeil on the opposite shore. It pauses to circle about the manor house, church and convent, and then wanders out into the country again, still following the river.

The manor house is a beautiful old building of Tudor style, standing among broad lawns sloping down to the water. As I passed by, the Lord and Lady of the Manor came riding through the gates on bay horses. The riders, the Tudor house, and the hedges and lawns suggested England, but only for a moment, for I just then caught sight of the tall spire of Beloeil from which the evening Angelus pealed forth, mingling its tones with those of the bell of St. Hilaire close beside me, and as if something more were needed to remind me that I was still in French Canada, a minute later I came upon a small stone convent-school, where, beneath

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broad elms, two black-clad nuns were shepherding a large flock of dark-eyed children.

Beyond the convent lay the cemetery with its black crosses and a splendid bronze crucifix many feet high, facing the waters of the Richelieu as they hurry onward to the sea.

I paused outside the church to watch an old man who was slowly making his way along. As he passed the church he lifted his hat. I wondered if conscious nearness to another world had prompted him. Just behind him came a tall youth. He, too, lifted his hat on passing the church, and then came a boy of about twelve, who did the same. Reverence in French Canada seems to be something more than a name.

On returning to the inn, I found the beer still flowing, and a lively political discussion going on. And here I found my traveller of the "Snappy Stories" whom I had seen on the train. I asked him if one could go to Sorel by following the Richelieu down to its mouth. He stared at me, and replied that if I *wanted* to go to Sorel the quickest way was to go by rail via Montreal. He apparently did not know of all the quaint villages that the river wears on its breast like jewels on a silver necklace. I then ventured to ask if there were boats going down the river, and was told that one went down once a week. O happy country, where people are content to

travel by boat and only once a week! I fear I was beginning to feel very superior to this Philistine, and a little proud of having been granted the protection of Saint Hilarius for so long. But as I left the inn, I complimented the inn-keeper on the excellent meals he provided. He replied that he was always very glad to please *les commis voyageurs*. He had classed me with my friend of the "Snappy Stories."

It was perhaps a rebuke to my pride, administered for the good of my soul by Saint Hilarius.

CHAPTER II

ALONG THE RICHELIEU

THE river Richelieu possesses a charm in some respects superior to that of the St. Lawrence. The great width of the latter, and the ocean tides that ebb and flow for many miles along its lower reaches, give to the St. Lawrence the characteristics of the sea rather than of a river. Its beauties, too, are chiefly those of wide expanses of water and tide-swept shores.

But with the Richelieu it is different. From the time it leaves Lake Champlain, just beyond the boundary of the United States, until it merges its waters with the St. Lawrence at Sorel, the stream never loses the characteristics that are generally associated with the rivers of Old France. It is broad, but not so broad as to render the features of the opposite shore invisible; it is navigable for the most part by boats of large size; and where there are falls and rapids, these are overcome by canals. Besides, it flows through one of the most fertile and quaintly beautiful portions of French Canada.

The very names by which it has been called at different periods—Rivière des Iroquois, Rivière de Chambly, Rivière de Sorel, and finally Rivière Richelieu are all suggestive of its importance in early Canadian History.

One writer of the annals of the Richelieu, Mr. A. H. Moore, has very aptly applied to it the phrase "Liquid History," a phrase once applied to the Thames; and in an admirable story of the events which have taken place along its shores, he more than proves his thesis.

The historian, Francis Parkman, too, paints a stirring picture of the Canada of the ancient days when the Richelieu was the "Iroquois River." Here it is:

"The French dominion is a memory of the past; but when we evoke its departed shades, they rise before us from their graves in strange, romantic guise. Again their ghostly camp-fires seem to burn, and the fitful light is cast around on lord and vassal and black-robed priest, mingled with wild forms of savage warriors, knit in close fellowship on the same stern errand. A boundless vision grows upon us; an untamed continent; vast wastes of forest verdure; mountains, silent in primeval sleep; river, lake and glittering pool; wilderness oceans mingling with the skies. Such was the domain which France conquered for civilization. Plumed helmets gleamed in the shade of its forests, priestly vestments in the dens and fastnesses of ancient barbarism. Men steeped in antique learning, pale with the close breath of the cloister, here spent the noon

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and evening of their lives, ruled savage hordes with a mild, parental sway, and stood serene before the direst shapes of death. Men of courtly nature, heirs to the polish of a far-reaching ancestry, here with their dauntless hardihood put to shame the boldest sons of toil.”

The recorded history of the river begins with 1609 when Samuel de Champlain made his way along its whole length, entered the lake that now bears his name, crossed over into what is now New York State, and won a victory for his allies, the Montagnais, over the Iroquois. This event is described by Mr. A. H. Moore in his “Historic Richelieu Valley” as follows:

“Entering the ‘Iroquois River,’ which he had been led to believe to be navigable throughout its course, he presently found his progress arrested by the rapids at Chambly. This obstruction nearly caused the plan to be abandoned. None of Champlain’s companions wished to proceed, but two ultimately volunteered to accompany him, the others and many Indians returned to Quebec. He pressed on with his two white men and sixty Indians, in twenty-four canoes. They paused to explore Île Ste. Thérèse, about six miles above Chambly, and camped the night somewhere near the site on which now stands St. Johns. On the following day, July 4th, 1609, Champlain entered the great lake which bears his name, having traversed the entire course of the Richelieu throughout its upwards of seventy-five miles. As Kingsford, Canada’s great historian, has well conjectured, little could he have guessed that

its forest-fringed banks would be the scene of such turbulent times in the stormy years of the future. At the extreme southern end of Lake Champlain, probably at Ticonderoga, Champlain fell in with a party of Iroquois and was instrumental in gaining a signal victory for his allies, the Montagnais."

It was not until about forty years after the time of Champlain that the river was fortified. Fort Richelieu was built at its mouth, Fort St. Louis at Chambly Basin, and Fort Ste. Anne near île la Motte. These forts were the centres of many raids and attacks. The river and lake formed the great highway between the English colonies to the south and the French colonies in the St. Lawrence valley, and hostile armies more than once moved up and down these waterways, or engaged in battles along the shores.

In the Indian raids, in encounters between the French and English during the French Régime, in the conflicts between the Americans and the British, in skirmishes between Canadians and Americans during the war of 1812, and lastly during the troubled times of 1837, the shores of the Richelieu were often the battle-grounds for opposing forces.

It is well worth while to make the trip, starting at the Vermont border where the river leaves the lake, and to follow it down to Sorel.

At first there is a strange mingling of American and French ideas expressed in the style of

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the barns, houses and churches; but as one gets further away from the border, the American influence becomes weaker, and finally disappears altogether. For the French-Canadian loves to do things in the old way, and while his mind is generally open to new ideas, he does not adopt them quickly, nor without due consideration. The long straight roads bordered by narrow farms that are a familiar feature of French Canada become much in evidence here.

The upper part of the river has little current, but further along, as it nears St. Johns, rapids develop, and the river at last falls into Chambly Basin with a rush and a roar that the great power dams built there seem only to enhance.

This river, like the St. Lawrence and the Saguenay, has its legends, and I will give one of them as it was told me some years ago.

THE CHAMBLY RAPID

There's a spirit in the rapid, calling, calling, through
the night,

There's a gleam upon the water, burning pale and
burning bright.

Woe to him who hears the calling! Woe to him who
sees the light!

My son and I had left St. Jean,
Our paddles dipping in the blue,
And many miles to north had gone
Along the silent Richelieu;

The night came down ; we thought of rest ;
A threatening cloud hung in the west.

No warning sound the river made
Save for the rapid's muffled roar,
As in the pine tree's deepening shade
We camped upon that luckless shore ;
No sound the night wind bore to me
Save one weird echo from Chambly.

The night grew dark and darker still,
The pale-faced moon was hid from sight,
When on the waters black and chill
We saw a ghastly, gleaming light,—
A fitful fire, pale and blue,
That burned my inmost spirit through.

And like some baleful gleaming eye
It shone beneath night's heavy pall ;
Then high above the loon's lone cry
Afar we heard the spirit call ;
It called us from the other shore.
Ah, Jean will never hear it more.

I could not seize nor hold him back,
For while the light burned pale and blue,
A heavy hand from out the black
Held me beside my own canoe,
And when I stirred, the other barque
Had silent sped into the dark.

Down on the river's drifting tide
To where the wild, mad rapids run,
Past pine-trees towering on each side,
His frail canoe had drifted on ;
He did not look to left nor right
But gazed upon that hell-born light.

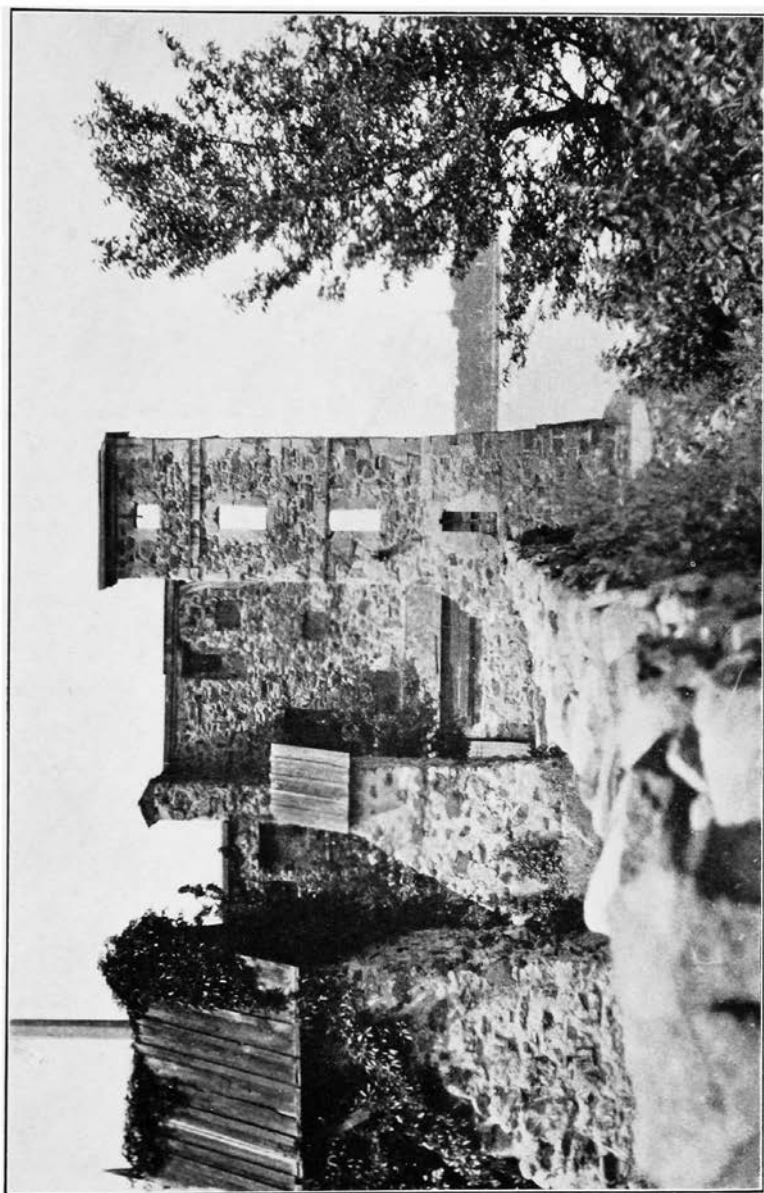
And ever swifter with the flow
He drifted where the rapids play,
His eyes still on that awful glow;
Ah, God! my life seemed snatched away!
I saw a gleam far up the sky
And heard the echo of a cry!

There's a spirit in the rapid, calling, calling through
the night,
There's a gleam upon the water, burning pale and
burning bright.
Woe to him who hears the calling! Woe to him who
sees the light.

The most interesting place along the Richelieu is Chambly. The quiet village with its venerable fort has now become a town, and stretches along the shores of the Basin at the foot of the rapids; and one can recall only with difficulty those far-off days when war-canoes crept along the water bearing Indians in war paint, or when the fort was the centre of military operations and the object of frequent attacks.

A wooden fort was built here early in the French period, but was burned by the Iroquois in 1702. The present stone fort, one of the most imposing military ruins in North America, was erected in 1710.

According to the records, there were just before this time about twenty families residing in the vicinity of Chambly. The descriptions



FORT CHAMBLEY

of each family and their belongings are couched in quaint language, and show that "cultivated acres," "horned cattle," "children," and a "good shot-gun" were the settlers' most valuable assets. The full names of husband, wife and children are given wherever possible; and where the number and names of the children are not known, the compiler has thought safe to put down "numerous descendants." Of the Poirrier family we read; "In 1681 they had five children, a gun, a cow and four acres under cultivation." And of the Besnard household it is stated that "this family had three children, a gun, two pistols, three horned cattle and ten acres under cultivation." A whole epic of bravery, privation, labor and family love is written in these few simple words.

The bachelors are given short shrift by the compiler, "Esprit Bernard, born 1642, is unmarried in 1681. He has ten acres and a gun. This is all we know about him." You can almost hear the writer exclaim: "He ought to be ashamed of himself; unmarried at the age of thirty-nine!"

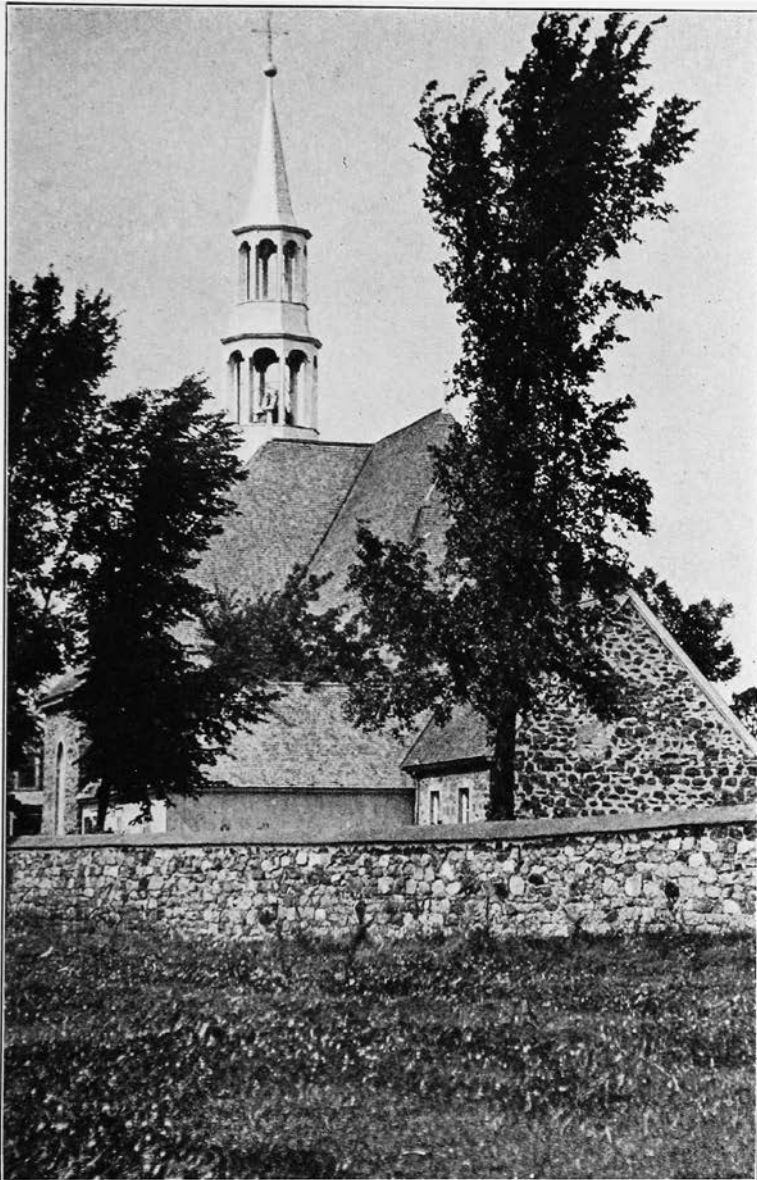
As has been stated the fort had been burned by the Iroquois. In the spring of 1709 an English invasion was feared, and the French began to make energetic preparations to rebuild the fort. During the winter, the stone, lime and wood were brought to Chambly on sleds, the

habitants of the whole surrounding country being pressed into service.

All the people under the government centered at Montreal were obliged to take part in a "bee" or "corvée" which lasted for a week; and during the whole winter men were employed in cutting the stone and timbers for the new fort. All through the summer of 1710 the work went on, and at the approach of autumn, 1711, the fort was finished. It was the pride of the whole district, for almost every able-bodied man had done his part in building it, and it was felt to be a sure protection from all enemies. Thus it is that the fort, whose magnificent ruins we see standing today, was erected like one of the great cathedrals of Old France, each man giving his quota of the labour required.

It had been necessary, of course, to consult the French Government at Versailles in regard to rebuilding the fort, and the matter had been under consideration in France for some time; but the colonial authorities, evidently knowing the ways of Imperial governments, took the matter into their own hands, and when finally the order arrived from France to rebuild the fort, it had already been completed for nearly a year.

Fort St. Louis, or Fort Chambly as it is generally known, continued to play an important role in the history of Canada. Mr. Moore



CHURCH OF ST. MATHIAS, THE SITE OF ETHAN ALLEN'S
ENCAMPMENT

asserts, and with reason, that the fight for Canada finished in 1760 along the shores of the Richelieu, and in this contest Chambly was always an important factor.

In 1775 an American force under Montgomery invaded the country, and the fort was besieged and captured.

Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys established themselves across the river where the village of St. Mathias now stands. After a siege of only a day and a half the English commander, Major Stopford, capitulated without even destroying his stores and ammunition. The reason for this has never been explained. Major Preston was making a heroic defence at St. Johns, but the fall of Chambly rendered his position hopeless, and he also capitulated, thus opening the way to Montreal.

The fort figures also largely, as has been said, in the war of 1812 and in the troubled times of 1837.

But to-day it is a scene of the deepest peace. I visited the ancient fort not long ago on a beautiful July day, and mounting the crumbling keep by means of a winding staircase, past antique guns and cannon, I found myself on the platform at the top. Here one gets a splendid view of the whole fort, the town and the surrounding country. The air was very clear, and the mountains of St. Hilaire and Rougemont

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seemed very near as their long purple flanks rose from the green plain. At my feet the Basin lay, as blue as the chicory flowers that grew among the stones beside it; the waters of the rapid crooned the drowsy tune that they have sung for centuries; the rose-coloured crumbling walls of the old fort echoed with the shouts of a picnic party of children, and in the military cemetery a hundred yards away children were playing above the graves of the soldiers of Old France. Here lie some whose names are unknown, and others whose names were illustrious in the old land during the dying days of chivalry. They came to a new and savage country, some to seek wealth and adventure, but many to extend the glory of France and to spread religion among the heathen of the New World. They lie in an alien land beneath another flag, but their deeds have not been in vain. For in all directions prosperous towns and fertile lands inhabited by a contented people are to be found; the tongue of Old France is still spoken, and devotion to the old religion is as intense as ever. And properly developed, and fostered, the sterling qualities of the French-Canadian are destined to be an important factor in the future well-being of Canada.

The old cemetery is now surrounded by a fence to preserve it from desecration, and two memorial tablets have been recently erected.

In the centre, on a rise of ground dominating the blue basin and the rose-gray fort, has been placed a bronze tablet bearing this inscription:

*Ici dorment dans la paix
du Seigneur ceux qui,
sous les murs du vieux Fort,
ont donné leur vie pour la patrie.*

Then follows the English inscription;

Here rest in the peace of our Lord
the mortal remains of the men,
who underneath the walls of this old Fort
gave their lives for their country.

The tablet is surrounded by a wreath of pine, surmounted by maple leaves and roses. In one of the upper corners the Lilies of France are carved in relief, and the other the Canadian Coat-of-Arms.

At a short distance from this tablet, near the out-skirts of the cemetery, there stands another monument. This consists of a granite boulder to which is attached a bronze tablet with the following inscription;

In Memory of
General John Thomas,
An American officer
Born in Marshfield, Mass. 1724,
Died of smallpox June 2, 1776,

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And other American Soldiers buried
in this ground.

Erected by the Saranac Chapter
Daughters of the American Revolution
Plattsburg, N. Y.
1925.

Then at the top of the tablet on a small scroll
is written;

*Général Thomas de l'Armée Americaine
décédé le 2 juin
1776.*

There could scarcely be found a more striking emblem of the bonds of peace and friendship uniting the French and English in Canada with the people of the American Republic than this monument.

Leaving Chambly Basin, the river flows through a most beautiful pastoral country. I know of no part of Canada that resembles it very closely. It suggests slightly the valley of the Seine, but has distinct characteristics of its own. As most of the farms and villages are far from a railway, primitive customs and manner of living prevail. At many prosperous farms, water is still drawn by means of the well-sweep, boats are the chief means of crossing the river, and the hum of the spinning-wheel and the click-clack of the loom are still heard in many homes.

The level nature of the land causes many

back-waters, sometimes of considerable extent, which are covered with the largest species of white pond-lilies that I have ever seen growing in Canada. During the month of August there are literally thousands of them lying on the placid surface of the water. But the whole valley seems to be a back-water, where the "ancient beautiful things" still exist alongside of the lilies that cover the streams, and the stately elms that border the banks.

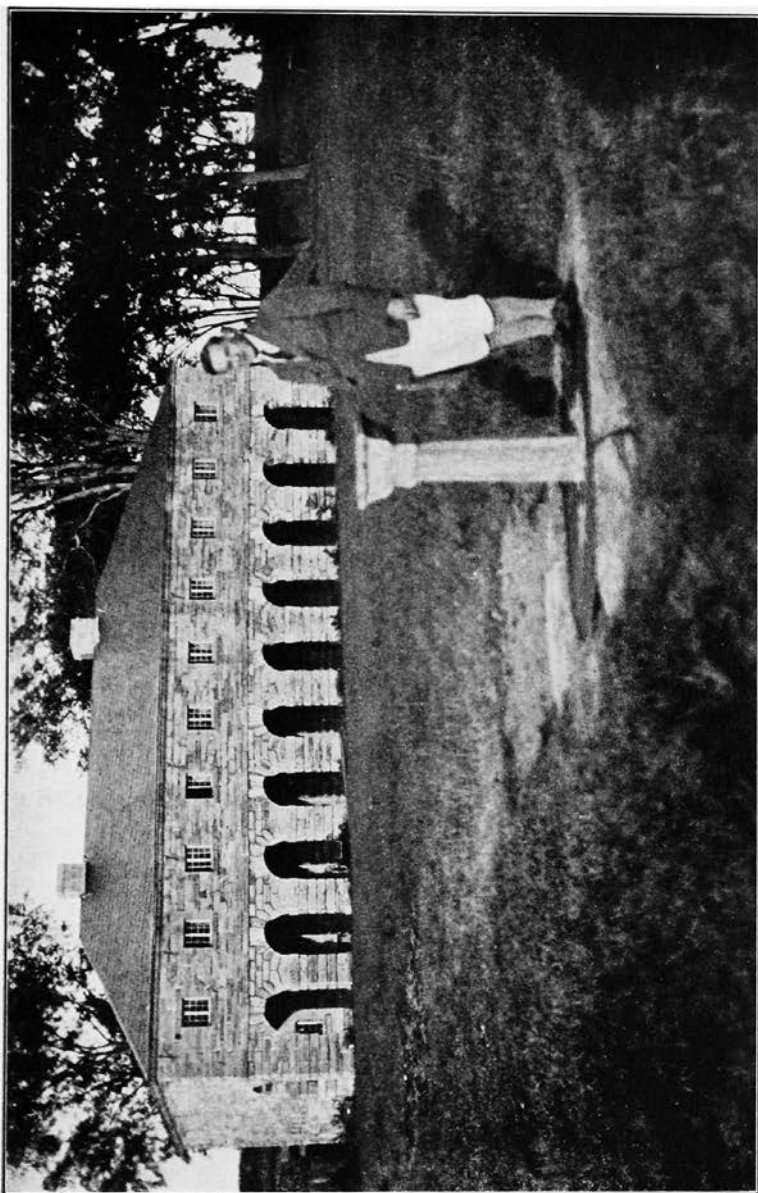
St. Hilaire and Beloeil are upon the railway, but on leaving these towns the line does not touch the Richelieu until Sorel is reached. Of all the villages along the shores of the Richelieu, St. Ours is the most attractive. It is neat and well-kept like most French-Canadian towns, with its long street parallel with the river and shaded by splendid trees; its great stone church, its little gray convent, and its venerable manor house of true French architecture, all combine to make it one of the most unspoiled French villages in the Province.

I would advise those who come to see the Richelieu valley to cross the river here and go over to the shores of the St. Lawrence which is now not far away, following the latter through Verchères and Varennes to Montreal, or to return to Beloeil by the western shore of the Richelieu. The country between St. Ours and Sorel is uninteresting, as it consists largely of

stretches of sand, and Sorel itself has the broken-down appearance of a town that once was important but whose prosperity has vanished with changing conditions. During the old régime it was the key to the Richelieu and it still bears one of the most distinguished names of New France; but in spite of this, the town has little to attract the stranger.

But Fort St. Louis at Chambly is not the only important relic of the past that still exists in the Richelieu valley. Fort Lennox, at île Aux Noix, may well dispute the claim of Fort St. Louis as being the most interesting military monument still existing in French Canada outside the city of Quebec. Its situation on a beautiful island in the Richelieu River is unique, and it is so well preserved that it is hard to believe that the massive stone buildings have been standing for over a hundred years, and during a portion of this period entirely uncared for.

The island on which the fort stands is situated about ten miles from the international border upon the chief route that the Iroquois used to follow on their raids against the French. It was discovered by Champlain in 1609 when, accompanied by two other Frenchmen, he made an expedition against the Iroquois in aid of the Hurons. The name, île Aux Noix, was given to the island by him on account of the large



THE PARADE GROUND, FORT LENNOX

number of butter-nut trees then growing there. These have entirely disappeared, and tall spreading elms have taken their place.

This island was once an important link in the chain of defences that protected New France from the attacks of the Indians, and the English, and later from the Americans. It is about three-fourths of a mile in length and contains more than two hundred acres. Protection is afforded by a wide stretch of water on each side, and also by the marshy shores of the river.

At the beginning of the struggle between the English and the French in 1750, a large force under the command of de Bougainville had been placed at Île Aux Noix to block the way to Montreal and Quebec. General Amherst appeared before the fort with a still stronger force, and broke through the defences that had been erected across the river. It would have been impossible for the French to hold out long, and their commander thought it better to retreat than to surrender. During the night of August 24th, 1750, de Bougainville sent the greater part of his two thousand men down the river, retaining only fifty of them to man the guns and to reply to the fire of the enemy. A message was sent to the English general, saying that the French would surrender if they were accorded the honors of war. This request was granted; but when Amherst landed upon

the island and marched into the fort he found only a handful of French soldiers remaining.

During the War of Independence the fort was constantly occupied. Generals Schuyler and Montgomery occupied the island during their advance on Quebec and Montreal. After the defeat and death of the latter general, the American army entrenched itself at Île Aux Noix under General Arnold. His forces were ravaged by a fever and he retreated, leaving the place in possession of the English.

The present fortifications, which remain in a remarkable state of preservation, were begun in 1812. The first work was done by General von Riedal and his German mercenaries from Brunswick, who dug the moat and built the earthworks, the buildings being completed a little later. The fort served as an important military station until 1869, when it was abandoned.

The buildings are of cut stone, some having arcades, and all built in the heavy and substantial style of the Georgian period. The green motionless water of the moat is now the haunt of water-birds, the grass grows thickly upon the parade ground, in the centre of which stands a stone-sun-dial marking the silent flight of the hours. The arches echo to the footfall of the occasional visitor who can now enter here at will, for the drawbridge has been rebuilt and

the gates have rotted away. Only the worn flagstone and floors remain to tell that many heavily-shod feet once trod this historic ground. But so substantial are the walls and arches that it almost seems as though they were waiting for new occupants to arrive. Within the building that formerly served as quarters for the officers a museum has been established which, besides ancient weapons of warfare, contains many guns and a gigantic airplane captured from the Germans in the late war. It is a curious fact that these weapons should lie thousands of miles from the place in which they were used to deal out death and destruction, surrounded by the very fortifications that German soldiers built more than a century ago.

A deep silence broods over the place—a silence that seems heavy with the weight of the past. When I last visited the island I found a solitary keeper in the guardroom, and a pair of lovers lingering by the shore. As I looked up the river, which was reflecting the setting sun in its placid surface, and tried to reconstruct a scene from the past, I was startled by the sharp report of rifles from the adjacent river banks. But this was not the musket of Indian, Frenchman, or American revolutionist, it was only the rifles of hunters seeking the wild ducks that abound everywhere along the reedy shores.

CHAPTER III

MONTREAL—A CITY OF CONTRAST

WHEN we meet a person for the first time we generally form an opinion of his character, but often it is not a correct one, as we find out upon further acquaintance. This is the case with cities, except that it takes much more time and perseverance to understand the secrets of a city's heart than it does to know the personality of a friend. Besides, if the city that one would know is one of contrasts and paradoxes, of subtle moods or changing characteristics, the difficulty of a sympathetic understanding is increased. It is only after a two years residence in Montreal, and countless visits since I left, that I can begin to appreciate the strange mingling of historical associations, noisy commercialism, and lofty idealism that is its own. Contrast is everywhere. In the first place we have the ancient order of things warring with the new, and the ancient everywhere going down to defeat. In Quebec the battle is as intense, but there the old has held its own. But although in Montreal the ancient is always beaten down, yet

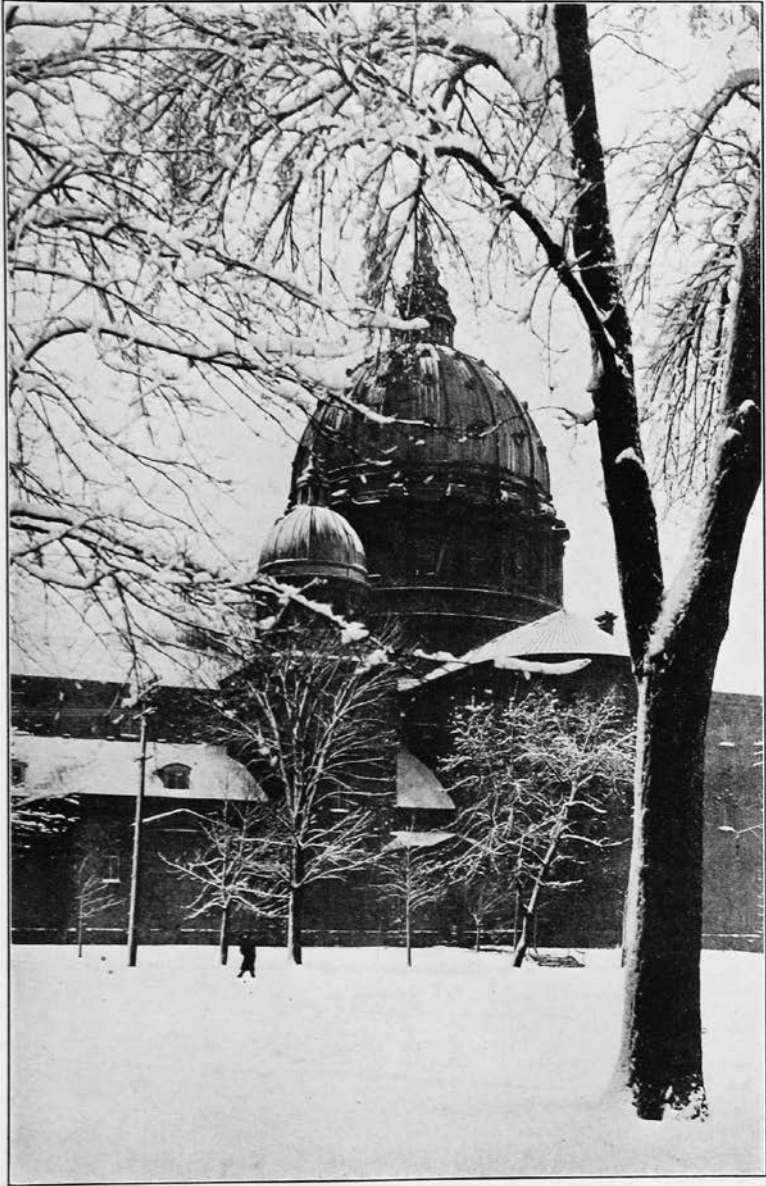
enough remains to make it one of the most interesting cities on this continent. Low stone buildings of the French régime where fur-trading was carried on, or where the wealthy trader lived like a mediæval baron, still hold their ground beside towering structures built only yesterday. Spires of old churches, from which the Angelus has rung for two centuries, are now over-shadowed by large grain elevators; ancient convent walls three hundred years old look across a busy square to the great financial institutions whose buildings stand opposite.

Another element of contrast is contained in the fact that Montreal is the place where two races and two civilizations meet with almost equal force. Far down the St. Lawrence the in-coming tide meets with the waters of the great river. Their currents cross and mingle together and the character of both is affected, giving rise to a body of water—half river and half sea—different from any other in the world. So it is when the tide of Anglo-Saxon civilization meets with the stream of Latin and Catholic civilization of Old France.

If one would know a city one must first become acquainted with its squares. Here is the expression of the city's life. The buildings that surround them, the people that pass through them, and even the very sky above them reveal much of the characteristics of a

city. Montreal has its share of such places, some of them ugly and grimy it is true, and others broad and beautiful. Among the latter, Dominion Square stands supreme, and although it may lack the historical associations of some of the other squares, its beauty at any time of the year more than compensates for its lack of historical interest. In summer, with its trees in leaf and its flowers in bloom, and the motley life of a great city flowing through it, the square is lovely enough; but with the bare boughs of the trees etching patterns upon the pearl-gray autumn sky, and the tower of St. George's, and the soaring dome of the Cathedral veiled in blue mist, it is the most beautiful place in Montreal. Even the gigantic tower of the Windsor Station rising gaunt above its castellated walls is invested with a lyric loveliness that is not apparent when seen in the full sunlight.

I walked through the square not long ago when the morning sun was struggling with a November mist that turned the Cathedral dome into the color of blue homespun. Many worshippers were coming from the open doors, and as I stood on the broad steps I heard the strains of the organ within, mingling strangely with the shrieking of locomotives in the near-by station. The statues of saints along the façade of the building gazed solemnly over at the white



THE CATHEDRAL, DOMINION SQUARE, MONTREAL

stone portals of a great temple of commerce opposite; and only the width of the square separated the replica of St. Peter's at Rome from the most English of Anglican churches—St. George's.

Leaving the square I wandered down Saint Catherine Street. Montreal has been called an ugly city by some, and a beautiful one by others. Both statements are true. Its ugliness is, however, that of growth and expansion to a larger life, and if one will only look for its beauties, one finds them in abundance. For example, I do not think many churches in America are so satisfying in their proportions and outline as Christ's Church Cathedral. On this morning as it raised its magnificent stone spire above the graceful bare elm trees beneath, I experienced a feeling of wonder that only few buildings could inspire. It is a suggestion of old-world charm in strange contrast with the gigantic department stores between which it stands.

Bleury Street seems to mark the boundary between the English and the French parts of the town, for beyond this the aspects of the city rapidly change. It is now French. The names of the streets, and the signs above the shops, are French; even the wares exposed for sale have been changed in character.

Here a fruit-store overflowed into the street

in true Parisian fashion, there wreaths of everlasting flowers were displayed in the windóws; and if I wished to imagine myself in Paris, I had only to stop before a tiny book-shop and see displayed upon the familiar yellow paper covers the well-known names of Henri Bordeaux, Anatole France, and a host of other old friends. Mistral's "Miriél," too, awaking memories of sunny Provence, was not wanting.

The peeps into the side streets that run into a main thoroughfare of a great city are often as interesting as the wider view of the thoroughfare itself. Those narrow streets that join St. Catherine Street in the French portion of the city are no exception. Down one I could see long lines of stone houses, high gabled roofs and dormer windows, with a church rising at the end; another led up to a convent or hospital with a gray arched gate; and as I came nearer to the river I caught sight of the masts of an ocean liner with gulls circling above.

Place d'Armes, while less beautiful than Dominion Square, holds an intense interest for the careful observer. Here one may stand watching the slow whirling eddy where the currents of commerce, religion and history meet. Commerce is symbolized by the dignified domed Bank of Montreal, religion by the arched façade and twin towers of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and the venerable Seminary of

Saint Sulpice; and history, by the striking bronze monuments to Maisonneuve, the founder of the city. It is most fitting that this impressive monument should stand in the very centre of the city's life, and on the traditional spot where the intrepid Frenchman engaged in victorious battle with the Indians.

Perhaps one of the most striking contrasts in the whole city is furnished by the sight of the twin towers of Notre Dame rising scarcely higher than the modern office building beside it, and the graceful Gothic pinnacles that crown the buttresses, standing out against the enormous mass of the harbor buildings.

I recall that last spring when passing the Cathedral I saw a large crowd upon its wide stone steps. Just then I saw long lines of little girls wearing white veils file out of the tall portal, and after them processions of boys in black, wearing white ribbons and gold-fringed badges upon their arms, coming out from a recent confirmation. There was an excited flutter, as the nuns and brothers in charge herded their pupils into groups, and much subdued chattering and the taking of many photographs. It was a striking picture to see several hundred young Canadians entering on what was for them a most important day in their lives, on the very spot where the city had its birth.

If Dominion Square is beautiful, and Place d'Armes historically interesting, Jacques Cartier Square is the quaintest and most picturesque. For not only old and new, English and French meet here, but also city and country come together in violent contrast. For over a hundred years the Nelson Column at the head of the square has looked down upon an animated scene of buying and selling, a scene which has extended its borders until it has embraced the whole square and adjoining lanes. The Bonsecours Market in the open square at the foot of the hill presents always a picturesque appearance. The display of flowers, fruit, vegetables and bright-coloured wares, and the good-natured bargaining of buyer and seller, has a charm for all lovers of the original and quaint. On market days the place is a scene of life, colour and movement equalled only by the markets of the Old World.

It is interesting to leave the square for a while and stroll along the well-filled stalls in the stone market building. The vendors of meat stand among gigantic legs of beef and festoons of poultry, or lurk like ogres in the twilight of the mysterious caverns behind. There is a continuous noise of crowing cocks and cackling hens, which have been brought alive to the market. The vegetable stalls are enlivened with bright coloured pinks, pansies



PLACE D'ARMES, MONTREAL

and marigolds from the habitants' gardens; and soft tints of rolls of homespun, and the gaudy festoons of socks and mittens like trimmings for some gigantic Christmas-tree, all enliven the picture. The habitant loves colour, and the bright blue, red and yellow of varying shades that are knitted into his socks and mittens are dear to his heart. These together with the knitted *tuque* and the rather rare *ceinture fléchée* give colour to a scene, where otherwise the gray of stone buildings and pavement would predominate.

Just above the market stands the most interesting building in Montreal, perhaps in all French Canada—the Chateau de Ramezay. It was erected by Claude de Ramezay in 1705, when he was Governor of Montreal, and it served then as his official residence. After his death it passed into the hands of the “Compagnie des Indes,” and to the Chateau used to come Indians and *Coureurs des bois* to barter their furs.

Sometime later it became the residence of the British Governor, General Montgomery, when he invaded Canada in 1775, made it his headquarters, and Benjamin Franklin set up a printing press in its vaults. Such is a bare outline of some of the interesting chapters in the history of the old Chateau, but only after long study, and a breathing of the atmosphere

of ancient days that clings about its walls, can its secrets become really known.

Opposite the gateway to the Chateau across the busy street, the walls of the new Court House were being built, and the steel frame of the tower was just being put together. The noise of the rivetting-machines echoed sharply against the old Chateau, but its thick walls and sturdy turrets sent the echo back bravely, with a note of defiance. It seemed to say: "I am old and you are young: I have seen much and you little: but while you serve the living, I hold the secrets of the dead, who lived in a great past when men held a philosophy of life different, and perhaps better, than the one they hold to-day."

On going a short distance further I arrived at the church of Notre Dame de Bonsecours. The spire of the church and the walls of the adjacent grain elevators seem vying with each other to reach the sky, and the spire is badly beaten in the contest. Nevertheless the ancient statue of the Virgin, brought long ago from Brittany, and which is said to be endowed with the power of working miracles, stands high above the river and lifts its hands in blessing to all sailors who pass by. Within the church is a haven of peace, for its triple doors shut out the noise of street and market, a dim many-coloured light filters in through the painted



CHÂTEAU DE RAMEZAY

glass and falls upon the marble walls, and a smell of incense and burning candles pervades the ancient chapel. A few sailors are praying before the high altar and as they rise from their knees they never fail to light a votive candle and place it before Our Lady of Help, to ensure a prosperous voyage to some distant land, or to some far-off port of home.

Many arguments have been advanced for Canadians to learn both French and English. These arguments are nearly always of a commercial nature, and while perfectly true it seems to me that the question is not entirely one of commercial advantage. The soul of Canada is a dual personality and must remain only half revealed to those who know only one language. The literature of a nation is as important as its commerce and will endure longer; and to understand a people one must read the literature of that people. These facts were borne home to me with irresistible force when recently I had the privilege of conversing with two of the many French writers who are now making the literature of French Canada. These writers were Paul Morin and Brother Marie-Victorin.

Dr. Morin is the type of the *litterateur* now becoming too rare in all countries. An artist and scholar—he holds the highest degree that the University of Paris can confer; a traveller

—he has seen much of Europe, Africa and Asia; a poet—he recently won the Quebec Legislature prize for literature—this sums up in a few words some of the characteristics of but one of the many Canadian authors writing in French to-day. Dr. Morin received me at the *École des Beaux Arts* of which he is secretary—a school of art which, although scarcely started, has already an atmosphere of Paris. We talked of Art, of France and its literature, of Racine—the greatest of French poets in Dr. Morin's opinion—in fact of everything except Dr. Morin and his poetry. It was difficult to get to this subject, but I insisted, and in the all too short hour I caught a glimpse of a true lover of beauty—of the old and the new—whether in painting, poetry, of sculpture, in fact of everything that goes to make the world more lovely.

On leaving the *École des Beaux Arts* I made my way to the *Université de Montréal* to pay my respects to an old friend, another maker of French-Canadian literature. This was Brother Marie-Victorin, the author of many simple tales of country life, and delightful, descriptive essays on different parts of his beloved Province of Quebec, which breathe the very spirit of French Canada.

I was ushered into the tiny study behind his botanical laboratory, for Brother Victorin is

a professor of Botany at the University as well as an author of delightful stories. The black cassock and skull cap lent a quiet dignity to the sturdy figure, and the kindly face looked down at me from above the white neckbands of a Christian Brother. It is never difficult to get English writers to talk about themselves and their work, but with French authors it seems to be different. Brother Victorin was more eager to talk about Botany than about his stories, but he said with a sigh "Ah! so much that is interesting and so little time!" Brother Victorin loves his native Province with a love that is almost a passion, and his eyes lit up as we talked of the parts that we both knew, Anticosti Island, the Magdalens, Gaspé, the great north-land, as well as the old parts of the Province were all mentioned in Brother Victorin's conversation, which revealed the keen observer who sees below the surface of things.

On leaving the French University I went westward once more, to plunge again into discussions about English books and English people, and to breathe the English atmosphere of the western portion of the city.

CHAPTER IV

OLD MONTREAL

IT is generally possible to sketch the history of a city without any reference to the geology of the district in which it is situated. But with Montreal the case is different. Here geology has so influenced geography, and geography history, that it seems necessary to mention a few facts in connection with the origin of Mount Royal, the far-famed mountain from which the city derives its name. Montreal is unique in having a mountain of considerable size and height situated in its midst, and it is this very mountain which is one of the city's most attractive features either in summer or in winter. In the summer the townsman or the visitor may find woodland quiet, pure air and beautiful scenery on its summit, while in winter its slopes afford ample scope for the sports for which Montreal has long been famous.

The history of "Old Montreal" should, therefore, go back to the birth of the mountain.

Thousands of years ago Montreal was covered by water, and Mount Royal was two little islands on the surface. Even to-day there are

traces of the beaches of those days. Sherbrooke Street, from one end to the other, was a beach during a period of hesitation in the retreat of the sea from these parts. Another beach at a subsequent period, when the sea had receded still further, was Dorchester Street of to-day.

Prior to the submerging of these parts by water, the whole country was covered by great glacial ice sheets for a time, in some places around Montreal the ice being over a mile thick. Rocks discovered here take geologists back 125,000,000 years, which is the earliest history of Montreal. Most recent calculations on the age of the earth show that it began to get solid 1,600,000,000 years ago. Compared with this, human history was hardly a drop in the great ocean of time.

A species of devil fish was the first form of life in Montreal, investigations have revealed. Later, fishes began to make their appearance. Then came a period of uplift, exposing dry land to the elements which in course of time began to wear it down, earth being swept away into the sea to be deposited for the formation of still future lands.

A mass of hard igneous rock then smashed and drilled its way upwards, making Mount Royal. It was not all done at once. There were from ten to twelve attacks of molten rock

upwards to the surface before it jutted out in complete dimensions. At the time Mount Royal was a volcano, the crater was at least one mile above the present surface and the sea and elements have removed or washed away the smouldering part.

Montreal nearly had another volcano on St. Helen's Island at this time. It just missed fire, the rock not smashing itself through and obtaining an opportunity to clear its throat. All this, however, was over 100,000,000 years ago, and there have been no volcanic activities here since those remote times.

This is the record, written in what one writer has called "The Manuscripts of God." As far as human beings are concerned, the earliest history of the city begins with that of the Indian village of Hochelaga which Cartier describes, and concerning which historians have collected a great deal of data. Dr. William Douw Lighthall in his paper, "The Hill of Hochelaga," gives us much interesting information concerning this early Indian village which once occupied a portion of the present site of Montreal. Of Cartier's visit he says:

The discoverer passed along a road "as well trodden as it was possible to see" and after about two leagues, "commenced to find tilled fields and a fine countryside full of Indian Corn," and in the midst of it the Town, near and joining to a mountain

“à l’entour d’icelle” which they named *Mont Royal*. “The said Town is quite round and walled with timbers in fashion of a pyramid crossed at the top, having timbers laid along, well joined and corded, in their manner, and of the height of about two lances; having one gate shut by bars, above which and at certain places on the wall are galleries with ladders furnished with rocks and stones for its defence. Within the Town are about fifty houses each about fifty paces long, at most, covered with sheets of bark as large as tables,”—likely elm bark—“well sewn together in their way, and in them various passages and chambers, and in the midst of the said houses a great hall on the ground where they make their fire and live in common, afterwards retiring to their said chambers, the men with their women and children. Likewise they have lofts in the tops of their houses where they put their corn, of which they make their bread called *Caraconi*.” They pounded their corn to a powder in mortars, and heated the paste as twists between hot stones; made soups of corn, beans and peas; and had squashes and other fruits, and smoked eels; all collected in great quantities for winter; and slept on bark with coverlets of furs. This population lived solely by farming and fishing, and did not travel about like those of “Canada,” although the Stadaconas and their neighbors, and eight or nine other peoples along the river, were “subject to them.”

The Frenchmen were led to the midst of the Town, where there is a square between the houses, about a stone’s throw square, where they were received in the Council and the speaking mats brought, on which they were seated, and to which was also borne the Agouhanna, who was ill. He wore poor clothing, as was the custom of chiefs, but around his head was

a red fillet of porcupine quill-work, which was the sign of his office. Here the sick were brought to be healed and Cartier who was doubtless regarded as a hereditary Agouhanna and god, read them the *In principio* from the Gospel of St. John and gave them gifts, which to them constituted celestial wealth. Doubtless the wonderful visit was in time noised afar among the surrounding tribes, and reached the Hurons of Lake Simcoe. The total of gifts made at one place and another was considerable. Cartier was then conducted to the top of Mount Royal whence the surrounding plains, rivers and mountains were described to him.

He now returned to the galleon and thence to Stadacona. He describes the god of that people, Cudouagny, their belief in the happy hunting grounds—to which the dead pass by way of the stars, their skin robes, winter moccasins, gambling, wooden hoes, tobacco, and pipes, indifference to cold, and hunting skill. These points were applicable to the Hochelegan race in general.

It is now possible to reconstruct a picture of Hochelaga to a certain extent, having regard to the foregoing testimony, from Cartier downwards, and with the aid of certain plans and what remains of the configuration of the ground in the present day city.

The palisaded town was built on a site carefully chosen for defence and convenience. It was established on the summit of a rise of ground, three sides of which were steep banks of streams. To-day these streams have been put underground, but they can be seen on the plans mentioned. The original contours of the rise,—or “Hill of Hochelaga,” as I prefer to name it,—have been cut down by street grading, but they can be partially discerned in the

lanes between the streets. It is interesting to still examine these lanes and other features. The Hill, its bordering streams, and strategic position, are strikingly shown on the City of Montreal Plan of 1830. There the steep southern slope of the Hill down to a brook which ran westwards just below Burnside is plainly given. That slope evidently fell a sheer twenty-five feet to the waterside, and doubtless the palisade ran along the top, making in all a commanding drop of some fifty feet. On the Hill of Hochelaga, James McGill, or his predecessor, afterwards built his residence "Burnside." On the east the Hill was bordered by the stream through McGill University Grounds, presently represented by the Tennis Court depression at Sherbrooke Street and by a depression in the lane behind the south side of Sherbrooke, between Victoria and University. This stream ran into the large Burnside Place Brook. On the western side of the Hill, the other brook ran down parallel with Metcalfe Street and also joined the Burnside Brook. Together all three proceeded as one southwards across the present St. Catherine Street and joined the Little River of Craig Street somewhat west of Victoria Square.

The Town stood in the midst of wide cornfields, except doubtless the marshes below the Burnside stream. The brooks afforded not only defence and abundance of water but also clay for the handsome pottery made by the women of the tribe. The site of the *dump*, about at the north corner of Metcalfe and Burnside, gives the approximate position of the Town Gate, and consequently of the ground traversed by Cartier. I am inclined to think that the Town's extent was somewhat larger than Dawson gives it, judging by McLachlan's remark that only the western border was touched upon, for the square

and the extent of the Hill would seem to indicate more size. So would the numbers of the population. I have had photographs taken by Mr. Smith of the contours of the lanes behind both sides of McGill College Avenue, as well as of the slope of that Avenue itself above Burnside.

A copy of a unique pair of plans throwing light on the configuration of the dump and the western brook has been most kindly supplied me by Mr. G. H. Wyrly Birch, who found them in the Court House Archives. They were made—the one as a ground plan, the other a profile of same—in December, 1854, by H. M. Perrault, Surveyor. The ground plan is entitled "Plan of part of Metcalfe Street showing excavations on each side of same." The profile plan is entitled "Profile of part of Metcalfe Street." Both show the street and its surroundings from Sherbrooke to St. Catherine, in connection with removing a mound for the grading. This mound I at once identified as the Hochelaga dump. It occupied the street space at the corner of Burnside and some space along each side above that street. The Ground Plan also shows the western brook, and the lines of the Burnside Place brook. The Profile Plan gives the contours of the surface on both sides of Metcalfe and that of the surface after grading. It is in fact a kind of picture of the dump, and shows the fall of some twenty-five feet, and one of the side gullies. It was apparently after this that the excavations for building and sand were made on the area of the Town. Dawson gives a cut of the fortress as he conceived it in "Fossil Men." I would make the bluffs steeper around the wall, raise it higher, and have the palisades cross one another at the top with picket tops. The gate would, I am convinced, be near the dump, thus facing the west. I was not sure at first whether

the dump might not have been within the Town, as occasionally was the case, e.g., in the Roebuck site in Ontario, and in some others, but expert opinion is agreed that it was usually outside when a convenient steep slope or bank was near.

To the foregoing remarks I might add a few other notes about prehistoric Indian matters in the neighborhood of Montreal. One is the question what was the "ville de Tutonaguy" from which "le premier Sault d'eau" was "at the distance of two leagues." As above mentioned, I understand this name as simply another for Hochelaga, and as being equivalent to the modern "Tiotiaké" used by the Iroquois traditionally for Montreal, and I consider the name descended in unbroken succession from the Hochelagans to their present descendants the Mohawks of Caughnawaga, and that it has been attached to Montreal for over five centuries.

The cornfields of Hochelaga apparently extended all over the plateau, including the present grounds of McGill University, and, from Mr. Marler's testimony, apparently the present Dominion Square as well. Not only were pieces of pottery found there, but during the excavations at Dorchester Street for the Canadian National Railway Tunnel through Mount Royal, a hoard of objects was unearthed, which included many arrow heads, a stone hatchet and celt, and a number of other articles (but no pottery). This information was given me last year by Mr. Wicksteed, C.E., who was assistant engineer in the work.

Undoubtedly the Hochelagans must have taken great pleasure in the magnificent woods, the immense trees, the beautiful flowers, the mosses and the dells and springs, of Mount Royal, which are such happy memories, also for many of us who have lived long

in the neighborhood. In later days their descendants of the Mountain Mission loved its beautiful nooks. In the Westmount portion the shade of an ancient elm of vast size, situated at what is now the Argyle and Sherbrooke corner of the Argyle School grounds, was one of their favourite camping-spots. An un-failing spring on the Raynes Estate at the head of Murray Avenue was known as "the Indian Well"; and the same name was given to another on the Murray Estate just below the Boulevard.

Eighty years after Cartier's visit, Champlain arrived here on one of his expeditions of discovery. It was the 24th of June, 1615, when he, and some of the Recollet missionaries, landed on the Island, and here is said to have been celebrated the first mass of which there is any record in the annals of Montreal. He also left a remembrance of his visit in the name of St. Helen's Island, which he named in honour of his wife, Hélène Boullé.

But the island remained a wilderness, traversed by savage tribes until the year 1642, when Paul de Chomédy de Maisonneuve formed his expedition with the expressed purpose of founding a colony on the slopes between Mont Royal and the river. He brought with him several families from France and was appointed governor of the island and of the settlement, which was called Ville-Marie.

Parkman in his graphic manner has described the event as follows:

Maisonneuve sprang ashore and fell on his knees. His followers imitated his example; and all joined their voices in enthusiastic songs of thanksgiving. Tents, baggage, arms and stores, were landed. An altar was raised on a pleasant spot near the landing and Mademoiselle Mance, with Madame de la Peltrie, aided by her servant, Charlotte Barré, decorated it with a taste which was the admiration of the beholders. Now all the company gathered before the Shrine. Here stood Vimont in the rich vestments of his office. Here were the two ladies with their servant; Montmagny and Maisonneuve, a warlike figure, erect and tall—his men clustering around him. They kneeled in reverent silence as The Host was raised aloft; and when the rite was over, the priest turned and addressed them: "You are a grain of mustard seed that shall rise and grow till its branches overshadow the earth. You are few, but this work is the work of God. His smile is on you, and your work shall fill the land."

Of the truth of this good man's prophecy, we, living 260 years afterwards, have an abundant proof. The small mustard seed, has indeed become a great tree, and the various nations of the Old World have lodged and are lodging in the branches thereof.

"The afternoon waned; the sun sank behind the western forest and twilight came on. Fireflies were twinkling over the darkened meadow. They caught them, tied them with threads into shining festoons and hung them before the altar. Then they pitched their tents, lighted their fires, stationed their guards, and lay down to rest. Such was the birthnight of Montreal.

The cross which now gleams at night from the top of Mount Royal stands in the same

place as the one erected by Maisonneuve in 1642.

Inside the fort were built a chapel, a hospital, quarters for the soldiers, and other buildings necessary for the shelter of the colonists. The Iroquois were a constant menace to the settlers, and encounters with them were frequent. In 1644 Maisonneuve, in a sally from his fort, drove back a band of Iroquois marauders, and killed their chief on the spot now known as Place d'Armes, this name being given to it to commemorate the event. But the Iroquois were not to be deterred from their raids. They would watch for many days until some unfortunate colonist would venture too far from the fort, then they would fall upon him and either murder him on the spot, or carry him away captive to be put to torment later.

The greatest slaughter here occurred in 1660 when, near Lachine, upwards of two hundred persons were slain and others taken captive. Emboldened by their success, it is likely that the Iroquois would have exterminated the colonists had it not been for the sacrifice of Dollard and his followers recounted elsewhere. Thus it can be seen that the city owes its foundation to a handful of brave men and women who, in the face of fearful odds, persisted in their efforts to establish the Cath-

olic faith and the authority of the King of France in the northern wilderness.

If one can obtain an idea of the present life of a city by lingering in its squares, it is the first paths trodden by the early settlers that will reveal much of its history. All the old streets of Montreal possess historical interest, but there are a few whose story is so closely connected with the early days of Ville-Marie that I must mention them here. The first streets of the city were laid out by Dollier de Casson.

Notre Dame was always the chief road through the early settlement, and thus became the first street of Montreal. Of it one French writer says: "Dollier de Casson traced first at the centre a main street which ran through the town, and gave to it the name of Notre Dame, in honour of the Holy Virgin who had been chosen as patroness of the city." Along this thoroughfare passed officers, traders, Indians, hunters, colonists, priests and nuns in a motley procession.

Some of the most interesting events connected with this old street are those of 1775, when the Americans took Montreal. One historian, Dr. Borthwick, speaks of the events of this year as follows:

What changes have taken place and what scenes have been enacted since that good Sulpician, with

his pair of compasses and pen traced out old Notre Dame Street in the proces verbal of date 12th, March 1672. Let us try to realize a few of them chronologically. Of course, we may say, till the beginning of this century everything beyond the Town proper, was "Terra incognita" the only great unalterable thing, being the old St. Lawrence River flowing on the same as it had ever done, since the days of that cataclysm, when that great flood of water flowing from north to south through all this pleasant land, was arrested by upheavals and the valley of the St. Lawrence was formed and the most wonderful River on the surface of the globe came into existence, that river which got its name, by Canada's renowned Explorer Jacques Cartier. It still, during all these years, when the country was wild flowed majestically on, as it will do for centuries to come—but who can foresee what wonderful events will happen to mark the progress of advance and make the old River subservient to the wants of man? The first scene which looms up in the pictorial panorama of Notre Dame Street, leads us back to the American Revolution of 1775 and following years.

The Americans determined then to take Canada, and for this purpose they sent two armies toward the North. In connection with this movement General Montgomery had detached Col. Ethan Allen with 150 men from the main army to attack Montreal. On the 24th October 1775, he crossed the St. Lawrence three miles below the City at Longue Pointe. No sooner did General Carleton know of it than he assembled 30 regulars and about 200 militia, French and English, of the town, and put them under the command of Major Carden, who, early next day, marched down to Longue Pointe and encountered the enemy. The Americans had possessed them-

selves of some houses and barns. An engagement took place which lasted half an hour, when the colonists under Allen were completely defeated, and he and his whole command were taken prisoners of war. Afterwards they were all liberated when their main army under Montgomery took Montreal. The American armies were commanded respectively by Montgomery and Arnold as their generals. They first took the route of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River, capturing all the fortified places on their way, as St. Johns, Chambly and Sorel. At Sorel, Montgomery placed heavy batteries to prevent any communication between Quebec and Montreal; and as soon as he marched to take the latter place, Governor Carleton was obliged to escape to Quebec, which he reached under the skilful guidance of Captain Bouchette and his aide-de-camp, Chas. DeLanardière.

The Americans took Montreal and entered the city on the 13th November, 1775, and finding abundance of fine thick woollen cloth, Montgomery clad all his troops in this Canadian stuff. They did not remain long in the city, but set out for Quebec, which was reached on the 5th day of December, 1775. An act of heroism and patriotism occurred at this time well worthy of being noticed here. It was necessary to communicate with the General at Quebec from Montreal; but by the strict watch of the Americans at Sorel it was impossible now to pass by the River St. Lawrence. In the exigencies of the case, two French Canadians stepped forward and volunteered for the office.

The news of the capture of Montreal was the means of so strengthening Quebec that it resulted in the death of Montgomery and retreat of his army. Followed by the British Army, they abandoned Sorel, Chambly, St. Johns and of course Montreal

The second thoroughfare named by M. Dollier de Casson was St. James Street. It was thus designated in honour of St. James the Apostle, and also in honour of M. Jacques Olier, one of the associates of Maisonneuve.

St. Paul Street was named in honour of Paul de Maisonneuve, the founder of Ville-Marie, but the practice of attaching the name of some saint to the different streets seems to have prevailed, and this street has since been known only by its present name. St. Paul Street seems to have been of importance in the early days, as here were situated the residence of the Governor, the Château Vaudreuil, and the Intendant's palace. Unfortunately these have now been demolished. St. Francis Xavier Street bears the name of the great missionary to China; St. Gabriel, that of the Holy Archangel and also of the first two curés of Montreal, who happened to bear the name of Gabriel. St. Lambert Street was named after Lambert Clossé who was killed by the Iroquois at the corner of this street and Notre Dame. These few examples will serve to show how both saint and settler were commemorated in Montreal's old streets, and also to give a suggestion of the historical associations that still linger there.

The life of the people who inhabited these streets is reflected by the Orders in Council passed by the Intendants from time to time.

These orders are preserved in the Archives of Montreal, and are furnished by the keeper of the Archives, Mr. E. Z. Massicotte. For example, we find that on August 9th, 1702, an Order in Council was passed by the Intendant, Jean Bouchart, "forbidding the farmers of Ville-Marie to allow their pigs to wander in the streets under penalty of a fine of three francs." This does not seem sufficient to control the keeping of pigs, for we find another order, dated June 22nd, 1706, decreeing that "the habitants are forbidden to keep pigs in their houses under penalty of a fine of three francs for each pig." On July 10th of the same year it was also enacted that "the inhabitants of the Rue St. François (St. François Xavier) and all the houses of the lower town from the cross-roads at the Hôtel Dieu as far as the small gate of the Rivière St. Pierre should no longer be allowed to raise pigs. The other inhabitants may have two at most, keeping them shut up until Easter. Whoever finds pigs in the streets may kill them. Enacted in Montreal." On the 17th of December another order was passed "forbidding the inhabitants to keep pigs under penalty of a fine of three francs." Whether this was the end of the pig-nuisance in old Montreal or not, history does not say.

We also find in the order of June 22nd, 1706, that the inhabitants of the town were to be

compelled to repair the roads and to build a kind of sidewalk at street corners. Also it was forbidden in that order to allow sows to wander in Notre Dame Street. The question of the sale of liquor vexed Montreal as early as 1702, for we find that on complaint of the Gentlemen of the Seminary all licenses to inn-keepers were annulled, they being obliged to obtain new permits for six months only. Several orders were also passed to prevent the selling of intoxicants to the Indians. Other orders regulating the moral conduct of the inhabitants were enacted as the necessity arose. In 1701 the price of beef was fixed at five sous a pound from Easter to St. Michael's day, and after that four sous. These few extracts from the orders perhaps afford some idea of the paternal control exercised by the Intendant over the people of Ville-Marie.

The stranger who visits Montreal is always struck by the great number of large buildings belonging to religious orders. He is also sometimes inclined to criticize the government that allows such valuable properties to exist for the most part free of taxation. But let him withhold his criticism until he has had time to learn something of the great work performed by these institutions—work which, if left to the government, would cost millions. The religious orders perform important educational functions,

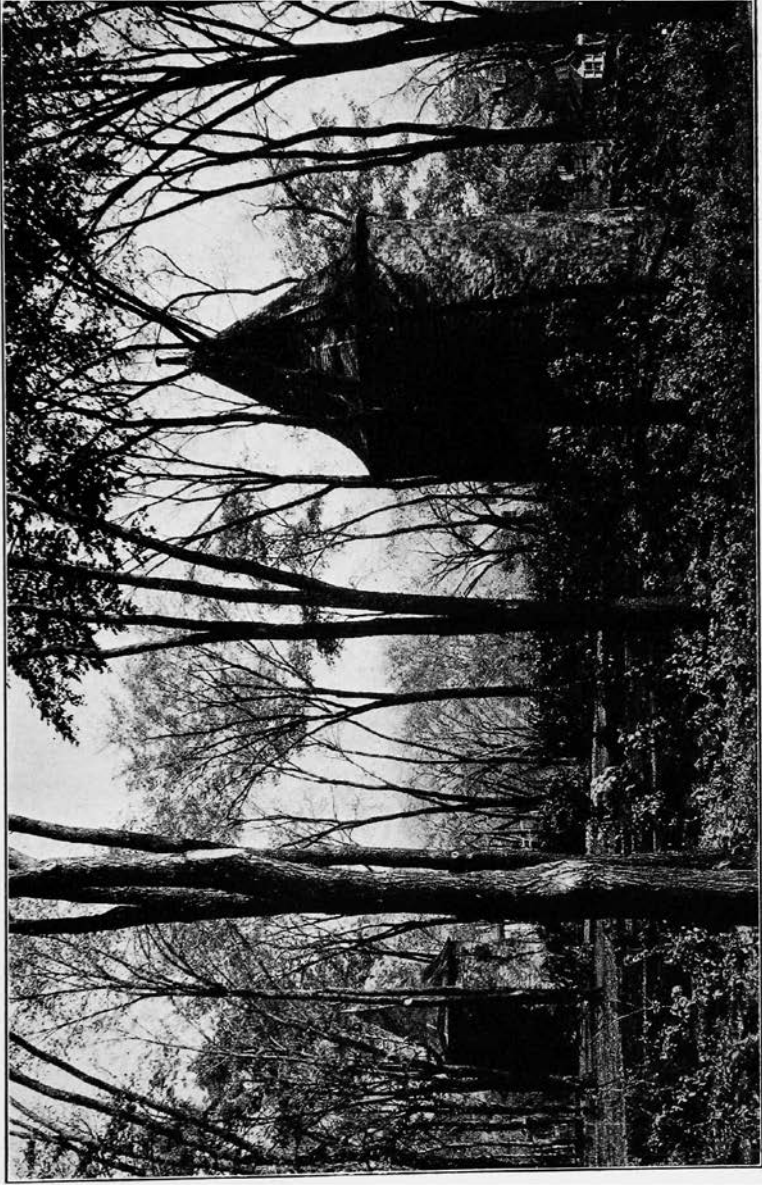
besides which they care for the sick, the blind, the incurable, the aged and the foundling. The devotion of the Brothers and Sisters to their vocation is little short of marvellous. I have had the pleasure of association with members of various orders and can speak from personal knowledge.

If one goes back far enough in the history of the city, one finds that the city really does owe its birth to one of these orders—the Sulpicians, or Gentlemen of the Seminary, as they were called. The Abbé Olier caused a branch of the Sulpicians to be founded in 1657, and the whole Island of Montreal was ceded to the Order in 1663. It was with the expressed purpose of founding a mission in the Canadian wilderness that the *Compagnie de Notre Dame de Montréal* was formed and Maisonneuve placed at its head. A religious order, then, was responsible for the birth of what is today the fourth largest French-speaking city in the world.

The Seminary of the Sulpicians, built in 1710, still stands beside Notre Dame church. This building now serves as the offices of the Order, the other activities having transferred to buildings situated elsewhere. The most imposing of these buildings is the Seminary and College of Montreal, situated on Sherbrooke Street. Here is a Faculty of Theology and also a large

and important boy's school founded in 1776. Besides the importance and age of the institution, the Seminary possesses another appeal to the lover of old Montreal. This consists in the two ancient towers that stand just inside its gates. These are two of the most important links with the past now remaining on the Island.

The towers formed a part of the *Fort de la Montagne*, or *Fort des Sauvages* as it was sometimes called. Here the Christian Indians were placed for safety—hence the popular name. A château was erected within a circle of walls, and two other towers were built in the rear. In one of the towers now remaining the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre Dame taught the Indian children, and in the other they lived for a time. One of the towers was transformed into a chapel, and here lie buried two of the early Indian converts. One of these was François Thoronmiongo'a Huron "baptised by Father Bréboeuf, and who died at about the age of one hundred years, by his piety and uprightness an example for Christians and the admiration of unbelievers." The other was Sister Marie Thérèse Gannensaqoa of the Congrégation de Notre Dame "who died in 1695 at the age of twenty-six, and who for thirteen years had instructed the Indian children." It is such survivals as these that help to create



OLD WATCH TOWERS, MONTREAL

and maintain that spell that French Canada exerts over all who really come to know it.

The tall spire of the mother house of the Gray Nuns rising above a mass of old-world buildings set in extensive gardens on Dorchester Street is a familiar and beautiful landmark. The gray-brown habit of the sisters is often to be seen as a picturesque note in the city streets, as well as in the villages of Quebec, for the work of the "Soeurs Grises" has many branches. This work is chiefly the care of orphan children, the aged and sick. The order was founded by Madame d'Youville about 1750, but authorities do not agree as to the exact date. Dr. Borthwick in his history of Montreal refers thus to the circumstances that led to the foundation of the Gray Nuns:

Mde Youville was going into Town on Institution business. When she came to the "Little River" which was then open and uncovered (now one of the city drains), she saw an infant stuck frozen into the ice with a dagger sticking in its throat and one of its little hands raised through the ice as if in the attitude of imploring justice and the vengeance of Heaven against its murderer.

This so shocked the good Sister, that after consultation with her associates, they determined that their charity should henceforth extend to Orphans and Foundlings as well as the aged and suffering infirm.

No one can calculate the immeasurable amount of

good which they have doné since then and their great establishment, now translated between St. Catherine and Dorchester Streets, still has its doors open, night and day, to all who need protection and help.

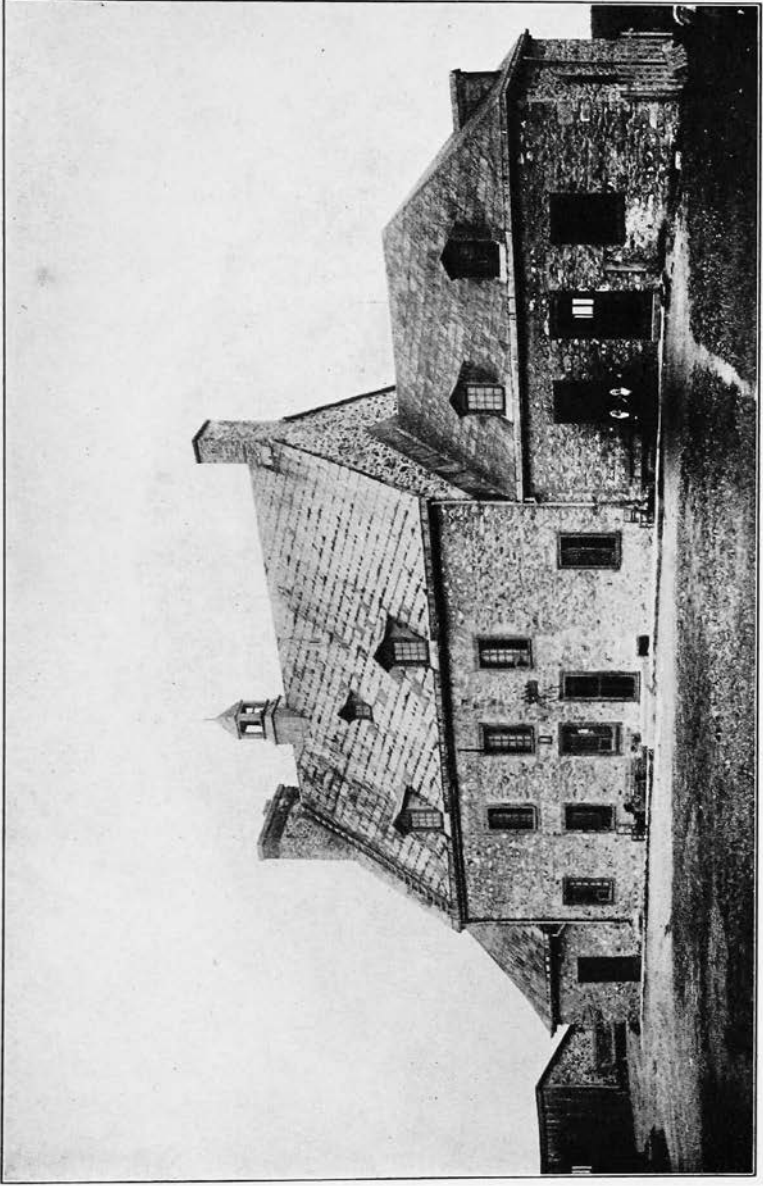
In all the distress and epidemics which have fallen on Montreal for 150 years these good Sisters "The Grey Nuns" have ever and always been in the van of the fight and if little worldly praise and advancement have accrued to them, their reward is hereafter.

One of the oldest of the institutions for education is that of the *Congrégation de Notre Dame* already mentioned. It was founded by Marie Marguerite Bourgeoys in 1653 for the instruction of Indian girls. Sister Marguerite arrived from France on the 16th of November, 1653, and at once busied herself with the foundation of a school, but it was not until a few years later that a real school could be begun. The only building available was a stable, Sister Bourgeoys living in the loft and giving instruction in a room on the ground floor. The next year she went back to France to get aid, and brought back with her four young women. In 1666 their establishment had prospered, and a school for older girls was also opened. A boarding school was soon added. This was the beginning of the *Congrégation de Notre Dame* which is now an important factor in the education of young girls in all parts of Canada. The mother house is an immense building occupying a whole city block on Sherbrooke Street, and

there are numerous convents in different parts of America. The work of Mother Marguerite Bourgeoys has had marvellous and well-deserved success. The teaching sisters form a highly cultured body of women devoted to their vocation, and who also are keenly interested in all educational and literary movements. At a lecture on Modern Poetry which I was privileged to give before an audience of teaching sisters, the greatest interest was taken in the recent poetry of America. One sister who was very deaf, insisted on my shouting down her ear-trumpet an explanation of *vers libre*, while the others plied me with more questions than I was able to answer.

Only a few of Montreal's old buildings remain to help us picture for ourselves the days when the subjects of the King of France walked the narrow roads that were then the "streets" of Ville-Marie. To the sisters of the Congrégation de Notre Dame belongs the credit of preserving a building which, while little known to the general public, rivals the Château de Ramezay itself in historical interest. This is the large farm house built by the sisters upon their once extensive farm opposite Île St. Paul or "Nuns Island." This building is older than the Château, having been constructed, at least in part, in the year 1681. Besides, it gives a better idea of the domestic architecture of the

French régime than does the more pretentious Château. When the sisters still occupied the old convent on Notre Dame Street, they acquired a large farm on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and eventually the island lying opposite. The old stone house was the centre of the farm activities, and it still remains to-day almost unchanged. It is, as I have said, little known to the public, and is seldom visited by English visitors, as it is so off the main thoroughfares of the city, although situated at its very edge. The old house and the piece of cultivated land surrounding it are like a quiet backwater of the turbulent currents of life that eddy around them. Venerable and mediæval in appearance, it stands close to the narrow stream that separates it from the île St. Paul, where it has stood for two hundred and fifty years, watching the city closing in upon it. On my first visit there, I had some difficulty in finding it, for it lies beyond the canal, the last house before the river is reached. I went up and down Centre Street near which I had been told the house was situated, but caught no glimpse of any building that looked in the least venerable or ancient. A happy inspiration suggested that I should call at the *presbytère* to invoke the aid of the parish priest. This proved to be the right thing to do, for Father Fournier not only knew where the house was, but also

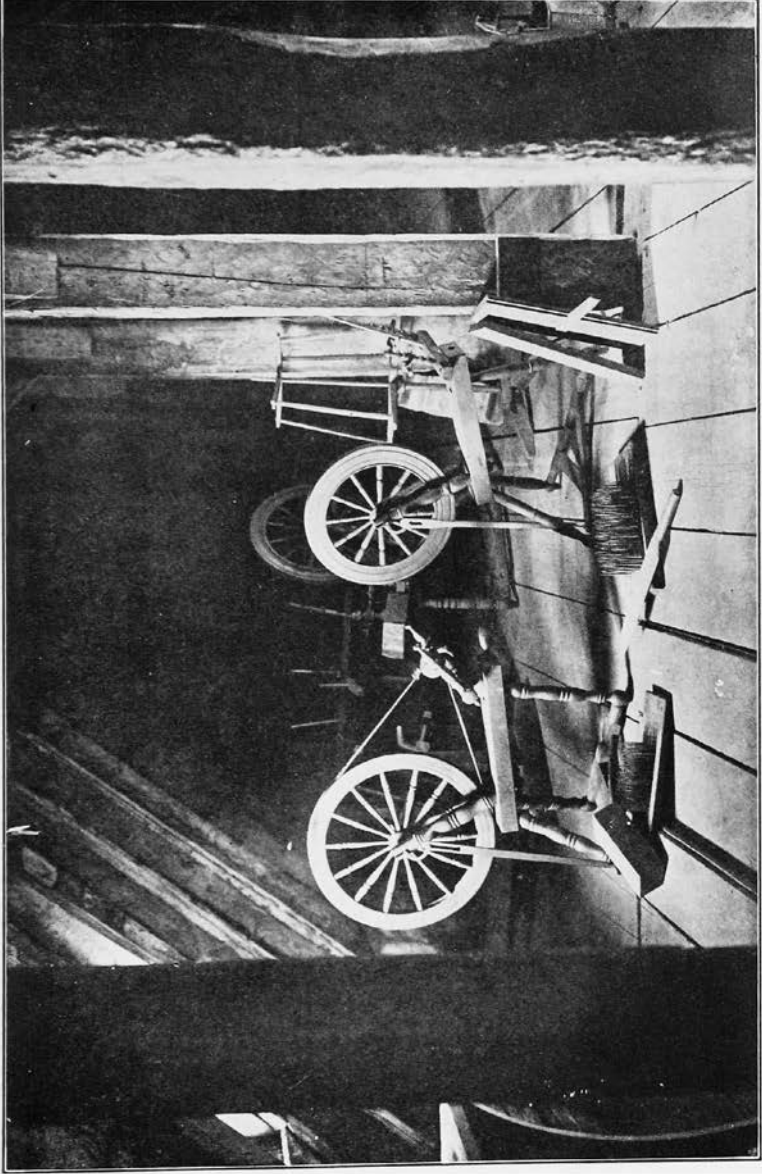


ANCIENT FARM HOUSE OF THE CONGRÉGATION DE NOTRE DAME

courteously offered to accompany me there and introduce me to the superior of the tiny convent, for such it now is. We arrived at a small yard with the house in the background, on each side of which were chicken pens and cultivated plots of ground, the sisters who reside here being expert farmers. At one side stood a tall cross surrounded by glowing petunias, a tiny belfry crowned the steep gable, and a small statue of the Holy Virgin stood in a niche over the doorway. As I looked at the gray stone walls, the blue water and the green cultivated island beyond, it did not seem that I was standing at the edge of a great commercial city of the New World. I seemed transplanted to the rolling plains of Normandy or Anjou in old France.

We were graciously received in the little hall by Sister Sainte Claire, the superior, who readily consented to show me the place and its treasures. The construction of the house is as massive within as without. Buildings were intended to endure in 1681. The heavy beams that supported the upper floors were rough-hewn and mellowed to a dull gold by time. The original partitions in some parts of the house still remain, these being of smooth pine boards. The large living-room ran across the building, and had a pleasant outlook on both sides, looking in one direction upon the cross and the flowers of the yard, and in the other towards the

water and the island. A fire-place occupied the centre of one wall, and beside it stood an ancient grandfather clock clamped to the wall by iron clamps and still ticking out the hours. Beside the clock and also clamped to the wall was a statue of naïve workmanship representing *le petit Jésus* in a glass case with faded roses beside it. Beneath the statue stood the chair of Mother Bourgeoys. This was an object of great veneration to Sister Sainte Claire, who carefully lifted the cushion that I might see where the venerated founder of the order used to sit so long ago. Across the hall were the storerooms and kitchen. In the former two sisters were engaged in the work of the household. The most curious object here was an immense stone sink, hollowed out from a single block of stone which looked like a fallen tombstone. A stone spout projected through the wall to drain the water to the river's bank. I was next taken to the chapel on the floor above. This was simple and plain, but contained some very interesting relics, especially a cross which once belonged to the founder, some beautiful candle-sticks and two ancient pictures dating from 1653. Adjoining the chapel was the dormitory, spotless and austere, containing seven high-posted and curtained beds. The attic which was next visited proved the most interesting part of all. Up a flight of stairs made of heavy



THE ATTIC OF THE FARM HOUSE OF THE CONGRÉGATION DE NOTRE DAME

planks we climbed to a large room at the top of the house lighted by small dormer windows. The staircase was said to be the same as it was when it was constructed at the order of Mother Bourgeoys. The attic has become a museum in which are housed the relics and treasures of the founder and her associates. The altar of Mother Bourgeoys, of white pine ornamented by faded painted flowers, stood at one end. On the other side stood the looms, reels, spinning-wheels and hand-cards formerly used by the sisters. Old pine coffer with huge hand-forged hinges that came from France, an ancient contrivance for beating butter, a large *huche* for kneading bread, and bins to contain grain and flour were ranged along the walls. The attic was overarched by a high roof of timber whose heavy beams were all held in place by pine pegs, instead of by iron nails. At the time this house was built, nails were unknown in Canada and pegs were used instead. Sister Sainte Claire laughingly pointed out the clumsy domestic utensils, calling my attention to the wooden dustpans, and remarking that the modern tin ones were much more convenient. From a cupboard that stood near the altar she brought forth some fine old candle-sticks, blue china plates and cups, and an immense blue teapot which would hold at least a gallon. She then showed me some wooden *sabots* in which

the sisters were accustomed to attend chapel on Sundays. This custom was abolished in 1856. Many other beautiful and valuable objects were exhibited while Sister Sainte Claire chattered cheerfully, at times in French and again in English, about the Congrégation and its founder. The last object shown was a faded drawing of the tiny stable given to Marguerite Bourgeoys by Sieur de Maisonneuve to house her first school.

All the sisters assembled in the hall to say *au revoir*, and as I left the yard with its purple petunias and towering cross the tiny bell above the venerable roof began to tinkle, calling the sisters to prayer or to the first duty of the afternoon.

CHAPTER V

OKA AND THE MONKS OF LA TRAPPE

I KNOW of no single journey in the neighborhood of Montreal that offers such infinite variety as that to Oka. One passes over the ground that history has marked for its own, through scenery not excelled for quiet and simple beauty in any part of French Canada, on towards the monastery of La Trappe, where monks lead the community life naturally associated with the Middle Ages, and finally on to the village of Oka and the legend-haunted Lake of Two Mountains.

Along the roads bordered with vegetable gardens of île Jésus the market carts wend their way to and from the great city. All through the night and early hours of the morning, carts and trucks laden with produce go along in a straggling procession, to return empty in the evening.

There is a sort of magic in the names of the villages of French Canada, and more than once I have found that the name suggests the place. It was thus with Ste. Rose. Quietly beautiful it lies along the river shore, its houses white or

red. Roses bloom in many gardens, and as I passed over the long bridge that spans the River of a Thousand Islands, a rose-coloured cloud hung above the church spire. The river is dotted by so many islands that no one would dispute its right to the name it bears. Some of these islands are of great beauty, as they reflect their tall trees in the placid water. It was near this place that the English forces crossed over the river on the ice in 1837, and engaged in a death-struggle with the followers of Nelson and Papineau.

The façade of the old church at St. Eustache still shows the scars of the battle. Its venerable stones are deeply indented by cannon-balls fired by the King's forces, against the followers of Papineau led by Dr. Chénier. These took refuge in the parish church and adjoining *presbytère*, and offered a heroic but vain resistance. Charles G. D. Roberts in his History of Canada speaks of this event as follows:

“From the former position (St. Eustache) most of its defenders fled on Colborne's approach, but a resolute few under one Doctor Chénier threw themselves into the stone church of the parish and made a mad but magnificent resistance. Not till the roof was blazing, the walls falling in, and most of their comrades slain, did these deluded heroes seek escape. Nearly every man of them sought it in vain.

From the embers of St. Eustache, Colborne led his forces to St. Benoit.”

On my visit to St. Eustache I found quite a different scene. The whole town was wrapt in the drowsy peace of a July afternoon. I stood before the two graceful spires of the Church, trying to recall the stirring and tragic events of 1837. The only visible reminders were the scars upon the façade of which I have spoken.

Inside the church there was even less to remind one of strife. A verger was dusting the pews, and paused in his work to talk to me. He seemed to take pride in the old edifice, and directed my attention to the marks of the cannon-balls. He told me that the façade remained much the same as in 1837, and that some of the side walls belonged to the original structure, but that the choir had been entirely rebuilt. Beside the high altar a nun was polishing the candlesticks, and a woman was scrubbing the altar steps, while her child played on the sanctuary floor. This was a striking contrast to the scene the verger had just described, and I wondered if the woman remembered that in this very spot seventy misguided but heroic men had given their lives for a lost cause.

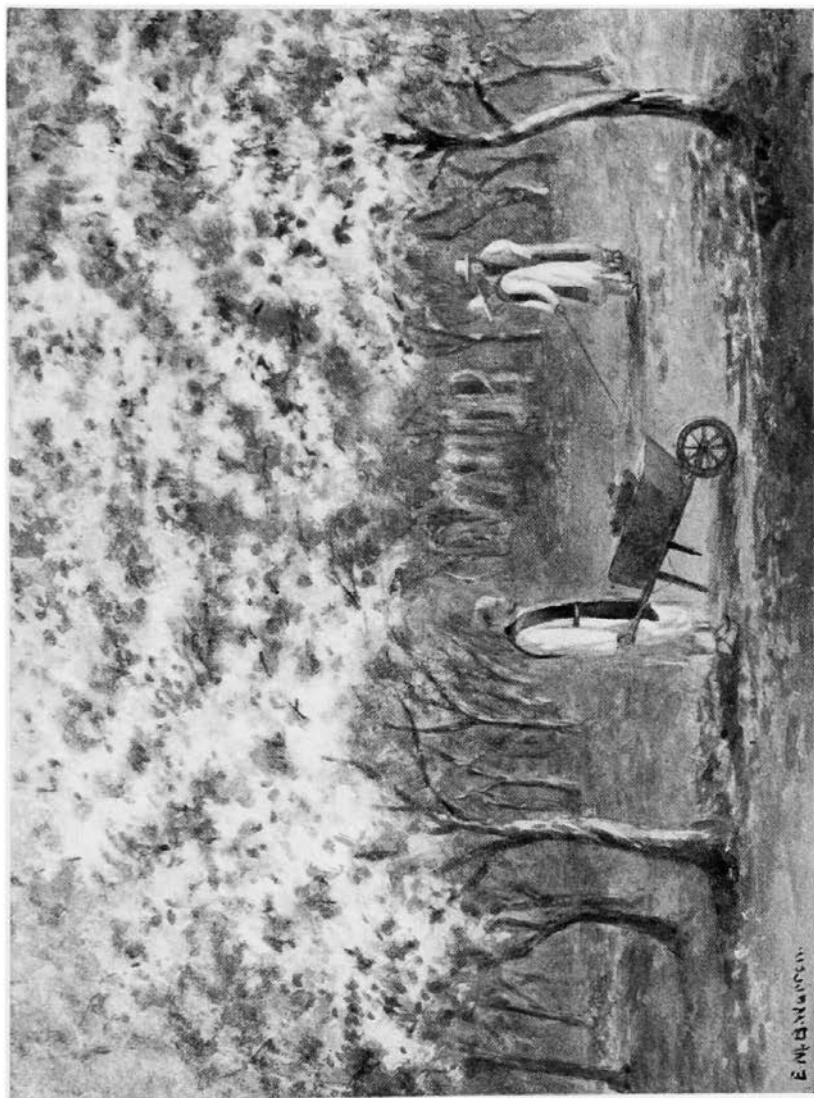
From St. Eustache the road passes through a beautiful agricultural district gently rising along a mountain ridge to St. Joseph du Lac. Here life is more primitive and perhaps more

picturesque than at Ste. Rose or at St. Eustache. Log houses shining with whitewash stand among extensive orchards and vegetable gardens. As the road leads ever upwards, blue patches of the Lake of Two Mountains appear, and soon the gray walls of the Trappist monastery loom up among the green hills. Tall French poplars and rows of Lombardies stand side by side near the building; a stone cross rises over the main entrance, and a lofty spire crowns the whole. Such is the Abbey of La Trappe.

It was Scott, I think, and also Von Scheffel, who first aroused my interest in monasteries. As a closed shutter makes one wonder what is behind it, so the closed doors of convents excite one's curiosity as one passes by. But I found the door of La Trappe wide open, and a cheerful-looking bearded monk in a brown habit waiting to welcome me. When I asked if I might see the monastery, he first inquired if I had any women in my party, and finding that I had not, he invited me in. He asked me to wait for a moment while he prepared the mail bag for the car waiting outside. This introduced rather a modern note into the mediæval surroundings. The monks, however, take a keen interest in things scientific, and later my guide explained to me carefully the mechanism of a powerful new motor-truck recently acquired, in the same manner that he told me of the good points of

APPLE ORCHARD, ABBEY OF LA TRAPPE, OKA

From a Painting by E. M. B. Warren



an enormous Ayrshire bull imported from Scotland.

A small door at the end of the hall was now unlocked, and my guide led me through long dim corridors that seemed almost endless, decorated only with small pictures, past bare rooms, and finally into the brightly coloured chapel. If the monastery is gray outside and white and bare within, the chapel atones for this; for all possible colour and brightness seem concentrated here. The afternoon sun was streaming through the tall arched windows, lighting the whole building with a golden glow. The chapel is lofty and covered with a round-arched roof, and although quite new, the original buildings having been burned in 1916, it already has a venerable appearance. In fact it is quite wonderful how new buildings can be invested with such a mediæval air as the monastery of La Trappe. Probably the monks in brown habits or in black and white robes who are everywhere in evidence are the cause of it.

The splendid farms that surround the monastery are marvellously cultivated, and the barns are well worth a visit. Here a great cleaning was going on in preparation for the government inspection; and my guide told me with a twinkle in his eye that the barns must be particularly clean on that occasion. I was shown some splendid specimens of the three breeds of cattle

that the monks raise, viz: Holstein, Ayrshire, and French Canadian. The raising of horses, poultry, bees, dogs and rabbits also occupies the monks; and a new breed of poultry was also shown from which great things are expected. Time did not permit me to visit the factories where the famous Oka cheese is made.

In the fields, orchards, and gardens, many silent white-robed monks were working in small groups. As we walked among these laborers I noticed the cheerful and contented expression on all faces. There was only one exception. This was a mournful-looking individual who was on his knees pulling out the nettles from a particularly stony corner. I believe he must have been performing some penance for the good of his soul.

The Trappists or Reformed Cistercians are a very ancient order dating back to 1098. They prospered until the fifteenth century, when a decline set in, due, it is said, to a relaxation of the strict discipline of the order; but in the seventeenth century a reform was effected, particularly at the monastery of La Trappe in France, from which the Reformed Cistercians take their name.

The monastery of La Trappe d'Oka, or to use its official name, the Abbey of Our Lady of the Lake of Two Mountains, was founded in 1881 by a colony of monks who came from the

Abbey of Bellefontaine in France. A tract of land was given them by the Sulpicians. This land was then virgin forest; and if any proof of the industry of the Trappists were needed, the beautiful cultivated hills and plains that surround the monastery would bear witness to their labor.

The discipline of the Trappist monks is of the strictest. A life of silence, work, prayer and penance is prescribed. The community idea permeates everything. On noticing one wing of the buildings that was slightly separated from the rest, I asked my guide if this wing were the residence of the Abbot. The monk replied, with a mild tone of reproach in his voice, that their Abbot shared the common life with the least of the brothers. Silence is imposed upon all, but the monks may speak in the Chapter House (at three o'clock in the morning!) and at such other times as permission may be granted. My guide being the porter for the day, had permission to talk, and seemed to enjoy explaining to a stranger the life and work of the convent. He also told me much about the rules concerning daily worship, meals, and hours of work and sleep, and gave me a little book containing a synopsis of these rules from which I quote the following:

“Rising at two o'clock in the morning on week days, at half past one on holydays, and at

one o'clock on solemn feast days, the monk begins by reciting the Matins and Lauds of the Blessed Virgin, followed by half an hour's meditation. Next comes the chanting or recitation, according to the degree of the feast, of canonical Lauds and Matins, followed by private Masses. The other long hours are distributed throughout the day according to the ancient practice of the Church. Each of these canonical hours is preceded by the corresponding office of the Blessed Virgin, except at Compline, where the latter follows the Great Office, and the day ends with the chanting of the *Salve Regina*.

“Common life, silence, and manual work give many opportunities of self-denial. But this is not sufficient. The Trappist must crucify his body by perpetual abstinence, and by a fast extending over no less than six months of the year. Meat is permitted only to the sick and to those of weak health. The diet of La Trappe, although vegetarian, is pronounced very wholesome by eminent physicians.

“From Easter till the fourteenth of September, the Rule allows two meals a day, besides a light breakfast called ‘mixt.’ The period of fasting begins on September 14, and lasts till Easter. During this period, the evening meal is replaced by a mere collation, and the ‘mixt’ by a ‘frustulum,’ consisting of two ounces of bread with a small quantity of liquid.

“To this fast and abstinence should be added the penance of sleeping fully dressed on a quilted straw mattress, and in a common dormitory. A Trappist is allowed seven hours’ consecutive sleep in winter, and six hours in summer; but then, an hour’s siesta is provided during the day, after dinner.”

It was with real regret that I left the dim, austere monastery, where silence reigns supreme, and said good-bye to my polite and gentle guide.

On ascending a long hill I passed the Oka Agricultural Institute conducted by the monks for the teaching of scientific farming. It is said that the monks are doing a very useful work in this way, and even the object lesson of their carefully cultivated fields and their splendid horses and cattle should have its effect for good.

The Lake of Two Mountains is very beautiful viewed from this point, whence the road leads downwards past the extensive farm of the Sulpicians, to the village of Oka situated on the lake shore. As is common in French Canadian towns, the church occupies the most commanding and beautiful position. It looks across the water to the wooded hills beyond, while in the rear rise the two mountains from which the lake gets its name.

I asked the friend who accompanied me what

the name "Oka" suggested to him, and he promptly replied: "Cheese." I think that I should have said the same a few months ago; but after visiting the monastery where the cheese is made, I find that it is not the most important thing after all. Besides, having read a recent book of folk-lore by Arthur Guindon, and having done a little research among the dusty tomes of Catlin and Schoolcraft, those two great authorities on North American Indians, I am able to answer differently. For Oka and the Lake of Two Mountains abound in Indian Legends and Folk-lore, as well as in historical and religious associations. The name Oka itself is said to be that of the ancient spirit of the lake, a Manitou part heron and part eagle, who used, in the ancient days before the time of the white man, to assemble the lesser spirits, the Indian chiefs, and the animals to a great concert and revel on a rocky island in the lake.

With the body of a giant Indian, the wings of an eagle, and the legs of a heron, Oka, the mighty genius of the lake, would emerge from the waves. With the music of his magic flute, mingling with the moaning of the wind and the roaring of the waters, he would call from all directions bird, beast, and insect, the warbler, the muskrat, and the fire-fly, and many more. Then with a louder note he would call all the

lesser spirits that haunted the neighboring hills and caves about the lake.

Poukonginin, the spirit that haunts the heights; Imakinac, the Manitou of caverns; Nibanabèque, who lives in the depths of the waters; and sometimes the dreaded Windigo would gather there. Then from its lofty nest between the two mountains, the Thunder Bird would swoop down upon the lake, and woe to the savage who saw him.

This was all before the white man came. The ringing of the Abbey bells on the distant hillside, and the echoing of the church chimes across the water, have driven away the Manitous from their ancient haunts, and they hold their revels here no more. The Thunder Bird alone remains, and he sometimes leaves his eyrie to swoop down upon the crops of the peaceful monks, or to smite the church spire with the flashes from his eyes. But he is powerless to bring back the old spirits; and no terrified savage has been carried away in recent years, gripped in his golden talons as used to be of frequent occurrence in prehistoric times. Many Indians still live about the lake, engaged in fishing, agriculture and basket-making, but they all seem to-day most peaceful and contented. I saw several encamped beneath some tall pines engaged in making baskets; and a short distance further on I inquired my way of one who was

washing a very shiny buggy in a wayside brook. I do not believe he had ever heard of the great Manitou, Oka, who used to keep his ancestors in order, nor of the Thunder Bird who carried them away in his talons when they transgressed the ancient laws of the tribe.

The cordial welcome that I received on the occasion of my first visit to the Monastery of Notre Dame du Lac gave me the desire to repeat it. But there was another reason as well. I had heard of the fame of Father Leopold as a grower of gladioli and peonies, and I determined to see him if possible in the midst of the beauty that he had helped to create; and, also, to get his practical advice in regard to the additions that I wished to make to my own peony garden. I therefore chose the time of the peonies—the last week in June.

The route taken to reach the monastery was different from the one followed on the first occasion, but was as picturesque and beautiful. It was the time of the strawberries as well as of the peonies, and at almost every farm that we passed, the whole family was engaged in gathering the fruit for the Montreal market. The red calico dresses of the women and the blue blouses of the men made a pleasing contrast with the green of the level fields. More than once I was reminded of Millet's "Gleaners" by the picture presented.

The favorite flower of the habitant of this part of the country seems to be the low-growing clove pink. There was scarcely a house that did not possess at least a large clump of this flower in full bloom, and many of the gardens had walks and beds bordered with them, the scent being strong enough to perfume whole stretches of the road. Often vegetables and flowers were mingled together. At one farm pinks and lettuce grew in alternate rows; at another the blue-green onion beds were dotted with clumps of pinks.

Although situated so near a large city, the Île Jésus has preserved much of the quaint simplicity of former times. While ugly square structures are common, many stone or wood houses of venerable appearance, still exist, and even a number of neatly whitewashed log cabins as well. I noticed several houses, evidently quite new, built in the old style. Well-sweeps are common, and here and there an out-door oven or a thatched roof show the desire of the habitant to cling to the past.

Time passes quickly when every turn of the road holds some special interest, and it did not seem long before I found myself between the avenue of tall French poplars that leads to the monastery. An elderly monk of ascetic appearance in a thread-bare but carefully mended brown habit was acting as porter. His

thin features were a contrast to those of Brother Léon, the former porter, but he possessed the same quiet and courtly manner. I made known my desire to see Father Leopold, and in a few minutes there appeared in the cloister a tall monk in black and white habit, with graying beard and a soft cultured voice. This was Father Leopold, who readily consented to show me his gardens. These are situated beside the Agricultural College at the top of a hill overlooking a wide valley and the distant Lake of Two Mountains. Father Leopold's collection of peonies, while not a large one, contains the most beautiful and the choicest varieties in cultivation. They are not centered in one garden, but are planted all along the main driveway, and beside the gladioli beds.

Father Leopold generously cut any blooms in which I was interested and presented them with an old-world courtliness. On inquiry, I found that he is Spanish, although he speaks French and English perfectly. After we had visited all the flowers that were in bloom we sat down beneath the poplars to discuss them. Father Leopold is a true lover of beauty and never mistakes the rarity of a variety for value. Many of the older varieties seem to be his favorites, although he introduced me to one that was comparatively new, and cut a specimen of the most glorious bloom that his garden produced. This



FATHER LEOPOLD

was Tourangelle, originated in France by Desert in 1913. The Father's advice was always concise and practical—the advice of one who knows and is glad to instruct.

He is also interested in the growing of other flowers, including gladioli and dahlias. In fact, I believe that anything that was beautiful would interest Father Leopold. He invited me to return in gladioli time, saying that he supplied many of the Montreal florists with blooms and that he had nearly fifty thousand bulbs in various stages of growth. Before leaving I asked and readily obtained permission to photograph my host among his peonies.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROAD TO CARILLON

OCCASIONALLY in French Canada there may still be seen on some rugged mountain-side a "Way of the Cross." The events that culminated in the Crucifixion are commemorated at different stations, marked by small crosses, and at the top of the mountain there stands a tall black cross representing Golgotha. Every year the faithful go along this road to Calvary, recalling the various events of Passion week.

In following the route to Carillon one treads a kind of historical "Way of the Cross." Suffering and martyrdom, in the cause of civilization and for the glory of France, have been experienced along this river way by explorers and missionaries, culminating with the heroic sacrifice of Dollard and his sixteen followers at Carillon.

Whether one follows the route of the French explorers through the Lake of Two Mountains, or whether one takes the road along the shore, it makes little difference. In both cases the scenery is beautiful; but it is because the whole

way has been rendered sacred by the toil, suffering, and death of heroes and martyrs, that this route holds an irresistible attraction for the student of the French Régimé. There is another reason as well. While about Montreal and Quebec cling memories of the great explorers that will ever remain, these places have been so changed, even in their outlines, that it is difficult for the imagination to bring back the heroic dramas which were played upon these stages. It is not so with the way to Carillon. Forests have in many places given way to cultivated lands, it is true, but much of the forest still remains, and the Two Mountains where the legendary Thunder Bird made its nest, and the hills on the other shore where the Manitou dwelt and the dreaded Windigo walked, have been little changed. The trees on the mountain-sides, the outlines of the shore, and the blue waters of the lake still remain as they were in May, 1660, when Dollard des Ormeaux and his sixteen heroes passed along towards the Calvary of Carillon.

The names of the great explorers, Cartier and Champlain, are connected with this waterway. Cartier went as far as the Lachine Rapids in 1541, and Champlain did the same in 1608. In 1611 he made a second attempt, losing two of his men in an accident at the rapids. In his journal, Champlain gives us an un-

adorned account of his feelings on viewing the turbulent waters where his followers perished. He writes: "The next day I went in a canoe to the said rapid with the Indian and one of our men to see the place where they were lost, and to try to find the bodies, and I assert that when he pointed it out to me my hair stood up on my head at the sight of a place so terrible."

In his second attempt, Champlain explored the Lake of Two Mountains and went on to the Long Sault. Of this journey he writes: "On the last day of May we passed into another lake six or seven leagues long and three wide, in which there are islands. The country around is very level, except in some places where there are hills covered with pines. . . . On Saturday, the first of June, we passed two other rapids, the first half a league in length and the second a league. . . . It was here that we had some difficulty, for not being able to carry our canoes overland on account of the thickness of the woods, we had to drag them along in the water with ropes, and in pulling mine I nearly was lost on account of its getting into a whirlpool; and if I had not fallen fortunately between two rocks, the canoe would have dragged me down. . . . In this danger I cried unto God and began to pull at my canoe, which was sent towards me by a back current such as often occurs in these rapids, and then,

having escaped, I praised God, praying Him to preserve us. . . . I was anxious to save our canoe, for if it were lost we should have to remain where we were, or await the arrival of any Indians who might pass that way, a poor outlook for those who have nothing on which to dine and who are unaccustomed to such fatigue.”

This way to Carillon has been travelled, too, by zealous missionaries in their attempt to carry their religion into the unknown regions of New France. They toiled, suffered hunger, thirst, and torture at the hands of the savages, and more than one gave his life for his faith.

Daniel, Bréboeuf, and Lalament, who suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Iroquois, must have passed along this way, the only road that then existed, and it is more than probable that they often encamped at the foot of the Long Sault after the toilsome journey of the day was over.

While the whole of the way to Carillon is crowded with historical interest that centres about the many great names connected with it, and of which I have mentioned only a few, it is the name of Dollard des Ormeaux that crowns with glory the long list of heroes. The story is well known, but it cannot be too often repeated, and I will give an outline of it here.

Towards the autumn of 1659 the affairs of the

colony were in an almost hopeless condition. The Iroquois were becoming ever bolder, and threatened to wipe out the brave Frenchmen who still tried to hold out until help should arrive from France. Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal, then called Ville-Marie, were all in great danger, and but for the bravery and sacrifice of Dollard and his companions, it is probable that all of these places would have fallen into the hands of the savages.

Dollard des Ormeaux was a young nobleman who had come to the colony some years before, and who was already known for his bravery. He saw plainly that if the Iroquois fell upon Ville-Marie the whole colony would probably be exterminated; and during the winter he collected sixteen followers as intrepid as himself to try to forestall the disaster.

A report was brought to Maisonneuve, the Governor of Ville-Marie, that a strong force of Iroquois was coming down the Ottawa from the upper country where they had passed the winter. Dollard and his followers determined to meet them by pushing as far into the wilderness as possible, and to give battle to them there.

On the 19th of April this heroic band stood before the altar in the little fortified post surrounded by untracked forests, and while the priest elevated the host, they swore to conquer

the enemy or to die. Then they took communion, which was really, in this case, to receive the last sacrament.

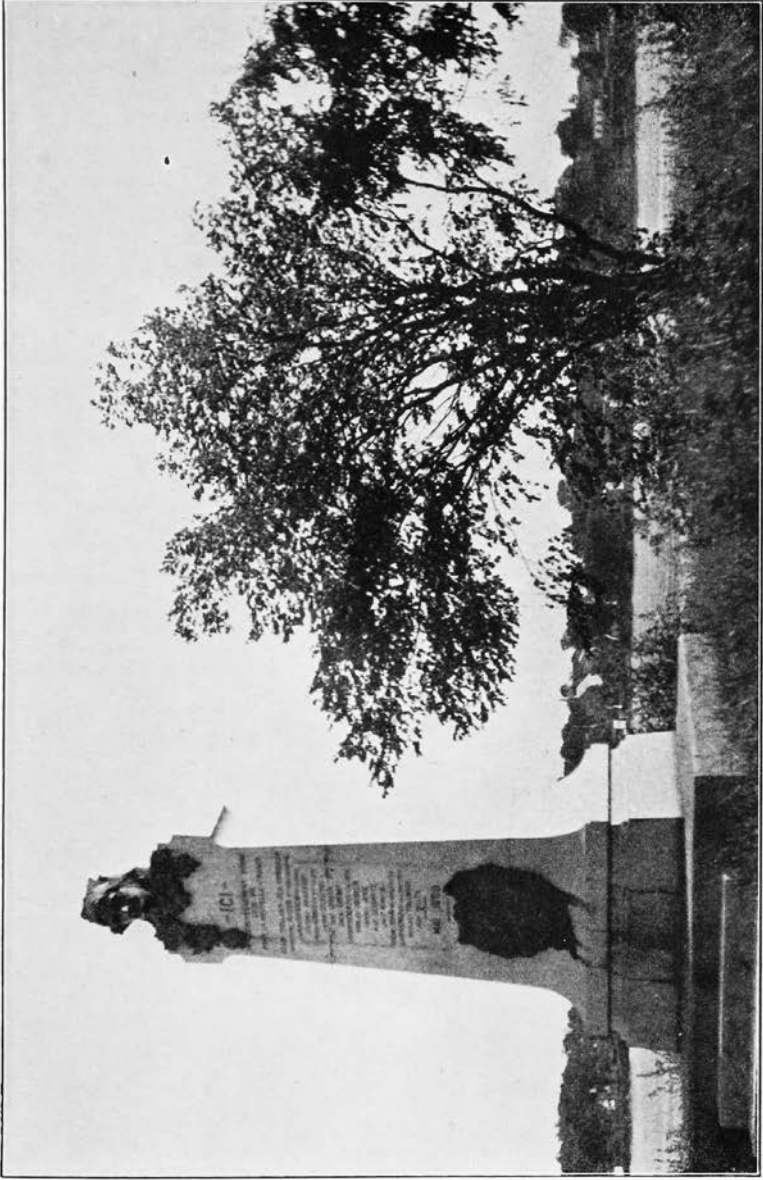
After unheard-of difficulties, battling with floating ice and rapids, the little band arrived at the foot of the Long Sault where the village of Carillon now stands. Forty-four Indian allies had joined them, and they took possession of a ruined stockade which was at the foot of the rapids. The Iroquois were not far away, and their approach seems to have been a surprise to Dollard and his companions, for they left upon shore their cooking utensils and canoes, and shut themselves into the old fort. The Iroquois broke the cooking vessels and burned the canoes. All efforts of the French were directed towards making the old stockade as much of a defense as possible. Seven hundred Iroquois swooped down upon them; and time after time they were driven back, carrying their dead as they went. Then nearly all the Indians deserted the French, leaving only their chief and four converted Hurons. But the handful of brave men held out. The siege continued for eight days with varying fury. The besieged suffered thirst, for only a small supply of water could be obtained except by going to the river in the face of the enemy's fire. Hunger also tormented them, for they had only raw flour to eat; and the attack of the enemy was increasing in violence. The Iro-

quois now advanced under cover of wooden shields, and Dollard, in trying to explode an improvised bomb, fatally wounded some of his own men. Then the enemy burst through the frail walls of the stockade, and a terrible hand-to-hand struggle ensued. It was soon over, for long before nightfall only one of the heroic defenders of the little fort survived. He was tortured until death put an end to his sufferings. The Iroquois withdrew to bury their slain, having lost about two hundred in the struggle; and when evening came down, nothing was heard but the long, low moaning of the rapid as it sang a requiem for the heroic dead.

But the colony was saved. The Iroquois, disheartened at this heroic defense on the part of a handful of French, departed to their own hunting-grounds, and Ville-Marie, Three Rivers, and Quebec were not attacked.

It was with scarcely suppressed emotion that I stood upon the sacred spot where Dollard and his followers met their death. The sun was just disappearing behind the dark wooded hills, and the rapids were still crooning their ancient song. Beside me rose a modest monument bearing the inscription; *Ici ont donné généreusement leur vie pour la Nouvelle France, Mai, 1660*, followed by a list of the heroes' names.

The name Carillon has a peculiar charm, like so many names in French Canada. The his-



DOLLARD'S MONUMENT AT CARILLON

torian tells us that it is only a corruption of Philippe Carrion, to whom the fief was granted in early colonial times. But the poet knows better.

Même quand il a tort, le poète a raison. It has a truer and better meaning—a chime of bells, which will ever echo down the years the deeds of these heroes of ancient chivalry.

CHAPTER VII

VERCHÈRES

IF you wish to make a pleasant historical pilgrimage, follow the route to Verchères. The road to Carillon is, as I have said, a veritable "Way of the Cross," and its history ends in dark tragedy. But the way to Verchères is easy and pleasant and its story has a happy ending.

I well recall a picture published long ago in the *Northern Messenger* which has remained engraved on my memory. It depicted the interior of a rude fortress of logs, with a soldier holding a lighted match near a powder-cask, and another hiding behind a bale of goods. At one side were two boys dressed in the style of the Seventeenth Century, with lace collars and long hair; in the centre stood a commanding figure of a girl, chiding the cowardly soldier who, beside himself with fear of the Iroquois, wished to blow up the fort and thus put an end to their troubles. The girl was saying: "Coward, traitor! Are we not all soldiers of King Louis?"

This picture may have been partly respons-

ible for my pilgrimage to Verchères, for the glamour of the "old heroic days" still clings about this spot, where a brave French girl fought against the Iroquois for more than a week.

The journey to Verchères is delightful. A perfect road leads along the banks of the green St. Lawrence, and well-kept, pleasant farms border the way. Broad fertile acres now lie where primeval forest once existed and through which savages once roamed, and the thatched barns shelter bountiful crops and well-fed cattle.

Leaving Longueuil one gets a splendid view of Montreal clinging to its mountainside, and across the mile or more of water even its monstrous elevators, softened by the haze, are invested with a charm that turns them into great fortified castles.

By crossing the Victoria Bridge some idea of the size and force of the river may be obtained, and as one travels onward, new beauties are unfolded on all sides. A long line of shore, broken here and there by a spire, level stretches of country, and houses of red brick or gray stone first meet the eye. If one is fortunate enough to travel on a clear day, the blue masses of Rougemont, St. Hilaire, and St. Bruno mountains rise in the distance, and lend a never-failing charm to the landscape.

Boucherville is the first town after leaving Longueuil. It lies along the shore in an orderly way, and its neat houses and lawns face the swift-flowing river.

Varenes is, outwardly at least, the twin-sister to Boucherville. The chief visible difference is that the great stone church has two towers instead of one.

But my chief interest was centered in Verchères, for it was here that Madeleine de Verchères, the heroic daughter of the Seigneur, held the Iroquois at bay for a week, with only her two young brothers, a couple of soldiers, who had already proved themselves to be cowards, and an old man for garrison. The Iroquois, impressed by the resistance of the inmates of the fort, retreated, and relief arrived from Quebec. A great, heroic deed such as this should be related in poetry instead of in prose, and I am going to quote the beautiful and stirring ballad on this event by the late Dr. Drummond. This is a poem that cannot be too well known, and one that I believe will live in Canadian literature.

MADELEINE VERCHÈRES*

I've told you many a tale, my child, of the old heroic
days
Of Indian wars and massacres, of villages ablaze

* Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers, New York and London.

With savage torch, from Ville Marie to the Mission
of Trois Rivières
But never have I told you yet, of Madeleine Ver-
chères.

Summer had come with its blossoms, and gaily the
robin sang
And deep in the forest arches the axe of the wood-
man rang,
Again in the waving meadows, the sun-browned
farmers met
And out on the green St. Lawrence, the fisherman
spread his net.

And so through the pleasant season, till the days of
October came
When children wrought with their parents, and even
the old and lame
With tottering frames and footsteps, their feeble
labours lent
At the gathering of the harvest, le bon Dieu himself
had sent.

For news there were none of battle, from the forts
on the Richelieu
To the gates of the ancient city, where the flag of
King Louis flew,
All peaceful the skies hung over the seigneurie of
Verchères,
Like the calm that so often cometh, ere the hurricane
rends the air.

And never a thought of danger had the Seigneur
sailing away,
To join the soldiers of Carignan, where down at Que-
bec they lay,

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But smiled on his little daughter, the maiden Madeleine,
And a necklet of jewels promised her, when home he should come again.

And ever the days passed swiftly, and careless the workmen grew
For the months they seemed a hundred, since the last war-bugle blew.
Ah! little they dreamt on their pillows, the farmers of Verchères,
That the wolves of the southern forest had scented the harvest fair.

Like ravens they quickly gather, like tigers they watch their prey.
Poor people! with hearts so happy, they sang as they toiled away,
Till the murderous eyeballs glistened, and the tomahawk leaped out
And the banks of the green St. Lawrence echoed the savage shout.

'O mother of Christ have pity,' shrieked the women in despair
'This is no time for praying,' cried the young Madeleine Verchères,
'Aux armes! aux armes! les Iroquois! quick to your arms and guns,
Fight for your God and country and the lives of the innocent ones.'

And she sped like a deer of the mountain, when beagles press close behind
And the feet that would follow after, must be swift as the prairie wind.

Alas! for the men and women, and little ones that
day
For the road it was long and weary, and the fort
it was far away.

But the fawn had outstripped the hunters, and the
palisades drew near,
And soon from the inner gateway the war-bugle rang
out clear;
Gallant and clear it sounded, with never a note of
despair,
'Twas a soldier of France's challenge, from the
young Madeleine Verchères.

'And this is my little garrison, my brothers Louis
and Paul?
With soldiers two—and a cripple? may the Virgin
pray for us all.
But we've powder and guns in plenty, and we'll
fight to the latest breath
And if need be for God and country, die a brave
soldier's death.

Load all the carabines quickly, and whenever you
sight the foe
Fire from the upper turret, and the loopholes down
below.
Keep up the fire, brave soldiers, though the fight may
be fierce and long
And they'll think our little garrison is more than a
hundred strong.'

So spake the maiden Madeleine, and she roused the
Norman blood
That seemed for a moment sleeping, and sent it like
a flood

100 **The Spell of French Canada**

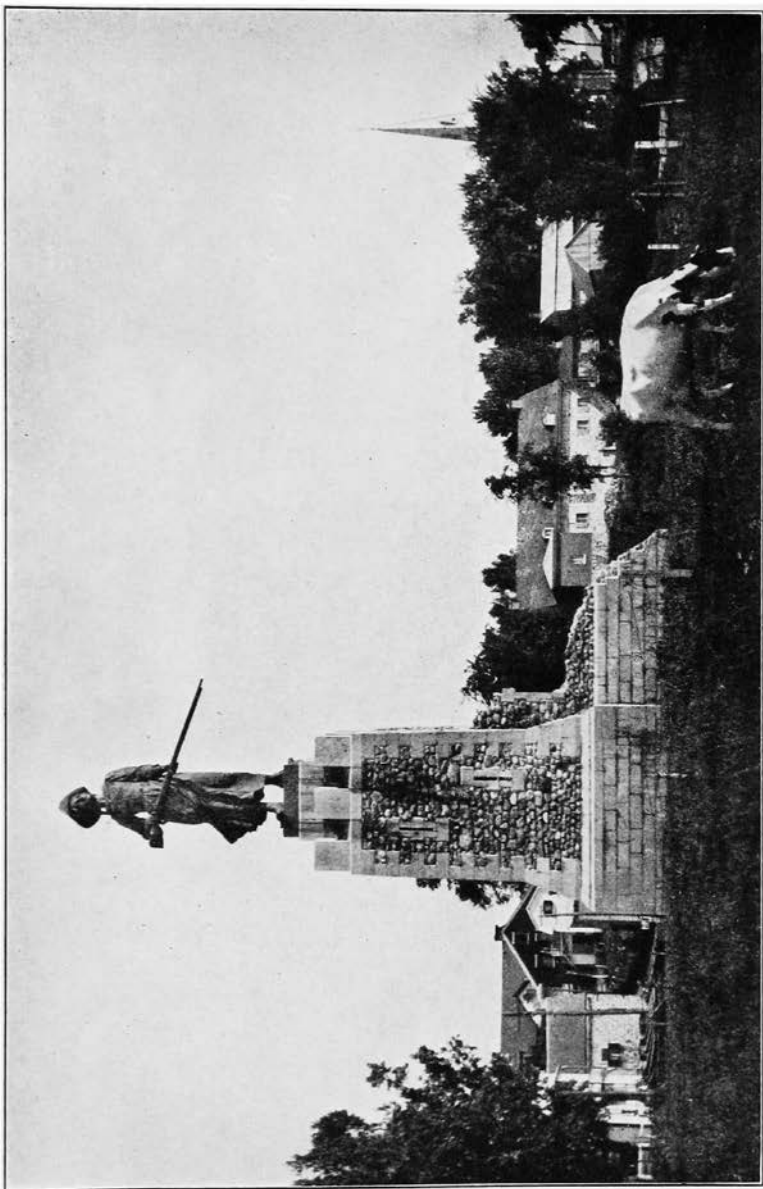
Through every heart around her, and they fought
 the red Iroquois
As fought in the old time battles, the soldiers of
 Carignan.

And they say the black clouds gathered, and a tem-
 pest swept the sky
And the roar of the thunder mingled with the forest
 tiger's cry,
But still the garrison fought on, while the lightning's
 jagged spear
Tore a hole in the night's dark curtain, and showed
 them a foeman near.

And the sun rose up in the morning, and the colour
 of blood was he,
Gazing down from the heavens on the little company.
'Behold! my friends!' cried the maiden, ' 'tis a warn-
 ing lest we forget,
Though the night saw us do our duty, our work is
 not finished yet.'

And six days followed each other, and feeble her
 limbs became
Yet the maid never sought her pillow, and the flash
 of the carabines' flame
Illumined the powder-smoked faces, aye, even when
 hope seemed gone
And she only smiled on her comrades, and told them
 to fight, fight on.

And she blew a blast on the bugle, and lo! from the
 forest black,
Merrily, merrily ringing, an answer came pealing
 back.
Oh! pleasant and sweet it sounded, borne on the
 morning air,



THE STATUE AT VERCHÈRES

For it heralded fifty soldiers, with gallant De la
Monnière.

And when he beheld the maiden, the soldier of
Carignan,
And looked on the little garrison that fought the red
Iroquois
And held their own in the battle, for six long weary
days,
He stood for a moment speechless, and marvelled at
woman's ways.

Then he beckoned the men behind him and steadily
they advance,
And, with carabines uplifted, the veterans of France
Saluted the brave young Captain so timidly stand-
ing there
And they fired a volley in honour of Madeleine Ver-
chères.

And this, my dear, is the story of the maiden Made-
leine.
God grant that we in Canada may never see again
Such cruel wars and massacres, in waking or in
dream,
As our fathers and mothers saw, my child, in the
days of the old regime.

But all is now changed. A splendid statue
of heroic size has been erected on the site of
the old block-house, and nearby stands the
stone tower of an ancient windmill.

As one approaches the village from either
east or west, the statue is wonderfully impres-
sive, standing against the green water or blue

sky. With gun in hand and face alert, Madeleine Verchères gazes up the river in search of the enemy. Never have I seen so much life and movement expressed in a statue of such gigantic size. Every line suggests power and watchfulness. Boys were bathing in the river, and their shouts, mingled with the twittering of the swallows, echoed across the historic ground. Cows grazed nearby, and a short distance up the river, where probably the Iroquois had their encampment, haymakers were busy gathering the heavy crop that this fertile land produces. It seemed to me that the dream of childhood, awakened long ago by a rude picture, had come true, and I was now standing on the ground where romance, chivalry, and heroism had met.

CHAPTER VIII

THROUGH NORTHERN FOREST

THERE are some stock phrases that seem destined to have a long life because it is difficult to find another combination of words to take their places. "The Call of the Wild" is one of these. Whether it comes in the form of a desire to go and hunt big game in Central Africa, or whether it is in the form of a longing to traverse the "Great Open Spaces"—another useful stock phrase—the impulse springs from the same source. But few town-dwellers ever realize either of these aspirations.

This desire to make a journey through the wilderness, in this case a northern portion of the Province of Quebec, and to pass over about one hundred and seventy-five miles of lakes and rivers linked together, had been simmering for sometime in the minds of four Montreal young men. These were Louis, Bob, Hugh and Merrill. The latter has been kind enough to hand over to me his carefully-prepared diary of the journey, and it is from this diary that the following account has been written.

The plan decided upon for this trip was to go on the Canadian National Railway to a point called Menjabagus, near Parent, and setting out from there to follow the lakes and rivers across the counties of Saint Maurice, Maskinongé, Berthier, Joliette, Montcalm, and Labelle, to Mont Laurier on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The following is an account of the journey as given me:

For months we had talked of this trip, which was to be one of hunting, fishing, and exploration, and after listening to a good deal of advice on the subject, and taking little of it, we decided on our course. We were strongly advised to take a guide, but as this would make a party of five—an awkward number for two canoes—we decided to omit the guide as being superfluous. Our adviser expostulated with us on this point, saying that the trip was a dangerous one on account of there being no reliable chart of the falls and rapids of the rivers. It turned out later that our adviser was right.

Our equipment consisted of two sixteen-foot canoes which had been shipped on ahead, one rifle, two shot-guns, fishing tackle, plenty of blankets and supply of provisions for two weeks.

October 3rd had been fixed as the date of

our departure, and by that time all was ready. If we were looking for excitement we were destined to find a certain amount before leaving the city. The baggage had all been piled upon a truck and the four members of the party were proceeding down Sherbrooke Street in a car at a fairly rapid pace, closely followed by the truck.

Suddenly there was a braying of motor horns behind. We suspected that something was wrong, but nevertheless continued our way, perhaps a little more rapidly than before. But this was not to be for long, for a policeman on a motorcycle appeared, and stopped the driver of the truck, who continued to honk piteously a hundred yards behind. We turned about, and if we had wanted to see something wild we had only to look at each other and listen to the remarks of one member of the party which were forceful and somewhat extended. The policeman told us that, while the passenger car was not exceeding the speed limit, the truck was doing so, and that we must all go to the police-station at once. If the red men of the old days, when the Indians of Hochelaga were encamped on the very spot where we stood, could have come back to their old haunts, I think they would have recognized the four wild men as their brothers, in spirit at least. Even the stolid truck-driver became somewhat

infected with the fever. But there was nothing to do but to follow the policeman to the police-station. He proved impervious to argument, and also, strange to relate, incorruptible. So to the station we all went in a slow and mournful procession, led by the guardian of the law on his motorcycle. After a long argument with the authorities there, during which we all acquired a more humble frame of mind, we were allowed to proceed to the railway-station on depositing twenty-five dollars for the benefit of the state.

The delay had nearly caused us to miss our train, but we managed to get aboard, and proceeded several hours without mishap. But near Grand Mère we struck a washout caused by the autumn rains, and were obliged to transfer to another train. This ceremony was performed again at Gouin for a similar reason.

This time we were put into a freight train, and rode in the caboose until eleven o'clock the next morning, when we reached Menjagous. But we were determined to set out at once, for now, after all our difficulties, the real fun was about to begin. But Fate was once more against us. We found on investigation that we had stopped at the wrong station. The arm of the lake that extends to the railway at this point was entirely filled with logs. Our canoes, however, had been sent to the same

station, and after a council of war, we decided to carry our canoes and equipment across to another arm of the lake, over a mile of very rough country. It was a heartbreaking task, for the way was either timber land or muskeg into which we sank up to our knees. However, this task was at last accomplished, and we finally pitched our camp on the shore of Lake Menjabagus, in a beautiful sheltered spot. After a meal such as we had never eaten before, we felt as though our coming was really worth while, and a feeling of peace and benevolence towards all men settled down upon us, a feeling that included even that Montreal traffic cop.

The next morning we were up at six, and as soon after breakfast as possible we started for the upper end of the lake. All went well until we arrived where we found a creek flowing in. This we took to be the river which was to lead us onward to the height of land where the rivers begin to flow towards the southwest. We paddled up it for several miles, until at last further progress became impossible. As it was getting late, and as I had fallen into the water and wanted a chance to get dry, we decided to stay where we were for the night, and retrace our course in the morning. At 4 o'clock, therefore, we started back towards the lake and, as all the rapids could be paddled

through without unloading the canoes, progress was rapid. On reaching the lake we paddled now for more than a mile and found the right inlet. Here we started to fish and caught several fine pike which we carried along for a future feast. This inlet is sandy and shallow, and winds among swamps and bushes. Four long portages are necessary to reach the first of a series of beautiful lakes, teeming with fish and linked together by short streams. These streams now flowed southwest, showing us that the height of land had been passed. Not far from here we found an encampment of fire-rangers. These fire-rangers are placed at different places to prevent fires in the parts of the forest likely to be frequented by hunters or trappers. This encampment consisted of a cabin and several little huts with canvas roofs. The rangers were most friendly and gave us some excellent moose-meat, also much information as to the kind of game to be found along the Lièvre River, at the headwaters of which we had now arrived. We killed several partridges during the day; so that with the fish we had caught and the moose-meat, we were well fortified against hunger.

An October morning at 3:45 is rather cold in these parts, and calculated to chill the enthusiasm of the boldest. But after I had lighted a fire I began to feel more comfortable,



LIÈVRE RIVER

and by the time that the bacon was sizzling and the coffee was steaming I felt as though this were the only kind of life worth living. We made an early start down the Lièvre River, which is both swift and rocky, and after several miles of rapids of varying degrees of swift-ness, and four portages, we reached a beautiful lake just at sunset. The shores were bordered with bushes, and tall dark firs arose in the background and stood reflected in the clear water. The whole lake took on a golden yellow color and then changed to a purple blue. Here was an ideal place to camp for the night. Long Lake was reached early next day, and here we caught the largest and finest trout that I have ever seen. The country from this point now became more rugged and more beautiful than the level lands further north. The course of the river led through great rocky chasms which the stream had won for itself, making exciting raceways for our canoes. To go drifting with the stream, which every minute becomes more rapid, through swirling foaming water, grazing sharp rocks and not knowing what the next second may bring forth, is a form of excitement that has an irresistible charm.

The 9th of October proved to be one of the most interesting days of the whole trip. We arose rather early, for it had been cold enough during the night to form half an inch of ice

on the water bucket. It was a crisp autumn day with a distinct suggestion of frost in the air, which acts as a sort of tonic, making even the laziest mortal want to do something exciting and strenuous. The excitement came to us just after we had stopped to prepare lunch beside the river. A big bull moose was sighted about two hundred yards from where we had stopped, wallowing through the shallow water at the river's edge. A discussion was started as to whether we should attempt to shoot the animal or not, but I had not come all this distance merely to look at a moose, and with a lucky shot from my rifle, I brought the animal down near the bank. He was a beauty, with very broad heavy antlers, and a feeling of regret seized me at having shot such a splendid creature. I consoled myself, however, by recalling the fact that we really needed fresh meat; besides, the antlers were enough to tempt any huntsman. Beavers were plentiful here, but as they are much hunted by the Indians, it is difficult to get near them. A sharp slapping on the surface of the water was often heard, warning the colony of our approach, and by the time we reached the place from which the sound came, the animals had invariably disappeared.

They seemed to have their huts in the swampy places a little back from the river, and the



" A BIG BULL MOOSE WAS SIGHTED "

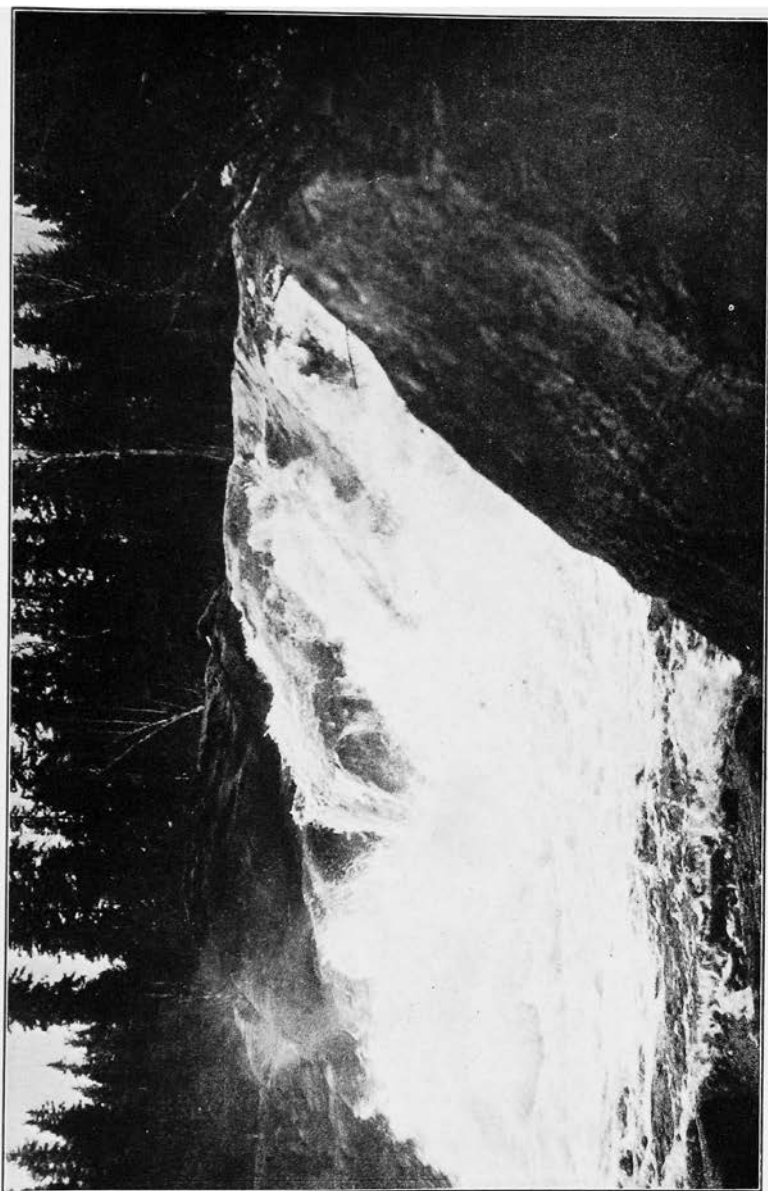
slides that they had fashioned for themselves as they came down the banks were numerous.

Lake Mitchinamekus is the largest lake along this route and also the most beautiful. The brilliant crimson of the maples and the yellow of the birches, mingled with the dark green of the firs and pines, made a gorgeous picture, particularly as the lake everywhere was like a mirror and reflected the forest on its shores as well as the rugged hills beyond. We stopped for a short time at a ranger's cabin on an island in the lake. There was no one at home, but a box was fastened to the logs with the notice: "Post your letters here." The lower part of the cabin was locked, as is generally the case, but the loft is always left open for the use of a chance traveller or trapper.

We entered the loft through a small window by means of the ladder provided, and found inside a hand sewing-machine, an Indian Bible, matches, and a bag containing some woollen yarn. These were things evidently left by some Indian trappers who would return for them later. At the lower end of the lake numerous tracks of bear and deer were seen, and several fine partridges were shot for our larder. The most difficult portage of the whole trip was at the end of Lake Mitchinamekus. It was more than two miles in length and all

over rough ground. Two trips had to be made.

If shooting a moose causes one to become excited, there are as many thrills in the shooting of rapids, especially if they are as swift and long as the ones we now approached proved to be. For seven miles there was scarcely a smooth stretch of water, and the towering cliffs at the side and the jagged rocks that every now and then thrust their noses above the foaming water kept us constantly on the alert. More than once we were obliged to land on a bar of gravel and empty the water from the canoes, and as we ourselves were wet through, I do not like to think of our plight if the weather had been cold. But the brilliant autumn sunshine seemed to have come to stay, and although we were never dry we were not uncomfortable. So down rapid after rapid we went in swift succession, with now and then a landing to empty the canoes or to "trace" over a particularly dangerous bit. We had been warned that a fall of over thirty feet called Conner's Chute lay between us and our destination, but we were rather hazy as to where it was situated. But Bob was on the lookout, and he now insisted that the water was becoming too swift to pass over in safety. In fact it was racing like mad between rocky fir-clad banks, although the surface was ominously smooth. We decided that probably Bob was



CONNER'S CHUTE

right, and began to pull towards shore. But the current was too strong for us, and a distant rumble warned us that the fall was only a short distance ahead.

By great good luck I managed, as we shot downward, to catch hold of the branches of a tree stranded on a rock above the falls. Bob then caught it, and we held back our canoe. Then, by exerting all our strength, we edged in towards a place of safety on a sand bar near the shore just above the falls.

During the evening we were visited by an Indian trapper who could speak no language but his own weird tongue. We had met a younger trapper further up the river, travelling to his hunting ground with his squaw and papoose. But the most interesting of the Indian trappers that we came across was an old man whom we met in the lower reaches of the river. He was very old; he told us in broken French that he was over eighty and that he was going north to the Red Pine Route to trap for the winter. He carried all his worldly goods with him in a twelve-foot birch-bark canoe which he told us he had made for himself many years ago. I took his photo, and as I pointed the camera, the old man held us his hands and begged us not to shoot him. We wished him bon voyage and left him paddling solemnly northward on his lonely journey.

After Conner's Chute the river was again calm and the paddling easy. Birch Rapids were reached; then after another day's journey we came to Cedar Rapids, which marked our return to civilization. At least it seemed civilization to us, for there is a clearing here with a small cabin and cultivated ground. Further on there is a "village" called St. Michel-Des-Rapides, rather a large name for a small place. The so-called village consists of a store, three houses, and a church. The curé was working in his garden, from which he was called to perform the baptism of an infant which had been brought in from a neighbouring settlement. We asked the habitant woman who kept the store for cigarettes; she laughed and offered us some *tabac canadien* in the leaf. We then asked for bread, and again she laughed and offered us a sack of flour. We tried for bacon; she had never heard of bacon as such, but she said she could give us some good salt pork.

We now procured a hay-rack and had our canoes and baggage conveyed for six miles around a rough and shallow portion of the river. We were landed at a small house where we were told that we could obtain lodging for the night. When we reached the house, however, we found that ten lumber-jacks had already installed themselves in the kitchen, intending to spend the night there. We decided

that we preferred to spend the night in the barn, there being more ventilation there.

The old habitant who owned the place told us that he had lived there for five years, and that he had cleared other farms further south, which he had sold. He intended to sell this one, he said, as soon as it was cleared and to push further into the wilderness. His wife seemed quite undisturbed by the number of her guests and went briskly to work to supply their wants in her own primitive way.

After spending the night in the barn in company with nine cows and a horse, we started on the last stretch of our journey. About three hours of paddling brought us to Mont Laurier, just half an hour after the only train for the day had left. The village offered us ample shelter for the night, and the next day we were speeding towards Montreal. We reached the city without further adventures. On the way down we began to discuss plans for another trip, north of the Saguenay and Lake St. Jean; up the Mistassini River to Lake Mistassini, a lake in the far north of the province, mostly unexplored and considerably greater in extent than Lake Champlain. Such a journey certainly has its possibilities. Hugh even suggested that we should follow the Rupert River down to Hudson Bay—but I hardly think we shall do so.

CHAPTER IX

MEDIAEVAL VISTAS

WHEN one goes to any city for the first time, there is generally some outstanding characteristic that impresses itself upon the mind. This is particularly the case in youth. I well remember when, as a boy, I first visited Quebec; the impression that I received as I saw the town on its cliffs overhanging the river, was that of a mediaeval city—a page torn from some storybook of the Crusades or the Legends of King Arthur. Nor has time lessened this impression. Quebec is still a fragment of the Old World set within the new, more mediaeval and more picturesque than many of the time-mellowed cities of France.

From whatsoever way one may approach the town, that old-world aspect is evident. Along the Montreal Road, as one mounts towards the high tableland on which the main part of the city stands, beautiful views may be had of farmland, village, mountain, and wooded valley, that call to mind some ancient barony of France or Germany.

But it is when one sails up or down the river and first sees the city looming through an overhanging veil of mists, that its mediaeval and fantastic appearance makes the deepest impression. In fact, if one allows the imagination to stray a little, one is carried back to the fairy dream-cities of childhood. For here we have the complete setting for a fairy play, or a romantic story of the Middle Ages.

The almost perpendicular cliffs, crowned by a gloomy gray citadel and massive walls, tower above the water. Here is the Giant's Castle. Then at a little distance rises a great palace with many towers and turrets where the King might live; and all along the steep hillside are prison-like places with stone walls and iron gates, and smaller palaces where the knights and their attendant squires probably dwell. Yes, a firm hold must be kept on the imagination if one is to believe that this is a real city filled with striving humanity. But the fairy city of the ancient romance is very beautiful, nevertheless.

To touch upon the history of Quebec is a difficult matter, the bulk of material being so great. Many volumes have been written on the subject, and much yet remains to be done. Therefore I shall be content with giving here only a few facts, and to touch upon these only lightly.

Jacques Cartier was the first of those intrepid explorers from Europe who beheld the heights of Cape Diamond, where part of Quebec now stands. In 1535 he sailed up the river and visited the Indian village which stood where the Ste. Croix River enters the St. Lawrence. Seventy-three years later Champlain, that brave explorer and dreamer of a great French empire, landed a small company of Frenchmen on the site of the present lower town, established there his famous "habitation," and thus became the founder of the city.

It is perhaps not too much to say that the small portion of country covered by the present-day city has been the stage whereon a large part of the historical dramas of Canada have been played. And upon it have walked such personages as Champlain, Frontenac, Montcalm, Wolfe, and Bishop Laval, to mention only a few of the greatest names from the long roll.

Domes and spires rising in all directions tell of the devotion of the people to the old faith; tall gray convents, colleges, and seminaries house many priests and nuns, who carry on a silent but powerful work; great ocean liners go up and down the river, bringing the commerce of the east and west together; and far away to northward and eastward stretch the tumbled masses of the Laurentians, the most ancient hills in the world, compared with the

antiquity of which the earliest event in the history of Quebec would become as the happening of the second that has just passed. One cannot but feel the unimportance of the present hour when face to face with such aeons as these hills represent, and there is something in their worn and scarred appearance that excites veneration. Canon Scott has beautifully expressed this feeling in his sonnet "The Laurentians."

These mountains reign alone, they do not share
The transitory life of woods and streams;
Wrapt in the deep solemnity of dreams,
They drain the sunshine of the upper air.
Beneath their peaks, the huge clouds, here and there,
Take counsel of the wind, which all night screams
Through gray, burnt forests where the moon-
light beams
On hidden lakes, and rocks worn smooth and bare,
These mountains once, throned in some primal sea,
Shook half the world with thunder, and the sun
Pierced not the gloom that clung about their
crest;
Now with sealed lips, toilers from toil set free,
Unvexed by fate, the part they played being done,
They watch and wait in venerable rest.

But if the narrow streets winding up and down the steep hills and the ancient gray buildings over which towers a gigantic fairy castle impress one with their mediaeval aspect, the ecclesiastics that one meets everywhere

heighten that impression. Gray-clad Sisters of Charity, black-robed priests and nuns, brown-frocked monks and sandalled friars are to be seen going silently and swiftly about the business in hand; and here and there one may see the higher dignitaries of the Church, or even the Lord Cardinal himself on a day of some special religious festival; while processions of lads from the seminaries and girls from the convents, under the command of nuns and friars, enhance the impression of mediaevalism. And floating above all, there are the constant voices of the bells from the many church towers and convent belfries, mingled with the chanting of choirs within the sacred buildings. But despite of all this, or perhaps because of it, Quebec can boast a great university, colleges, hospitals, and schools, and an important commerce as well; and while reluctant to part with the past, it stretches out eager hands to the future.

As certain aspects of a place lay hold of the mind, so also in a city so rich in historical lore there are certain places and objects that appeal to the imagination more strongly than others of equal importance. For me, at least, these objects are not the many imposing monuments to commemorate historical events, nor the sacred spots where the heroes of two nations have shed their blood; but they are the frowning

citadel standing at the very summit of the rocks, and the little church of Notre Dame des Victoires, with the deserted old square in front. Perhaps the chief reason for the appeal that these two places possess is that the Church and Square recall the old régime more than any other spot in Quebec, and that the Citadel stands as an impressive symbol of the might and power of the Empire whose flag floats over it.

It is an unpretentious little church of time-worn stone that rises beside a square through which few people now pass—a kind of back-water from the busy thoroughfares beside the river. Its arched windows are close to the narrow streets; its slender spire rises scarcely as high as the near-by commercial buildings; and two small windows, dull with age and the surrounding shadows, look beyond the little green plot at the distant warehouses, like the dim eyes of an old man gazing at something he cannot understand.

On the site of the church, or very near it, Champlain built his “habitation;” and it was probably from here that Madame de Champlain looked towards the forest-fringed waters in front or the bare rocks behind, and sighed for “la belle France.”

After Champlain’s time, this little plot of ground continued to be the centre of the Col-

ony's activity, and this spot may be said to be the very cradle of New France. Over the door of the church is the inscription "1688," the date of the laying of the foundation stone. This was in the reign of Louis Quatorze and when François de Laval was presiding over the diocese of New France. The Church was first dedicated to the Child Jesus; but on the defeat of Admiral Phipps, in 1690, the name was changed to Notre Dame de la Victoire. It is said that the whole population had implored the help of the Virgin when the Colony was threatened by the English, and when Phipps departed without bombarding the place, the Church was dedicated as a thank-offering to Our Lady of the Victory.

Twenty years later the same danger threatened Quebec. Admiral Walker, with a fleet of English vessels, was sailing up the St. Lawrence. Again the colonists sought the protection of the Virgin. A terrible storm came down upon the Gulf, and the English ships were wrecked before they could reach Quebec. The name of the Church was again changed to commemorate this event, becoming Notre Dame des Victoires. In 1759 the building suffered great damage from the bombardment of the British. After the fall of New France and the coming of peace, the Church was again restored as it now stands.



INTERIOR OF NOTRE DAME DES VICTOIRES, QUEBEC

Early one June morning not long ago, I walked through the ancient square. The turmoil of the neighboring market and the clang of the street cars were only faintly audible as I swung back the heavy door of the venerable building. A few worshippers were kneeling in different parts of the Church. Their eyes remained fixed upon the Virgin and Child which stand above the altar between two quaint paintings, representing the Guardian Angel of New France, and the Wreck of Walker's Ships.

The interior decorations are in the Renaissance style, and although they must once have been rather garish, time has caused the gaudy colors to blend into an artistic harmony. The only sounds to be heard were the murmured prayers of the worshippers, and the slow ticking of a clock interrupted by the occasional rattle of a chaplet. Except for the Renaissance decorations, one might have been in some old church in Normandy or Brittany, the home of the ancestors of those praying before the statue of the Virgin.

If the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires and its old square symbolize something of the spirit of New France, the citadel of the old fortifications that crown the heights typifies Great Britain. It is solid and apparently unchanging in spite of the years, and now that the fight for Canada is over, it is benign as

well. Although it may be obsolete in modern warfare, it remains the symbol of calm but conscious strength. And between the proud citadel on the height and the venerable church on the shore, two races different in blood, temperament, and religion, work out their destiny side by side under the protection of the Union Jack.

Whenever I visit Quebec, I always climb the stairway to the King's Bastion. The last time that I did this it was on a June evening. The city below the cliff lay in shadow, but the sun reddened the spires of the churches, the masts of the ships in the harbour, and the town on the opposite shore, until they burned with a crimson glow. Beside me were obsolete cannon of various kinds; not far away stood a German gun, captured in the Great War, and near it a small gun taken by the British from the Americans at Bunker Hill.

But whether one visits the Bastion in the evening or the morning or at noonday, one cannot escape the voice of History echoing from the very stones that form its walls. This thought has been beautifully expressed by Canon Scott:

Fierce on this Bastion beats the noonday sun,
The city sleeps beneath me old and gray,
On convent roofs the quivering sunbeams play,
And batteries guarded by dismantled gun.



IN A CONVENT GARDEN AT SAINTE ANNE DE BEAUPRÉ

No breeze comes from the northern hills, which run
 Circling the blue mist of the summer's day;
 No ripple stirs the great stream on its way
To those dim headlands where its rest is won.

Ah God! what thunders shook these crags of yore!
 What smoke of battle rolled about this place!
 What strife of worlds in pregnant agony!
Now all is hushed, yet here in dreams once more
 We catch the echoes, ringing back from space,
 Of God's strokes, forging human history.

The shortest description of Quebec must include a reference to the shrine of Ste. Anne de Beaupré, which is almost as widely known as the city itself. Lying about twenty miles below Quebec on the St. Lawrence shore, with Mount Sainte Anne forming the background, the village would attract by the beauty of its situation, even if it did not possess the Shrine of "La Bonne Sainte Anne," now famous in all parts of the continent.

Tradition tells us that some sailors from Brittany vowed during a terrible storm that, if they reached the shore in safety, they would erect a shrine to Sainte Anne, their patron saint. The storm ceased, and where they landed the first Chapel was erected. As early as 1660, miracles were reported to have been wrought here; and when in 1661 a larger Church was built, and some years later a relic of the Saint was brought here by Bishop Laval,

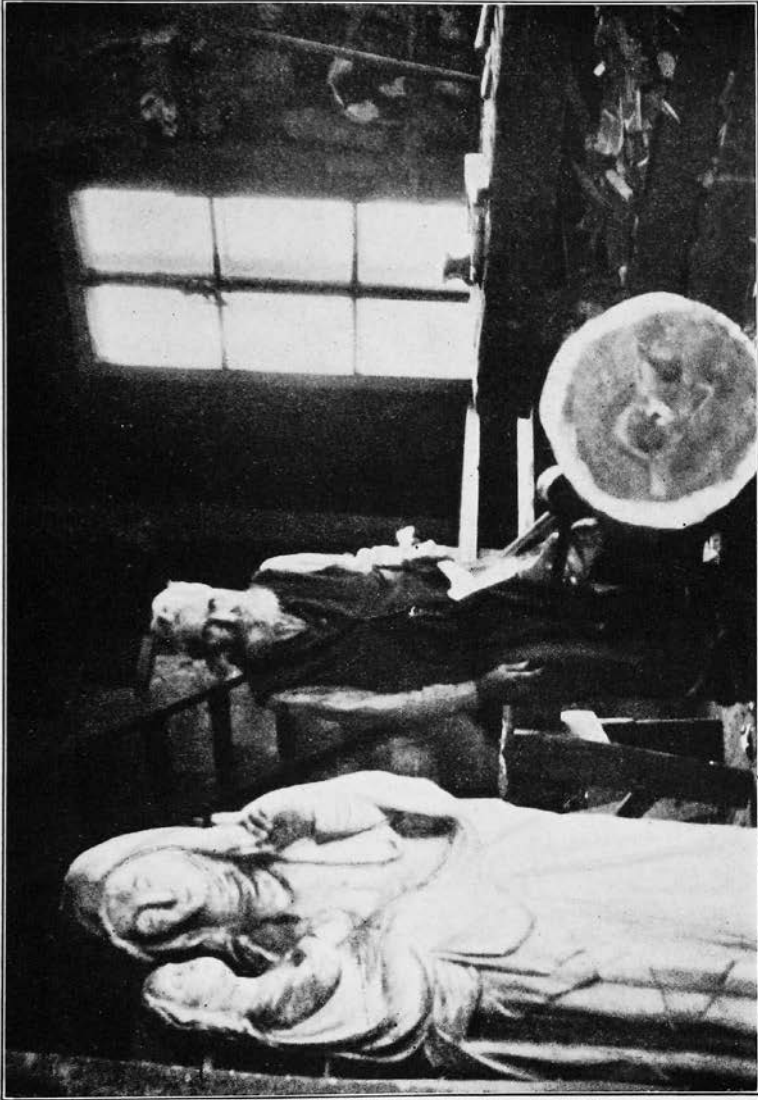
the fame of the shrine spread far and wide. This relic—a finger-bone of the Saint—was presented by the Bishop of Carcassonne and was first exposed for the veneration of the faithful in 1670. Three other relics have been added, the last in 1891, when the Bishop of Carcassonne presented to Cardinal Taschereau another precious relic of Sainte Anne.

The proud Basilica with its twin towers, burned in 1922, was the fourth church to be built on the site. A fifth and larger one is now in process of erection.

The shrine of Sainte Anne de Beaupré holds an interest for the psychologist, the devotee of religion, and for the mere lover of the impressive and the spectacular.

I fear it was as the latter that I visited the shrine; but I soon became impressed with more than the outward appearance of things. The relics, sanctified by the veneration of thousands, statues, vestments, and sacred vessels given by those who bore illustrious names in Old France, and particularly the atmosphere of devotion that pervades the place, cannot fail to impress deeply the most matter-of-fact visitor.

Statues of Sainte Anne and the Infant Virgin are numerous, and some of them are of artistic beauty, but the most attractive one that I saw was a simple statue where both figures



THE WOOD-CARVER OF SAINTE ANNE DE BEAUPRÉ

were clothed in blue robes and stood in the midst of a little garden of Madonna lilies.

But the most interesting part of my visit came just as I was leaving the village. I was passing down the main street by the river when I caught sight of a little work-shop, some distance from the street, with tall French windows looking out upon the water. I turned down the narrow path and stopped before the door. Near a window stood the "Wood-carver of Sainte Anne de Beaupré," working busily at a large block of white wood. Around the shop were several completed carvings; a tall unfinished statue of Sainte Anne and the Child stood near the door, and a large figure of Christ on the Cross was leaning against the wall.

The old man paused in his work to talk to me, telling me that he had carved religious statues all his life. He was then just beginning a statue of Christ to be carried in processions. It was to be covered with gilding when finished, but was now only roughly hewn with the axe. The old wood-carver talked in a low and far-away voice, and his mild eyes kept turning to the block of wood at his feet. I could see that he was eager to go on with his work, although he readily consented to pose for a photograph. I offered to compensate him for his loss of time, but he shook his head with

quiet dignity. He bowed politely, took up his axe with which he had been working, and as I went up the path to the street, I could hear the echoes of his regular blows, as he hewed the block from which was to come forth the statue of Christ.

CHAPTER X

UNIQUE QUEBEC

IN the preceding chapter I have said that it is a difficult matter to sketch the history of Quebec. It is also difficult to describe the sites of greatest historical interest, the reason being that so much history is confined in so small a space that the importance attached to one place is apt to overshadow that of another. The well-known historian, Colonel William Wood, has for years made a study of the history of the city of which he is a citizen. I am, therefore, most fortunate in having enlisted his aid in the writing of this chapter and to have received his permission to compose it entirely of quotations from his interesting brochure "Unique Quebec." I feel that I am thus resting upon a sure foundation of historical scholarship and personal knowledge, for Colonel Wood is the recognized authority on the history of Quebec, as well as on Canadian and American history in general.

CHURCH

(1). The celebrated Quebec Act of 1774 created a situation which is still apparently

unique in the whole world's history of church and state. Everybody knows what established churches are, and disestablished churches, and non-established churches too. We also know that an inevitable result of church establishment is some kind of directly responsible contact with the civil power. Every established church that ever has existed, or that exists to-day, has had, in one way or another, to reckon with the worldly powers of the state—either with an autocrat, or with an oligarchy, with a parliament, or perhaps with revolution. But here, in this Province of Quebec, is apparently the only church in history, which, though not established, is specifically recognized, and in such a way as practically to give it nearly all the rights and privileges of an established church, but—and here's the unique effect—none of the direct responsibilities. There are, of course, indirect responsibilities and many points of contact with the civil power. But, for a century and a half (1774–1924) there have been no real church-and-state debates in any parliament: none in the Provincial Houses, none in those of the Dominion, none even in those Imperial Houses from which this Act originally came.

There is some need of definition here, lest there should be misunderstandings. The Roman Catholic Church is one throughout the world. There are other than French-Canadian Roman

Catholics in Quebec. And other forms of religion in Quebec enjoy similar tax-exemptions on property used in similar ways. Moreover, the whole question is so complex, when all its varied implications are involved, that these few sentences may seem absurd to those who know how many books might well be filled with facts and explanations. But, since the peculiar historical interest of the Quebec Act, coupled with its present-day effects, is only to be found, from first to last, among the French-Canadians, I am obliged to isolate them here, from the other children of their Church, in order to point the moral of my tale—which tale and moral are greatly to the honour of their Church.

For consider what the privileged position of this Church has been within this Province during the last three hundred years. Three hundred years ago exactly the Jesuits in France first heard the call sent to them by the Récollets in Canada. How well that call was answered is known to everyone. Presently Richelieu made up his unifying mind—more for the safety of the state than of the church—that New France should be free from all weakening differences among her own population. So he decreed that only good Catholics should be allowed to trade or settle there. Thenceforth French Canada was Roman Catholic, almost to a man. Then, two hundred and fifty years

ago exactly, New France also became what French-Canadians are to-day—extremely Ultramontane. Even the rising glories of le Roi Soleil and all the Gallican tendencies of France herself could not prevail to have the first Bishop of Quebec placed under the Archbishopric of Rouen. The question had, indeed, been settled in 1659, when Laval had arrived at Quebec as *Vicaire Apostolique* and Bishop of Petrona *in partibus infidelium*. This arrival meant that the Sulpician Abbé Queylus (who had been the Archbishop's Canadian Vicar-General for the last two years) was soon and completely superseded by Laval. Laval and the Ultramontane Jesuits looked straight to Rome; and there they found the jurisdiction they desired—straight from the Pope himself. Finally, one hundred and fifty years ago exactly, the Quebec Act made the Church of Rome unique within the Province by confirming its civil rights, without, however, subjecting it to the direct accountabilities which all established churches have always had to face elsewhere.

I repeat that this great question cannot be compressed within a few short paragraphs; and I again warn my readers that my own formula—“rights without responsibilities”—is wholly misleading without much fuller explanation than can be given here. But, because the French-Canadian part of the Church in the

Province of Quebec was recognized without being established, and because it received the confirmation of its civil rights without being *pro tanto* subjected to the usual parliamentary questions and debates, it has, for a hundred and fifty British years, enjoyed what, with all proper qualifying explanations, may, in a governmental sense, be almost called "rights without responsibilities". This unique position would have been the sure undoing of most political institutions, and of many ecclesiastical institutions too. Therefore these two mere facts, first, that this privileged church should have satisfied most legitimate demands for three whole centuries—half British and half French—and, secondly, satisfied these demands so well that no repealing Act has even been debated—these two mere facts are proof that this uniquely privileged Church has used, but not abused, its quite peculiar powers.

(2). Visitors to the City and Province of Quebec cannot fail to notice that many public services of a more or less eleemosynary origin are still entirely carried on by the Roman Catholic Church, in contradistinction to the purely lay management usually found elsewhere. Indeed, with regard to sum totals, the City and Province might well be called unique in the vast number of schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages, asylums, and other institutions

which are ecclesiastically managed. The modern differentiation which confines most "religious," *qua* "religious," to purely religious functions does not yet obtain here. French-Canadian Quebec, however much developed in some ways and modified in others, is still true to her own Church type in this respect. And here it is only fair to add that many P.Q. tax-exemptions in favour of the R.C. French-Canadian Church are in reality no more, and generally less, than what the state would have to pay for such public services in any other case.

(3). Quebec Church archives may claim to be unique, more especially if the *Jesuit Relations* are included, as they may well be; for there are several early years of which hardly any other archives exist. Quebec, we must remember, was for more than a century the only R. C. bishopric in either French- or English-speaking America; so everything that required episcopal action had to be referred to Quebec till 1786, when John Carroll became Vicar-General of Baltimore. If, for instance, a researcher wished to find the original evidence for some parochial affair at New Orleans in 1783, the year that George III acknowledged Independence, then this evidence could only be found at the Archbishop's Palace at Quebec, if it had ever involved episcopal action. Still more remarkable is the fact that the episcopal

archives of all the American Western Posts held by the British till Jay's Treaty had been put into operation by both sides are still to be found in the same Palace, whither they originally went till 1796, or twenty years after Independence had been signed. Detroit, for instance, though French, British, and American, all within the eighteenth century, reported its parochial matters to Quebec for ninety-six of these first hundred years. Of course New Orleans was Spanish from 1762 to 1800, and Detroit was in occupied territory from 1783 to 1796. But these two facts, especially the first, rather increase the interest of the Quebec location of their archives.

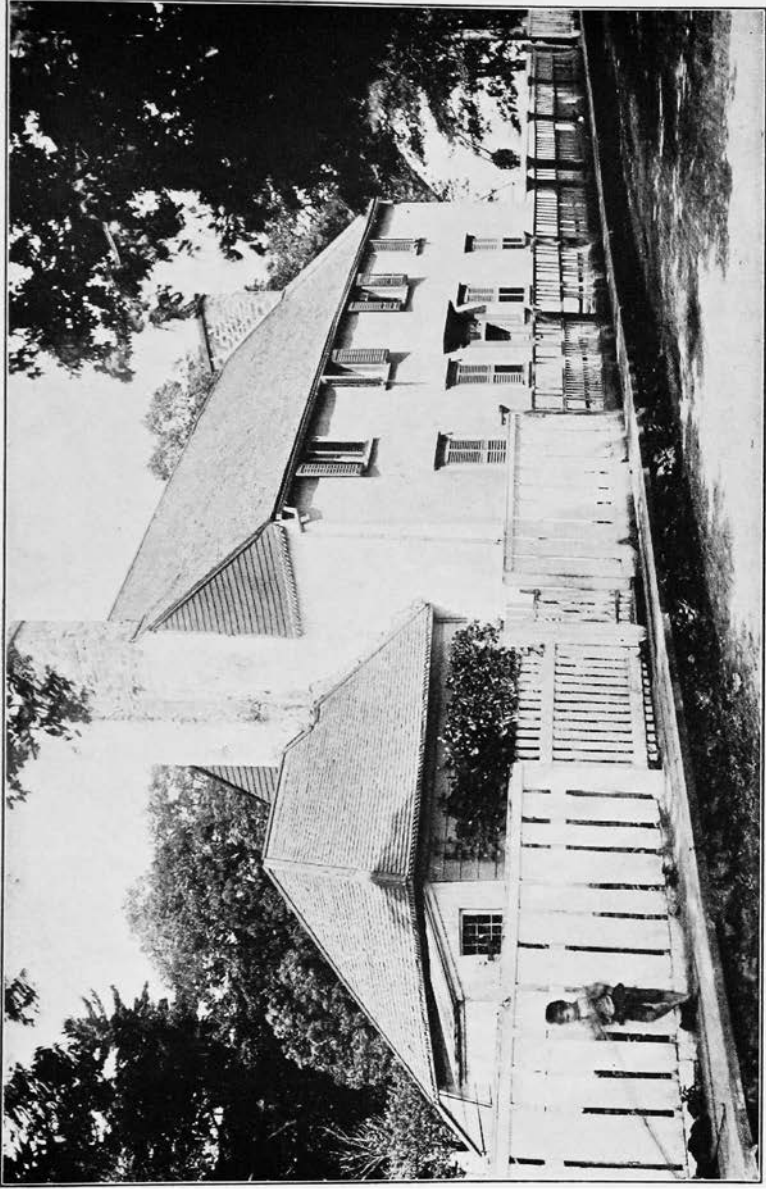
(4). Three years later, in 1799, we find Mgr. Plessis, the French-Canadian Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec, preaching a sermon and issuing a *mandement* of thanksgiving for Nelson's victory over the French fleet at the Nile. This prelate gratefully acknowledged what the Canadian part of his Church owed to the just laws and the protecting arms of Britain against what he regarded as an apostate and regicide France. Bishop Plessis, whose sermon is still worth reading, was among the foremost Canadian patriots in the War of 1812, knowing, as he did, that the peculiar position of his Church could never be maintained outside the British Empire.

(5). The first nuns, first female teachers, and

first nurses who ever came to Canada were the three Ursulines and three Hospitalières who arrived at Quebec in 1639. The Quebec Ursulines and Quebec Hospitalières are also the only nuns in the whole New World who have been through four sieges and have nursed the sick and wounded of all the warring peoples that have contended for the possession of Quebec (which of course meant Canada as well)—Indians, French, British, and Americans.

(6). Quebec has suffered from many disastrous fires. But the *Hôpital-Général* has always escaped; and here you still may see a perfectly intact specimen of seventeenth-century French-Canadian architecture, in that part of the building which includes the belfry. From this date, 1671, down to the present day the structural history of Quebec may be followed up in stone. This senior of all Canadian hospitals does not, however, possess the oldest of all Canadian buildings still intact; for the Jesuit Mission House at Sillery, a few miles above the city, dates from 1637.

(7). The Ursulines are the only nuns in Canada whose building was actually turned into a fort. This was in 1660, when the Iroquois seemed determined to make a bloody end of all New France. Eighty men and twelve trained war-dogs garrisoned the convent, where every able-bodied nun was also told off to active duty.



JESUIT MISSION HOUSE, SILLERY

The Superior, the celebrated Mère Marie de l'Incarnation, took the most dangerous of all—the supply of ammunition to the men in action. The Ursulines, again, are the only community in New France which ever had a daughter of the New England Puritans as their Superior. Esther Wheelwright, great-granddaughter of the Reverend John Wheelwright, was taken by Indians at Wells in 1703, ransomed in 1708 by Vaudreuil (père) Governor-General, and elected Superior in 1761. The Ursuline Chapel has by far the oldest votive lamp in Canada, the one first lit in 1717 by Marie Madeleine de Repentigny in memory of her dead affianced lover. In the present century the maternal members of her family in France have placed a new, and beautifully jewelled, lamp in this Chapel, and, having lighted it from the old lamp, have thereby endowed the Ursulines with another unique souvenir; for nowhere else in the whole New World are two votive lamps burning together in the same romantic way. But even these lamps are eclipsed by another double souvenir; for this one is unique both in the Old World and the New. No other place of worship in the world contains such personal souvenirs of the opposing commanders in a world-famous battle. In the Ursuline Chapel you may see on one side the tomb of Montcalm, while facing it is the pulpit from which the

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Chaplain of the British flagship *Neptune* preached the "mourning" sermon in memory of Wolfe.

(8). Quebec naturally has the oldest street in Canada, the little rue de Notre-Dame in Lower-Town, leading to where the first of all parish churches stood in 1615.

(9). The see of Quebec is incomparably senior to all others. Founded in 1674 it is 115 years older than the first R.C. bishopric in the United States (Carroll, at Baltimore, in 1789). It is also 119 years older than the Anglican see of Quebec (1793) which itself is very little junior to the first in Canada (Nova Scotia, 1787) and to the first Protestant Episcopal in the U. S. (Connecticut, 1784).

(10). The Quebec Basilica is by far the oldest Cathedral in French- or English-speaking America; and it possesses vestments and vessels which, as royal gifts from Louis XIV, are quite unmatched in Canada (and, of course, the United States). More than a century later (1800-1804) George III gave a complete set of communion plate to the Anglican Cathedral, which also has the only Royal Pew throughout the whole New World.

(11). Quebec has what is probably the only school in the world that has ever been founded in the middle of an earthquake season—le Séminaire Laval (1663).

(12). Finally, Quebec is next door to the great transatlantic Lourdes, where, before the shrine of la Bonne Sainte-Anne, pilgrims gather from all north-eastern North America in such numbers that, if the whole of London were to visit an English shrine, this concourse would not outnumber, in proportion, the Provincial French-Canadian pilgrims at Ste. Anne.

STATE

Here I shall be very brief, because everybody who is anybody knows the main political history of Quebec when she was the capital of Canada. But few points seem worth emphasizing, however well they may be known to the elect.

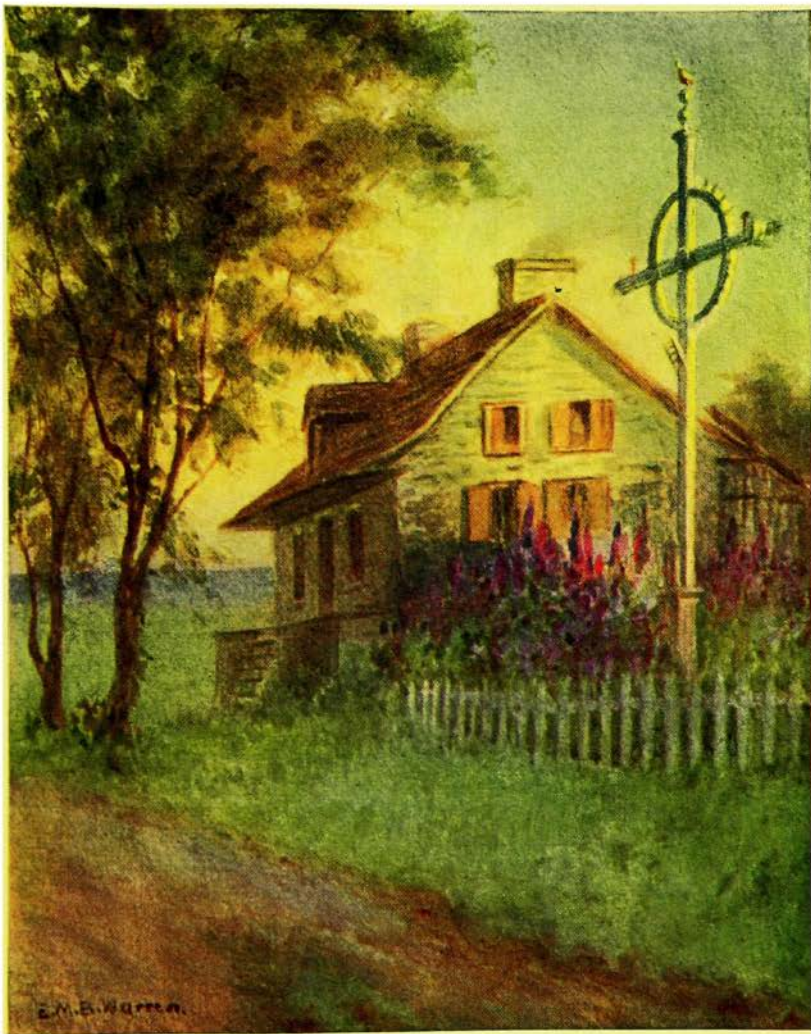
(1). The real French constitution of Canada dates, not from the time of Champlain, but from that of Roberval, whose commission was granted by Francis I on the 15th of January 1540. By this commission the whole political system of France was applied to Canada through the powers conferred on the King's "Lieutenant-Général," who thus became a very "potent, grave, and reverend seignior" indeed. His wretched colony, partly stocked with jail-birds, failed miserably enough; and one whole century and a quarter more elapsed before the arrival of the Marquis de Tracy made the foundations of New France at all secure. But

the constitution of 1540 persisted still—feudal tenure, rights, and very searching duties, all included. There were revocations; but none that affected rights which had not been abused. Grants were simply reissued to previous good holders, as to Louis Hébert, who received the seigniority of Sault-au-Matelot in 1623. With the usual modifications of all constitutions this original one persisted through the time of the chartered company of One Hundred Associates, through that of the Royal Province of New France, on to the cession of 1763, through the Quebec Act of 1774, and even through the commutations and other changes effected in seigniorial tenure eighty years later—down, in short, to the present day; for seigniorial tenure still survives in a greatly modified, but quite constitutional, form. Quebec is thus unique throughout the world in maintaining an integral part of a French constitution granted by the King who shone resplendent at the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

(2). Now let us reverse the process, beginning with any P. Q. lawyer of the present day who chooses to quote the *Coûtume de Paris*. This takes us back, through Confederation in the nineteenth century, to the Quebec Act of the eighteenth, thence to the time when Canada was a Province of centralised France in the seventeenth, and thence again to the time when,

A HABITANT HOME OF TO-DAY

From a Painting by E. M. B. Warren



in the sixteenth century, France was just beginning to become a centralised monarchy, and the *Coûtume de Paris*, as a great centralising force in helping to unify the laws, was beginning to gain ground at the expense of all the various local *coûtumes*.

(3). The *Habitant* was the colonist, in sharp distinction from the *coureur de bois*, who was trader, trapper, and haunter of the wilds. Quebec had the first of all habitants, in the person of Louis Hébert, who began farming on the heights of Quebec just 250 years before Confederation. Six years later (1623) he was granted the first of all seigniories. But the mere bush lot of Sault-au-Matelot never grew into anything like a real seignior; and Hébert died a virtual habitant, if also a titular *seigneur*. How well the early Habitants became rooted in the soil, and how well their stock has flourished in the selfsame soil from that time till our own, may perhaps be understood by looking through the official list compiled in 1908, the year of Tercentennial Quebec. This list (surely unique in all America) enumerates no less than 206 families who still occupy the same lands that were first farmed by their own ancestors during the seventeenth century.

(4). The first real seignior was Robert Giffard, who did homage for his fief of Beauport to Champlain's lieutenant, Bras de Fer du Châ-

teaufort, at Quebec on New Year's Eve, 1635. Entering without sword or spur, he made obeisance, swore fealty, and was invested with his seigniority. Then, spurred and sworded, he went forth, ready to serve New France as coloniser in time of peace and commander of the local levies during war. Time, and place, and people all considered, the seigniorial system worked well enough throughout the French régime. The changed conditions and the changing personnel that followed the conquest made it grow increasingly anachronistic till 1854, when, again at Quebec, it was so changed by antagonistic legislation and by new communications as to become but the simulacrum of its former self. Still, as a quite legal simulacrum, it exists to-day—the last vestige of the feudal age throughout the whole New World.

(5). Population, that is, French-Canadian population, from the strictly scientific point of view, presents a fact and factor that are unique in Canada, as well as being of peculiar interest among the population problems of the world at large. This French-Canadian problem is not an easy one to state, from lack of precise and accessible statistics. For though the parish registers have been admirably kept, though immigrants were well reported, and though works on genealogies abound, yet no one seems to have approached this literally and figuratively vital

question from the purely scientific point of view. What we need to know is the exact number of immigrating males and females who became the actual ancestors of the nearly three million French-Canadians of the present day. We must also know the dates at which these ancestors arrived. The greatest immigration was about 250 years ago. The total number of ancestral immigrants has never, so far as I know, been determined. Some place it below 20,000; others above. But, in any case, the French-Canadians, by natural increase in Canada alone, have multiplied at least one hundred times over within two hundred years; that is, fifty times over within a century, or five times over within each decade, or no less than twice in every two years. This fifty-per-cent-per-annum increase, by means of births alone, is certainly unique in all America.

(6). In this twentieth century, when Canadian ambassadors are so much discussed in Ottawa, we might remember that Father Druillettes, a properly accredited Canadian envoy, went from Quebec to Boston in the seventeenth. New England and New France discussed their differences amicably, Druillettes being entertained by General Gibbons and courteously received by Governor Dudley, Governor Bradford, and many other leaders. But the United Colonies of New England next year (1651) declined

the proffered reciprocity, at the expense of war against the Iroquois; and New France be-thought her of the potential enemy that New England might become—an enemy with already ten times the population of New France.

(7). The Quebec Act of 1774 was unique in the Imperial legislation of its age, unique (as we have seen already) in its privilege-recognition of the French-Canadian Church, and unique in its territorial dispensations most of all. What are now Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan (and, of course, Ontario) thenceforth formed part of the Province of Quebec till the Peace of 1783. These unique nine P.Q. years deserve a special monograph from the administrative point of view. They have already received plenty of virulent, and lately some quite impartial, attention among those who know the Quebec Act only as one of the “Intolerable Five” which fanned the flame of revolution.

(8). The City of Quebec is unique in having been the home of an abortive oversea French pseudo-*Parlement* in the seventeenth century. Frontenac, shortly after his arrival in 1672, summoned no less than a Canadian imitation of the French States-General. The three Estates of the Province were there—to the number of nearly a thousand, as optimistic Frontenac surmised. He first made a counterpart of

the Speech from the Throne and then exacted the oath from every member of the three Estates—Clergy, Nobles, and Bourgeoise. But his enthusiastic report met with a chilling response from autocratic Louis, in the form of a dispatch from Colbert: “Since our Kings, for a long time past, have thought it inadvisable to summon the States-General in France, you should seldom, or, to be more precise, never, assemble the people of Canada together in that way.”

(9). The first oversea British parliament that ever assembled at the call of a Governor-General was also unique in being mainly French by language. (The fact that Carleton was absent, and that Alured Clarke acted for him, makes no difference). All previous oversea legislatures of all kinds had been those of mere provinces or individual colonies of a purely provincial kind—as, indeed, this Parliament of Lower Canada itself was, in a territorial sense. But the Governor-General, *qua* Governor-General, assembled it; while the Parliament of Upper Canada (though not more essentially provincial in other ways) assembled at the call of its purely local Lieutenant-Governor. Both met in 1792.

(10). The basic instinct of every form of life—from plants to politics—is sheer self-preservation; and self-preservation comes home most

nearly to fundamentally differentiated minorities when brought into growing contact with environmental forces which have great assimilating powers. Therefore the very day the French Canadians found themselves in Parliament they inevitably began evolving a policy which, with all its adaptations, naturally centres in the basic instinct of preserving that quadrunion of race, religion, language, and laws which seems best fitted to stand four-square against the assimilating forces of the Canadian and American environments. Of all French colonies beyond the seas French Canada alone remains, (that is, as a racial entity on a relatively large scale, though under a different régime.) France has again created an empire overseas; but this time not one which the French themselves can colonise to any great extent. The Americans have assimilated Louisiana out of its really French life altogether. P.Q. alone remains a quite distinctive entity, widely differentiated from the life of modern France, yet unassimilated by its vast North-American or closer Canadian environment. P.Q. is thus unique throughout both the Old World and the New. This uniqueness connotes extreme particularism in certain ways. But it also accounts for many a vivid interest and abiding charm which are themselves unique.

(11). I shall not add to my perhaps already

too offensive statements of the obvious by desecrating on the universally known fact that the Fathers of Confederation met in this City for the first time exactly sixty years ago.

(12). Nor shall I do more than mention the resultant fact of the Proclamation of the Dominion on the same historic spot—(that is, the open ground at the top of Mountain Hill, on your right as you come up)—the same spot that witnessed the meeting of the first Parliament in 1792, and that remained a Parliament ground, of different kinds, till 1883.

WAR

“Unique” is fast becoming that very noisome thing, a tag, suitable (not for sermons but) for advertisers, tub-thumping speechifiers, and others of the non-elect. Yet Quebec does happen to be what “tag-men” would delight to call “still more unique” in all concerning War than even in affairs of Church and State together. So, to avoid much strident repetition, let it here and now be said that the City of Quebec is quite unique, at least in Canada, in all things to be mentioned under War—that is to say, in the first, or last, or only things which happened to occur within or near her walls. Some of these happenings are also unique in all America; while others, again, are quite unique throughout the world.

For purposes of easy reference I group the various items under these five heads:—A. *Wars*, B. *Garrisons*, C. *Fortifications*, D. *Miscellaneous*, and E. (a mere P.S.) on the *Misunderstandings* about the infinitely hackneyed and quite misnomered *Wolfe-and-Montcalm Campaign*.

A. *Wars*. Quebec has been concerned in literally a dozen different wars.

(1). *French and Indian wars*, from Champlain's first expedition against the Iroquois in 1609 to Frontenac's last, in 1696. Quebec itself was the actual scene of Indian fighting for only a comparatively short time (e.g. in 1656, when the Iroquois killed out the Hurons on the Island of Orleans) yet it was the base on all occasions for all the forces, whether commanded by Champlain, Montmagny, Courcelle, La Barre, Denonville, or Frontenac.

(2). *French and English* met here first in 1629, when Champlain was forced to surrender owing to the hopeless dearth of men, munitions, and supplies. As usual, the determining influence of the sea-power which caused this hopeless dearth is slurred over in the usual histories or omitted altogether. There was a naval action (albeit on a microscopic scale) off the Saguenay in 1628, when the Kirkes defeated the tiny flotilla of four little armed vessels which

were escorting eighteen little transports to Quebec under the gallant Claude de Roquemont.

(3). Courcelle's expedition against the Iroquois in 1666 led to the first and most dramatic *Inland meeting between the French and English*. The French, missing the Mohawk trail, suddenly, to their intense surprise, found themselves face to face with the English at Schenectady. They were looking for Mohawks. The only whites of whom they knew anything along the Hudson Valley were the Dutch. Yet here were the English, who, having supplanted the Dutch at New York eighteen months before, had now worked their way north straight toward the flank of New France. The two home governments were then at peace; so French and English parted with all the usual compliments; but not without most ominous forebodings on both sides.

Yet, for another generation, there was peace, till Frontenac's raids set the Colonial Americans to work on Pieter Schuyler's "*Glorious Enterprize*" of conquering New France by a double invasion, an inland army going up the line of the Hudson to Montreal, while a joint expedition ascended the St. Lawrence to Quebec. As we all know, this plan did not succeed till the time of Pitt, seventy years later. Meanwhile the French had their own strategic plans,

all based on Quebec. Frontenac urged Louis XIV to get New York either by treaty or force, thus securing the most convenient ice-free port, driving a wedge through the country of the Iroquois, and cutting the English colonies in two. But the one chance of getting it by treaty, when Charles II was almost a pensioner of Louis XIV, was lost, and thenceforth sea-power became, as before and afterwards, the prime determinant in every war.

French strategy in America, still based upon Quebec, then aimed at the control of the *three great gulfs, the three great rivers, and the five great lakes*. Grandiose as this appears to us now, we must remember that France was then the first power in Europe and had a population far exceeding the population of Great Britain. Moreover, she did command the local areas of the three great gulfs toward the end of the seventeenth century, when Iberville commanded Hudson Bay, raided Newfoundland, and had no challenger in either the Gulf of St. Lawrence or of Mexico. The St. Lawrence, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers were also under French control, if under any, a little later on; while the five Great Lakes were practically free from all whites but the French.

The first combined invasion of New France by English-speaking forces was unique in being the only combined invasion ever attempted by

the *Colonial Americans alone* (for the purely naval force at Louisbourg in 1745 was exclusively Imperial). Phipp's fleet and army were almost entirely composed of New England men and vessels; and the whole expedition reached Quebec without a ship, a penny, or a man, or even one official word, from the Home Government in London. Hopelessly mismanaged by its loquacious councils, and faced by Frontenac with the cleverly concentrated strength of New France, Phipp's armada retired beaten; whereupon the new church in Lower Town was called Notre-Dame-le-la-Victoire. In 1711 there was a second combined invasion; and this time an Imperial one, which, if properly led, Quebec could never have withstood. But the mulish Admiral, Sir Hovenden Walker, "kept it at North" till Egg Island, at the N.W. corner of the Gulf, was strewn with wrecked transports carrying a good number of the veteran soldiers who were completely miscommanded by that ass of a General, Jack Hill. The mule and ass then brayed together and went home; though the remaining force was still quite strong enough to take Quebec: whereupon the church's name was changed to *des Victoires*.

(4). The only successful invasion was the famous one of 1759. This campaign, in spite of enough original evidence on both sides to settle all vexed questions, is still so much mis-

represented as to be worth discussion in a little P.S., even before an audience of F.R.S.C.'s. (see under E, at the end of this section).

(5). Quebec, as the stronghold of New France, had now faced four different kinds of war: first, against the Indian frontier; then against English raiders from the sea; next against a combined invasion by Colonial Americans; and fourthly, against British combined invasions, by joint Imperial and Colonial forces, culminating in conquest, cession, and the change to the new régime, under which Quebec has been connected, in differing ways, with no less than eight other kinds of war.

The first of these other eight was the *invasion by the American Revolutionists* under Montgomery and Arnold in 1775-6. For that whole winter all Canada was practically under American control—all except Carleton's garrison inside the walls of Quebec. The double assault was defeated, Montgomery's at Près-de-Ville and Arnold's at the Sault-au-Matelot. (The sites of these two barricades were marked by bronze tablets some twenty years ago). Then up came a British fleet in May, and Canada was saved—as, indeed she would have been, even if Quebec itself had fallen, so decisive has always been the influence of sea-power on the whole course of all our history.

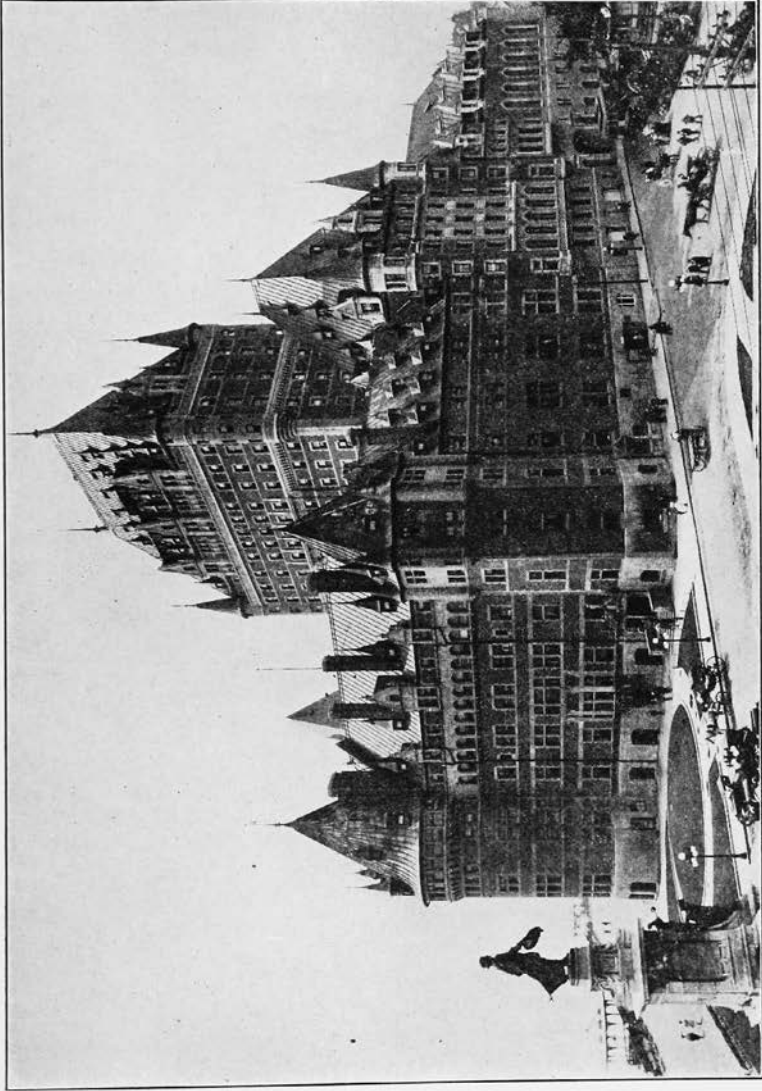
(6). *Two American invasions*—one Colonial,

the other Revolutionary—had now failed before Quebec. *The third—that of the War of 1812*—never reached it at all. But Quebec was, of course, a prime American objective, as well as the local British stronghold, throughout the frontier operations; and the heroes of the two fights which are best known in their respective Provinces—Queenston in Ontario, Châteauguay in old Quebec—were both more than mere visitors to (or subordinates of headquarters at) Quebec. Brock had lived here, as Commandant, in the third house from the top of Fabrique Street; while De Salaberry was almost a Quebecker, the family seat being at Beauport, only a few miles off. De Salaberry and his brothers were officers in the Imperial Army; and his Voltigeurs were French-Canadian regulars—two points not usually stressed.

B. *Garrisons*: Well, they too are unique in all America, where no place whatever, except Quebec, has been garrisoned for more than three whole centuries without a single break: first by Champlain's Frenchmen for 21 years, then by Kirke's Englishmen for 3, then by the French again for 127, then by British Imperials for 112, and finally by Canadian regulars for the last 53. Montmagny, who was Governor from 1636 to 1648, believed in being ready for all eventualities; and the Jesuit Father Lejeune has left us a good description of the garrison

in those early days, when, please remember, Quebec was but a village—perhaps I should say hamlet—with only a few hundred souls. “We have some good resolute soldiers. It is a pleasure to see them go through their military exercises and hear the sound of musketry and cannon called forth by every occasion of rejoicing; while our illimitable forests and the encircling hills answer these salutes with echoes like the roll of thunder. The bugle calls us every morning, and we rise to see the sentries take post and the guard turn out in proper style.” But it was not till 1665 that the arrival of the famous Régiment de Carignan—the *first regiment of regulars that ever came to North America*—raised the garrison to a really imposing strength. In 1759 British Imperials began a garrison duty that lasted till 1871, when the first Canadian regulars under the Dominion Government fell in for their first parade.

C. *Fortifications.* In this respect Quebec is still more remarkable—unique, in fact, throughout the whole New World; for nowhere else is there any place that has been fortified in five successive centuries, from the sixteenth to our own. Of course, Jacques Cartier’s tiny stockade beside the Little River (as the St. Charles was called and is—in contrast to the great St. Lawrence) can not be counted as a “fortification,” in the stricter sense of the word. But it



CHÂTEAU FRONTENAC

served its purpose, as did the *Abitation de Quebecq*, the much more pretentious, but still very small, fortified winter quarters built by Champlain in 1608. Champlain also built the first fort in the Upper Town, on the site of the present Terrace; and Montmagny rebuilt its makeshift "fascines, terres, gazons, et bois" in solid stone. But up to Phipps's attack in 1690 there was nothing more than a stone fort round the Governor's fortified Château in the Upper Town, with a "strong place" in the Lower Town on each side of the present Sous-le-Fort Street. In 1692, twenty years after his first arrival, Frontenac first succeeded in getting the means for building the first walls round Quebec. Frontenac, like Montcalm, was exasperated beyond all endurance by the rascally contractors and bad local workmanship. By the time the last of the dishonest and dilatory work had been completed the first was falling to pieces. Then in 1720 new, but equally bad and even more dishonest, work was begun. From this time till the Conquest nothing but patchwork was ever done. Good French engineers came out and made excellent reports. But the local workmanship was bad, the contractors were worse, and when the infamous Intendant Bigot took charge the Government was worst of all. On the very eve of 1759 the despairing Montcalm wrote home: "Les fortifications sont si ridicules

et mauvaises qu'elles seraient prises aussitôt qu'assiégées." "What a country," as he constantly wrote home in private letters, "what a country, where rogues grow rich and honest men are ruined!"

British makeshifts replaced French tinkering till after the American invasion of 1775. Then a temporary British scheme was finished in 1783. The remains of the Cape Diamond works—still palmed off on sentimental tourists as "Old French Works"—date from this time. Forty years later the great fortification was begun. It took nine years (1823–32) and cost over seven millions sterling. This, however, was only a very small part of the more than a hundred millions sterling spent by the patient Imperial taxpayer on military works in Canada; and this, in its turn, was nothing like a quarter of what the Imperial taxpayers of the Mother Country paid for the naval and military forces devoted to the special defence of Canada in peace and war. The walls and Citadel, as they stand to-day, were well and honestly built. Then, just before Canada took over her own defence in 1871 (with exceptions that lasted for another generation on both coasts) the Imperial Government built the three big forts on the heights of Lévis. Finally, in 1910, the Dominion built the modern works near Beaumont, eight miles below Quebec and on the south shore

of the St. Lawrence, whose ship channel they command. These works were inspected, that same year, at the request of the Canadian Government, by Lord French, the first Commander-in-chief of the first British troops in France during the Great World War.

D. *Miscellaneous* first, or last, or only things connected with Quebec's war history are numerous enough to make a quite effective class of their own. But I shall merely note a few.

(1) *Charlesbourg*, close to Quebec, still has fields divided by fences which stretch out from a common centre like spokes from a hub. The original hub was the local fort, into which the habitants could run most easily when all the neighbouring fields met at one common point. The fort has long since disappeared. But, among the older habitants in the remoter districts, any nearby village is still referred to as *le fort*, in reminiscence of Iroquois and scalping parties; while here, unique in all America, you still may see the fences running in to one strategic point.

(2). Five special points about the *Quebec Campaign of 1759* are worth a little emphasis, at all events in naval and military eyes.

1). *The great Fleet and Convoy*, in all, 277 sail (from which Wolfe's little army acted as a landing party) was by far the greatest that had ever come up the St. Lawrence. More

than that: despite the vast increase of size in modern vessels, the actual gross tonnage of this great fleet and convoy was never again equalled on the St. Lawrence till the First Canadian Contingent sailed from Quebec to the Great World War in 1914.

2). It was at Quebec that Wolfe himself suggested the regimental motto of the famous *Royal Americans—Celer et Audax*. This regiment, first raised in 1755, and soon numbered as the 60th Foot, was the first four-battalion regiment in the Service, the first to become a Rifle Regiment, and the only one whose uniform became the model of all Canadian Rifles. It is, therefore, quite befitting that the present English-speaking Quebec militia battalion, known as the Royal Rifles of Canada, should be affiliated with the "Old 60th," now known as the King's Royal Rifle Corps.

3). It was at Quebec that the *Royal Marine Light Infantry* first served in a complete battalion ashore in any campaign.

4). *The thin red line* immortalised by Kinglake was antedated by nearly a century at Quebec; for the first two-deep line ever formed by any army in any battle in the world was formed by Wolfe's at Quebec. This statement, first made, from the original evidence, in 1904, has stood the expert researches of the past twenty years.

5). *The father of modern hydrography*, the great Captain Cook, began his surveys at Quebec; and it is a rather peculiar coincidence that while the great English circumnavigator Cook was helping Wolfe to get into Quebec the great French circumnavigator Bougainville was trying to keep him out.

E. *The Misunderstood Campaign of 1759*. Even the most gushing publicity department of the most aggressive tourist agency could hardly make the "standard story" of the Battle of the Plains more hackneyed or less truthful than it is. But so deeply grooved are all the old perversions, and so long does it take to get any popular error out of any well-worn grooves, that perhaps I might be excused for making this little critical digression, in order to set before those who do not specialise in history a few of the fundamental facts which make all the difference between theatrical perversions and the really dramatic truth. I should add that although the limits of this paper forbid references to the original evidence—references which, if complete, would fill more space than this whole paper fills—yet the few points mentioned here are based entirely on this evidence, without the slightest regard to any intervening books (the author's own included) and that this evidence (from both sides and from every point of view) is now so nearly

final that practically all important matters stand revealed. The Dominion Archives can alone supply any impartial and scientific student with evidence enough to arrive at something very near to what any final judgment ought to be.

To begin with a few perversions.

(1). To say that Wolfe came here "supported by a fleet" is to put the cart before the horse. British sea-power, both mercantile and naval, was a vastly greater factor in that rightly named "Maritime War" than land-power was or could be, simply because it divided its enemies and united its friends all over the world. British oversea armies could no more work without ships than they could march without legs; and this was especially true at Quebec, where Wolfe's little army was really no more than a most efficient landing party from an overwhelming fleet. Including the crews of all supply and transport vessels, there were three times as many seamen as landmen on the British side. But this difference in mere numbers by no means shows the vastly greater preponderance of sea-power over land-power in every other way. To begin with, the source of all decisive armed strength was in the warring mother countries, not in America. Consequently, the mother country whose sea-power could make the At-

lantic a good road for its own ships but a bad one for its enemy's was certain to win in the end, no matter what the respective armies did. But these respective armies were themselves vitally dependent on sea-power. For the inland waterways were infinitely better than any roads, even the best; and few were even tolerably good in those days. Even to-day, whenever distances are long and heavy transport is concerned, a hundred tons can go by sea as well as ten by train or one by road with horses. What, therefore, must have been the preponderance in favour of the water when trains did not exist and roads were very few and very bad indeed?

But man is a land animal; and he naturally knows little of the sea. So we must expect him to misinterpret amphibious history in terms of his own environment. One might suppose that most readers would appreciate the wonderful navigational feat of bringing 277 sail up the St. Lawrence without any aids to navigation in the way of buoys and lights, without good charts, and (despite the many French-traitor-pilot tales) without any real dependence on the local pilots (who were almost worthless in working up a concentrated fleet). But, except for the "Damn me!" of "Old Killick," they rarely see any account of how the feat was done.

(2). Wolfe did not theatrically repeat Gray's *Elegy* as he came down to the final attack in the same boat with some of the forlorn hope, when silence had been ordered under pain of death; but he did repeat it, appropriately and dramatically, in another boat, on the afternoon of the day before, when making his final reconaissance with a few staff officers.

(3). Circumstances, both at the time and ever since, conspired to make the Battle of the Plains one of the so-called decisive battles of the world—and, in one sense, it was decisive; for it marked the turn of the tide within its own restricted area. But, in another sense, this term is quite misleading, because the Plains did not decide the conquest of Canada, which required another campaign; also because the conquest was itself determined vastly more by naval and by civil forces, both in a universal and a local sense, than by the actual armies on the spot; and finally because Quiberon not only clinched Quebec but made the next campaign an inevitable triumph for those who were thenceforth free from even challenges at sea. Quiberon, with its universally decisive effect, settled the fate of New France. Quebec was a mere local step by the way.

Quebec happened just at the precise psychological moment, and in the perfectly dramatic way, to take the public by storm. Seven-



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teen hundred and fifty-nine saw the turn of the tide for British arms by land and sea; while each new victory made the deeply apprehended French invasion of the Mother Country more and more unlikely to occur. Things had not been going well in previous years. But now the tide was turning. English-speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic were being drawn together by their interest in the conquest of New France; and Quebec became a word to conjure with. Next, to heighten the effect, the news at first was most discouraging. The joint invasion was apparently about to fail again. Amherst's forces were held up along the line of Lake Champlain for want of local sea-power; while Wolfe's first attack (on Montcalm at Montmorency) was an utter failure, besides being an egregious blunder too.

Then, just at the very moment which a supreme publicity agent would have chosen, Wolfe's final plan succeeded. It was no more than a second best, and strategically wrong, as we shall presently see. But it was managed to perfection by as finely worked a combination of naval and military forces as British history can show; and though this consummate combination was, as usual, ignored by the public, all the incidental details happened in just the very way the press and public love; while the false

theatrical versions of some truly dramatic stories, like Wolfe and Gray's *Elegy*, added greatly to the popular effect. The boatwork by night; the scaling of the cliff (popularised not because it was extremely well done as a military feat but because it was misunderstood to have been an astonishingly acrobatic "stunt"); the famous volleys (absurdly misrepresented as having been fired by the whole line together, instead of having been only single volleys, fired by battalions, and followed by a "general," i.e., collective independent); the dashing down of Highland muskets and the charge with Highland claymores (which deranged the line and caused undue Highland losses later on); the defeat of greatly exaggerated French numbers under the still more exaggerated walls of the "frowning fortress" of Quebec; the death of the supposedly outwitted Montcalm and all his Generals; and, finally, the death of the really noble Wolfe in the very arms of victory—well, what more could press and public want? Hawke's absolutely decisive victory at Quiberon two months later not only dispelled the real dangers of invasion but settled the fate of New France. Yet, being at sea, and coming after pent-up emotions had already been discharged profusely, it had to be less famous than the Battle of the Plains.

Pray let me add that I do not for a moment

mean to belittle either Wolfe or his admirably planned and executed manœuvres, fight, and victory. But I do want to draw attention to the popular perversions which, here as elsewhere, distort the relative values of historic events out of all due proportion. Moreover, it would be grossly unfair to the French, and correspondingly belittling to the British, if I failed to stress the many successes which, in a purely military sense, were all the more honourable to the French because adverse seapower and lack of general resources were forcing them to fight with one arm tied behind their back.

Ten years before the Battle of the Plains La Galissonnière revived French strategy along the three great rivers by sending Céloron to make the French claims good to the whole Ohio Valley. Next year (1750) Christopher Gist went there prospecting for the British Ohio Company. For three years more the French and British manœuvred against each other without drawing sword; while, during the third, George Washington appeared in history for the first time as a surveyor and militia officer sent to assert Virginia's claims. This brought on the inevitable clash of arms at Fort Necessity in 1754, when, on the first memorable 4th of July, Washington was forced to surrender. Next year, though the mother coun-

tries were still at peace in Europe, their armies met in America, where Braddock's Defeat in the Ohio Valley was only partially offset by Johnson's victory at Lake George. The British expedition against Niagara never went farther than Oswego, where it left a garrison as a thorn in the side of the French. Then, in 1756, Montcalm came out and won four successive victories in four successive years, as we shall presently see. After his death there was another campaign, when the French, under the gallant Lévis, won a salving victory at what might well be called the Second Battle of the Plains; while Vauquelin fought a magnificent rearguard action in *L'Atalante* against the vanguard of the fleet that forced the whole French army to retire. The arms of France thus left Quebec with all the honours of war, both by land and sea.

(4). Now let us hark back for a final glance at Wolfe and Montcalm; and let us take Wolfe first. We have already seen how well the Battle of the Plains lent itself to popular perversion. But this popular perversion, which has lasted to the present day, should never blind us to Wolfe's real merits and very sterling qualities.

We must remember moreover that successes happening at times and places which cause the greatest emotional attention then and

thereafter need not be correspondingly great in a naval or military way.

Three very simple illustrations will prove this to the hilt. First, when Admiral Vernon "took Porto Bello with six ships" (in 1739) both Lords and Commons presented their congratulations to the King. Much greater naval actions than this audacious stroke have attracted far less attention. But that might have been because they had no such tag as Jenkins's Ear had been for some time past; and because they had not been fought by an admiral who was also an M.P. and inventor of the prophetic tag that he would "take Porto Bello with six ships." Secondly, admirers of Mr. Pickwick will remember the portrait of the bare-headed Marquess of Granby, in his famous Warburg attitude, over the inn at Dorking.

Now, Granby might or might not have been a great cavalry (or even army) commander if he had had the chance. But the fame he did acquire in 1761 was due mostly to the fact that he was the first Englishman of his kind to cut a good figure on the European scene in a war which had not been so successful there. And when the real merits of his charge were further impressed on the public by the fact that his hat and wig blew off, why, of course he became a popular hero. Hatless and wigless he soon

appeared on tavern signboards all over England. Beer and glory did the rest. Thirdly, Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864 was easily the least difficult among all his masterstrokes of war. He said himself: "Were I to express my measure of the relative importance of the march to the sea, and of that from Savannah northward, I would place the former at one, and the latter at ten—or the maximum." But "Marching through Georgia" happened to catch the public eye while nothing else was on the central stage, and while the whole Northern press was itching to write something up to the very top of its bent.

Now, Wolfe's famous battle was a greater naval and military feat than any of these three grossly over-estimated instances; while Wolfe himself was a singularly fine character and a most excellent professional soldier, who might have become a great commander had he enjoyed any future chances. Moreover, as already stated, his plan was very well conceived and executed almost to perfection. So all that can be said in praise of him is fully justifiable—except, and here's the crucial exception, that his plan was only a second best, that while it took Quebec, it failed to take New France, and that this entailed another arduous campaign next year.

To make a long story short I should explain

(to those who may not have had occasion to follow up the strategy of this whole war) that New France must have fallen if the main French army at Quebec surrendered, that this army would die if it went north into the resourceless wilds, that the British fleet cut it off from the east and the south, and that its one possible line of supply and retreat was to the west, preferably of course by the St. Lawrence, so far as this was feasible, but also by the single upper road which led the whole way west to Montreal. Now, at Quebec itself, and for a good many miles west, there was a lower road, in the valley of the St. Charles, which eventually joined the upper road. If, therefore, Wolfe could entrench astride of this upper road, westward of its junction with the lower road, then, while the fleet barred the river abreast of these entrenchments, Montcalm would have no choice but to fight, starve, or surrender; and both sides knew that Wolfe's army of highly trained picked regulars would, in such a position, be able to prevent at all events the main body of Montcalm's mixed forces from ever getting past.

When Wolfe was ill in August he had asked his brigadiers to suggest a plan of their own; and they had suggested a landing at Pointe-aux-Trembles, twenty-two miles above Quebec, at a spot fulfilling the strategical conditions

mentioned above. Then, on the 3rd of September, he broke camp on the left bank of the Montmorency, just beyond the Falls, let non-committal manœuvres go on for a week, up towards Pointe-aux-Trembles; and finally, on the 10th, formed his own plan of landing two, instead of twenty-two, miles above Quebec, so as to bring on an immediate action in the open field, across the Plains of Abraham. This second-best plan succeeded to admiration, as all the world knows. But the point is whether, with the almost omnipotent fleet, he could not have feinted here, or elsewhere near Quebec, and then cut off the whole French army, by landing at the better strategic point twenty miles higher—or somewhere else that would serve the same turn—thus ensuring the complete surrender of New France.

At this point I beg leave to say that these criticisms of Wolfe come from far higher authorities than I can claim to be. Having been obliged to learn both the ground and the original evidence (both French and British) I have often gone over the Quebec battlefields as guide to naval and military men of great experience, not only in war but sometimes in very high command as well; and I have nearly always found them criticising Wolfe in the foregoing sense.

Excluding French and French Canadians, as

possibly a little partial—though I know some who are quite as impartial as anyone can be; excluding also Americans and Japanese (whose naval and military men I have also guided) in case they might be over-neutral—though here again I know some who are equally keen and impartial; I come to British experts, men who would naturally think the best about Wolfe; and I take from these none but those who have been themselves Commanders-in-chief afloat or ashore. Two afloat were, first, Admiral-of-the-Fleet Sir Edward Seymour, Commander-in-chief in China during the Boxer Rebellion, a very keen student of war history, and one who in his autobiography makes special reference to his tour of the battlefields here; secondly, Admiral-of-the-Fleet Lord Jellicoe, whom all know as the first Commander-in-chief afloat during the Great War. Both thought Wolfe's strategy wrong, as did the late Sir Julian Corbett, the universally known naval historian.

But lest anyone might conceivably suppose their opinions were tinged with a little naval prejudice—which is of course absurd—I shall now mention three other Commanders-in-chief, all of whom were soldiers who had led great armies in the field:—Field Marshals Lords Roberts, French, and Wolseley. (Here again, as with the naval historian just mentioned, so with the Honourable John Fortescue, the his-

torian of the British Army: he was and is most critical of Wolfe's plan). Lord Roberts and Lord French said very much the same as the two great Admirals; while Lord Wolseley, who knew Quebec and Canada very well indeed, epitomised his carefully considered judgment in the following written words:—"Wolfe was a first-rate Commanding officer of a Battalion; but, in the only campaign he ever conducted, he did not, according to my views of men who have conducted campaigns, display any originality or any great genius for war."

(5). Now let us take our final glance at Montcalm, who came out to Quebec in 1756, at the age of forty-four, with a well earned reputation as one of the rising stars of the whole French Army, and whose really wonderful services in defence of doomed New France certainly raised him to an assured position among the few great Commanders of the whole New World. For if we consider, however hastily, what were the enormous odds against him—not only on the side of his open and honourable enemies but on the part of his backbiting friends—we cannot fail to wonder at all that he accomplished when forced to fight insidious enemies in rear as well as those who, based on a sea-power of overwhelming strength, were bent on the conquest of misgoverned, corrupted, and perishing New France.



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A word should be said in passing about the original evidence, nearly all the most cogent part of which is now accessible to students, but much of which was not accessible to previous generations, whose writers were naturally apt to fill up the gaps by surmises made in accordance with their own national and individual prejudices. Moreover, the fall of New France was, quite as naturally, no more popular with French and French Canadians than the American Revolution was with the British, or the three abortive American invasions of Canada (Colonial, Revolutionary, and "1812") have hitherto been in the States. So, one way or other, Montcalm never came into his own till the present Dominion Archivist made the first proper bibliography of the original evidence about him; till the first French Canadian who ever did him "knowledgeable" justice was found in the historian who now presides over the Royal Society of Canada; and, finally, till La Section Historique de l'Etat-Major de l'Armée published its admirable monograph on *Montcalm au Combat de Carillon* in 1909, the very year that Marshal Foch was directing all staff studies as Commandant de l'Ecole Supérieure de Guerre. To this I should like to add that all really expert historians who write in English now see the greatness of Montcalm, and that all the expert naval and military Com-

manders, British and foreign alike, whom I have accompanied over the fields of battle at Quebec expressed their admiration for him as a master in the art of war.

To conclude by trying to make three crucial factors of his dire problem clear: first, the disabling drawbacks on his own side; secondly, the ultimately overwhelming forces of the enemy, mainly due to sea-power; and thirdly, the desperate nature of the four campaigns in which, unique among the world's commanders, he won four successive victories over those who speak the English tongue.

First: the disabling drawbacks on his own side. It used to be thought, and is still either said or tacitly assumed (sometimes by those who ought to know better) that Montcalm was the really supreme Commander of all the forces in New France. Nothing could be further from the truth. New France was an autocracy without a local autocrat. She was as much like a Royal Province in France herself as edictory powers could make her. But in France a Royal Province had its Royal Master (or his Master) close at hand; whereas New France was three thousand miles away, cut off completely for nearly half the year, and changed by environment in many important ways. In order that all provincial leaders should always be dependent on the central power their func-

tions were designed to overlap. Now and then a great Intendant, such as Talon, or a very masterful Governor, like Frontenac, would make the system work. But in Montcalm's dire days the governmental powers in doomed New France were all parts and no whole—no, not even a united whole in battle, if the Governor or the Intendant could serve their own ends better by interfering with Montcalm.

Montcalm's own military position, difficult enough at first, became impossible as time went on. He would have gladly resigned on several occasions; and it was only the highest sense of duty to a ruined cause that prevented him from going home after Vaudreuil's contemptible proceedings in 1758—proceedings which followed Montcalm's great victory at Carillon (that is, Ticonderoga). Technically, Montcalm commanded only *les troupes de la terre*, that is, the French regulars from France. The French-Canadian regulars (*troupes de la marine*) and the French-Canadian militiamen (who theoretically included all able-bodied men) were under the Governor-General, who also was in supreme command, if and when he would assume such sole responsibility; but who was likewise told to "defer" as much as possible to Montcalm's "advice" in purely military matters. The French seamen were semi-independent in certain ways. The Indians were

under their own chiefs, were told to regard the Governor as their father, but naturally took Montcalm to be the true Great War Chief, and justly resented the way in which they were cheated by the infamous Intendant. Moreover, Vaudreuil, the Governor, was (in every possible military way) a vain and fussy fool, wholly incompetent to conduct a campaign himself, but intensely jealous of Montcalm, bent on thwarting him at every turn, and, though personally honest, equally bent on letting the absolutely corrupt and corrupting Intendant Bigot have a perfectly free hand. Now, Bigot practically controlled all the supply and transport services of all the forces in New France. So here was another incongruous element to help the parts against the whole. To complete the disunion, Vaudreuil, a French Canadian born, set French and French Canadians by the ears; while Bigot, who was French-of-France by birth, was quite impartial as to whom he robbed, traduced, supported, or divided—always supposing that the profits came to him.

Let me be perfectly clear about Vaudreuil and Montcalm. First, let me repeat that I am only concerned with their respective values as commanders, and not with their private characters or even their characters as non-military men. Next, let me point out that Montcalm had his human faults, that he lacked the almost

superhuman patience of Marlborough or Washington, and that he did not make sufficient allowance for some quite justifiable environmental variations of a purely French-Canadian kind. But here comes the very pointed question whether Marlborough, Washington, and Fabius Maximus, put together, or even triune in a single man, could possibly have harmonised the distracting conditions of New France under Bigot and Vaudreuil. Finally, let me say that Vaudreuil really loved his native country, and that he had some real justification for resenting certain French-of-France assumptions of superiority over French-Canadian things and people. Moreover, his natural pride in French-Canadian prowess was justified by the many gallant feats of arms performed by French Canadians in the century between Dollard's defence of the Long Sault in 1660 and Lévis' attack at Ste. Foy in 1760. But Montcalm did not undervalue the native spirit of the French Canadians; while all his words, plans, and actions bear witness to his military worth. Vaudreuil, on the other hand, was far worse than worthless as a military man. Just read his own most self-condemning words.

To sum up: there were two different kinds of French—the French-of-France and French Canadians; and three different overlapping

authorities at headquarters—Vaudreuil the fool, Bigot the knave, and Montcalm, who, though the only real expert, commanded only one of the five different forces, could be overruled by Vaudreuil, and had to depend on Bigot for all supplies and transport.

Secondly, the ultimately overwhelming forces of the enemy, mainly due to sea-power. Of course there was some disunion on the British side, especially among the very dissimilar American Colonies. There also was jealousy on the part of Colonials against Imperials; and there were all the usual misunderstandings when such different forces meet for any common end. But Pitt was both the greatest of all civilian ministers of war and the greatest unifier of the English-speaking peoples. So, with the inestimable advantages of sea-power on his side, he kept the ever-growing forces of invasion at work against the ever-dwindling resources of New France until the inevitable end was reached at Montreal in 1760, when only two thousand French regulars remained to lay down the arms which had kept the British so long and so gallantly at bay. The year before (the fatal 1759) the grand totals on both sides were about 40,000 British against 20,000 French, that is, of all kinds put together, on both sides, and all over the area of operations. But while the British were well supplied the

French were half starved already; and all French disabilities were further intensified as time went on.

Remembering all this, what are we to think of Montcalm, who, under these terrible conditions, won four successive victories in four successive years: first, at Oswego, thus driving in the British salient and restoring the indispensable French link in the chain between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi; next, at Fort William Henry, where he did all that could be done to clear this vital flank of New France from its most imminent danger (and where, by the way, he was absolutely guiltless of the massacre which he and his staff risked their lives in stopping); then at Ticonderoga, where he defeated four times his own numbers, as impartially told in the French monograph on *Carillon*; and, lastly, at Montmorency, where he and Lévis took immediate advantage of all the British mistakes? Organiser, strategist, tactician, and every unprejudiced soldier's beau idéal of what a fighting leader ought to be, Montcalm is worthy of a place beside Lee himself and Stonewall Jackson; for, great as their drawbacks were, they had no such disunion among their forces, and never such powerful gangs of criminally false friends to stab them in the rear.

But how about the Battle of the Plains, where

Montcalm is generally supposed to have contradicted everything else in his whole career? Well, the original evidence convincingly disproves all these unfounded suppositions, and, what's more, proves that Montcalm's military powers were at their very best before and on this fatal day. For let us remember here that all the disabilities which beset him elsewhere were at their very worst during the Quebec campaign, when Vaudreuil the fool and Bigot the knave were interferingly present all through, when supplies were scarcer than ever before, disunion growing, discontent increasing, and the effective fighting forces decreasing every day by disease and desertion. Moreover, there was the big detachment of regulars which had to be sent to Montreal, because Montreal then, as in the next campaign, was Amherst's first objective.

Let anyone who knows anything of war examine the state of the commissariat, transport, and even ordnance branches under Bigot; let him read Vaudreuil's idiotic orders in his own silly words; and then let him remember that Montcalm was the commander, and on sufferance only, of half-a-dozen different forces which never made a single army—French regulars, French-Canadian regulars and militiamen, seamen of various kinds, non-combatant branches of the whole distracted Service, and a few

badly cheated and unstable Indians; let him remember that while everything on the French side was known in a very short time on the British, very little on the British side was known on the French, and then it was probably garbled by Vaudreuil, if he heard it first, before he passed it on to Montcalm: finally, let anyone who knows anything of war remember that while the British fleet was overwhelmingly strong afloat it formed an impenetrable screen behind which the British army could manoeuvre in perfect secrecy and safety, and that it also served the staff with all the latest news by means of visual signals over the whole thirty miles of river front, from Montmorency up to Pointe-aux-Trembles: let anyone who knows anything of war remember all this, and then let him think out the problem that Montcalm was set to solve.

For ten whole nights and days (from the day that Wolfe broke camp at Montmorency on the 3rd of September to when he fought the battle) Montcalm had no means whatever of getting any reliable intelligence in time. Yet, through his own strategic insight, and from the manoeuvres of ships and landing parties on the British side, he was led to spare what strength he could for guarding Pointe-aux-Trembles. But this was not all, nor even what was most important; for he actually divined Wolfe's own

quite secret plan and did all he could to prevent its execution.

On the 5th he sent a battalion of French regulars to guard the heights between Cap Rouge (seven miles above Quebec, where the great bridge stands now) and the famous Plains, just outside the City. On the 7th Vaudreuil withdrew this battalion. On the 10th Wolfe made his secret plan (secret even from his brigadiers) of trying to land at what is now Wolfe's Cove, just beyond the Plains. All ranks and ratings on both sides still had their eyes on Pointe-aux-Trembles, more than twenty miles above Quebec, and on the chief French encampment, from one to seven miles below Quebec, where the only big fight had taken place already, and where feints (which might mask real attacks) were still going on: that is, all ranks and ratings on both sides *except the two commanders*—Wolfe, who had made the new and secret plan, known only to the few chief naval men concerned, and Montcalm, who had divined it. After the manœuvres on the 11th, masked as they were by the fleet, and of unknown meaning to both sides, Montcalm, on the 12th, ordered the same French regulars to camp at Wolfe's Cove itself. This meant that Vergor, a perfect "rotter" and a friend of Bigot's and Vaudreuil's, would be superseded by a good French colonel with a whole bat-

talion of French regulars—enough to prevent any surprise ascent of the cliffs before Montcalm's main force had reached the Plains. But again Vaudreuil gave counter-orders, this time quite angrily and accompanied by the historic imbecility that "those English haven't got wings—I'll see about it myself to-morrow." Vaudreuil's to-morrow never came; for Wolfe surprised Vergor and gained the heights.

"There they are, where they have no right to be!" exclaimed Montcalm, as he ordered out the whole force to the Plains, except a mere camp guard. Vaudreuil then issued counter-orders; and actually told Montcalm to take *one hundred men* and see what the British were about. (Here, as all through, he stands condemned by his own written words). Montcalm, however, managed to get most of his men to the Plains, where he did not rush them into action, but drew them up properly, and called all seniors to the front, out of sight of the British, to see if anybody had any further and authentic news. Nobody had. Then, as Wolfe's right seemed not yet formed, Montcalm attacked, with the result we know. He was thwarted by his own side to the very last. There were twenty-five field guns available. But he was only allowed the use of three. And so the tale goes on.

He has been often blamed for this attack;

and Vaudreuil backbit him more than ever after his death. But what else could he do? He could not retreat by the lower road with the British on his flank and with ships and men to stop him where the two roads joined. He could not subsist his force two days inside Quebec, whose rotten walls were worthless. And every hour's delay would strengthen Wolfe's position; for by that evening the naval brigade (usually omitted in the usual books) had hove up all the materials for a siege, including 47 guns, the heaviest weighing $6\frac{1}{4}$ tons—hove all this up the cliffs, while the army had dug in, impenetrably in, across the Plains and the one good road to Montreal. There was no use in waiting for the detachment from the neighbourhood of Pointe-aux-Trembles, because any additional strength gained by this would be more than offset by Wolfe's own additional strength.

Fight, starve, or surrender were the only alternatives. There are other factors in the problem. But they must be studied from the original evidence; and we must stop this over-long discussion here. Might I, however, end by asking the arm-chair critics of Montcalm what infallible alternative they think he could have followed with success?

Wolfe has a fine inscription over the spot on which he breathed his last:

HERE DIED WOLFE VICTORIOUS

Wolfe and Montcalm together have a unique inscription on the monument erected to their joint renown:

MORTEM VIRTUS COMMUNEM
FAMAM HISTORIA
MONUMENTUM POSTERITAS
DEDIT

But the Montcalm monument follows perverted history in showing him only in defeat.

Some Frenchman or some French Canadian would doubtless compose a far finer inscription in their own expressive tongue. But I hope that if and when they do they will convey the same idea as I endeavoured to convey in what I suggested as an additional inscription over his tomb in the Ursuline Chapel. A suggestion had been made that the Canadian Daughters of the Empire might place crossed colours on Wolfe's hideous monument in beautiful Westminster Abbey (a monument which never looked so well as when half hidden by Canadian colours massed there while the units owning them were fighting at the front). These two colours were to have been the Jack of Queen Anne (as used in Wolfe's day) crossed with the present Union Jack, which should have been

“de-faced” with a golden Maple Leaf. On the supporting shield the suggested inscription was to have been this:—

COMMEMORATING
CANADA IN ARMS
BESIDE HER MOTHER COUNTRIES
DURING THE GREAT WAR

What I also suggested for the tomb of Montcalm (with simultaneous inauguration) was: crossed *Fleur-de-lys* and *Tricolore*, with these words on the shield:—

QUATRE FOIS VICTORIEUX
UNE FOIS VAINCU
TOUJOURS
AU GRAND HONNEUR
DES ARMES DE LA FRANCE

MISCELLANEOUS

1. *Language.* Suppose you went to a distant part of the world and there you found people speaking English as Shakespeare heard them speak at Warwick Fair: would you think that kind of English particularly bad? Well, this—of course with many variations from environment—is not unlike what an educated modern Frenchman finds among the French Canadians, whose educated speech is still very reminiscent of Bossuet and Molière and the days of the Grand Monarque. Even the fact

that most of them call their native tongue *français*'s (and not *français*) is reminiscent of the days when Charlevoix and others found the people of New France speaking without the least outlandish accent. They spoke the French of France in those days; and some educated French Canadians speak, while still more write, the French of France to-day.

It is not, however, of the highly educated that I am speaking here, but of the proverbial man in the street and, still more, out on the farm, who, whatever his tongue may be—English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, or what not—sticks to the older forms all the more closely the farther away he lives, both mentally and physically, from the central home of his ancestral tongue. For, as everybody knows, the older forms of all life survive longest in remote communities; linguistic life is no more an exception to this biologic law than any other form; and just as Portuguese is older in the Azores than at Lisbon, Spanish older in South America than at Madrid, and English older in New England than in Old, so, now that New France and Old have lived apart for several generations, we must expect to find the average French Canadians older in their speech than modern Frenchmen are.

Nor, if we leave such circles as that formed by our own Section I and by their congeners,

and if we keep an open ear among real habitants (and even among their congeners in towns) shall we be disappointed—unless, indeed, we happen to be performing specimens of that kind of English-speaking tourist who can't see why their own "Parisian French" is not the only kind of French worth speaking. The tricks of speech these specimens perform are found offensive now and then. But why? Why should not everyone be pleased? The really perfect specimens themselves are quite delighted to find they speak a kind of French which is absolutely unintelligible to those who speak the "French-Canadian patois," while F.R.S.C.'s and all their congeners in France are too polite not to pretend that they can understand this "pure Parisian French"; and so these perfect specimens go on their way rejoicing. But the offended French Canadians? Well, should not they be happiest of all? For who else enjoys so many opportunities of hearing a kind of noise which even French and French Canadians, put together, could never have invented for themselves?

Speech differs of course among all French Canadians, as among ourselves, by social classes, education, locality, or calling. But, taken in a general way, with emphasis on that in which it differs from the general French of France, and with special stress on how it is



A QUEBEC CALÈCHE

spoken by the average habitant and by his urban congeners, I would venture to call it a variant made up of excellent materials and subject to peculiar dangers, of which Anglicisms are the worst. It is not, emphatically not, a patois; though it does contain some elements of several dialects current in France two centuries ago. It is, first of all, an elder form of French—and good French too. Next, it contains a fusion (perhaps I should say infusion) of old French dialects, Norman and other cognate forms preponderating. Finally, it has varied from environment:—from daily contact with local conditions, from former contact with the Indians, from contact with naval and military life, from an intimate contact with waterways greatly surpassing that of the stay-at-home French, and from contact with English-speaking people, both in the States and Canada.

2. The *calèche* (pronounced on the tourist-haunted cabstands as *calash*) is a unique survival of an old French vehicle, now probably extinct everywhere else; and only surviving in Quebec because here, if anywhere, the tourist likes to feel “as he should”—and, still more, “as *she* should.”

3. P.Q. is not a Prohibition Province. But it is also not a drunken one. Doubtless there were some “good old days” when it was; though I am inclined to doubt whether there

ever was a recognised bar-room query in Quebec such as some old West Indians must often have heard in their youth. "Drink, Sah? Yassah!—Drinky for drunk or drinky for dry?"

However this may be, Quebec certainly had the first of all governmentally-licensed inns and bar-rooms in Canada; for in 1648 the Governor-in-Council appointed Jacques Boisdon (bibulous cognomen!) first and only inn-keeper for the City of Quebec, "provided always that the said Boisdon settles in the square in front of the Church, so that the people may go there to warm themselves; and that he keeps nobody in his house during High Mass, sermons, catechism, or Vespers."

4. *The first play ever performed in Canada* was Corneille's *Le Cid*, which was given before the Governor and all the Jesuit Fathers in the store-room belonging to the *Cent Associés* in 1646.

5. The old Intendant's *Palais* must be unique in having been, first, a brewery, established by Talon in 1671, then his own official residence, (where the Superior Council sat, and where the infamous Bigot revelled while New France was on the road to ruin) then barracks (in which lodged some of Arnold's Americans after their wonderful march from Cambridge to Quebec) then, after 112 years of

military possession, Dominion Government property; and now a brewery again.

6. Quebec is unique in the whole New World as being the burial place of five Governors-in-chief, from Champlain in 1635 to the Duke of Richmond in 1819. Frontenac's heart, enclosed in a small leaden casket, is said to have been sent to his Comtesse—*la Divine*. But, so the story goes, and it may well be true, she haughtily refused to keep after death what she could never call her own in life. Consequently, it was returned to Quebec, where, with the rest of that warrior's remains, it has passed through two great fires, one when the Récollet church was burnt in 1796, the other when the Basilica was burnt only the other day.

7. From old to new. Quebec lays claim to what, almost forty years ago (1885) was then *the longest electrical power-transmission in the world*—from Montmorency to Quebec, seven miles by wire. How true this claim may be I won't pretend to say. But we do know that by far the *longest suspension span, and by far the heaviest too, in all the world of bridges* was successfully raised into its present position in 1917. This Canadian-built central span is 640 feet long, and then made, in every way, the record for the world.

CHAPTER XI

LE CHEMIN DU BON DIEU

I DO not know what traveler it was who first called the great St. Lawrence water-way "Le Chemin du Bon Dieu." The phrase however, is an apt one, and must have had a world of meaning for the early explorer who had no other road except this broad shining one, given to him by *le Bon Dieu*, and leading into unknown regions full of mystery. And I can think of no more fitting title for that mighty river which becomes the sea itself, even while flowing between its rocky shores, with the open ocean still hundreds of miles away.

The voyage of the early travellers was, however, made under far different circumstances than the trip which I recently took from Montreal to the head-waters of the Saguenay. Instead of a palatial steamer such as that on which I travelled, he had only a canoe or sailing vessel, at the mercy of winds and tides, and it is no wonder that he placed himself under the protection of some special Saint, or even Notre Dame de Bonsecours herself.

Although my way of travelling was so differ-

ent and its dangers non-existent, Notre Dame de Bonsecours, who protects all voyagers, gave me her blessing with arms extended against the setting sun as the steamer left the harbour of Montreal. On either side towered castellated masses, their bases in shadow against the purple slopes of Mount Royal, and their tops outlined upon the amber and vermillion sky. These were not castles inhabited by hungry giants as the imagination suggested, but grain elevators ready to receive the golden harvest of the West. Across a broad stretch of water lay St. Helen's Island, its tall elm trees fringing the horizon, and its undulating surface already hidden in the shadows.

Towers, domes, and spires soon swung behind, and I heard as we passed from the great city, a clanging of cars and a shrieking of whistles floating out over the water, mingled with the bells of a neighboring convent—those ever-present, haunting bells of French Canada. Dominion Park now blazed out with a glitter of light in the darkness, and across the river on the south shore the slumbering whitewashed homes of the habitants were still vaguely visible in contrast with the garish glitter of the Park. The river buoys gleamed across the water, and made curious waving lines, blue and green and white like the water-snakes of the Ancient Mariner.

I had left a city of contrasts where the old and new war together, the new everywhere prevailing. I awoke at dawn to find another city clinging to the cliff above the water, more mediaeval in appearance than any port of the Old World. In Quebec, also, the old and the new are each striving for mastery, but a picturesque and ancient air seems to hover around even its newest structures. The boat sped downwards, carried swiftly by the current, and in the hazy morning the panorama spread before me looked like a mediaeval city, rather than like a modern town.

The long, low Island of Orleans lay upon the left. It is a beautiful tract of country, twenty miles in length, covered with farms. It is French to the core. Its very name, given to it in honour of King Francis the First, carries us back to the early days of New France.

On the northern shore of the river lie splendid farm-lands, and above them, peeping timidly over, appear, at some distance to the north, the summits of the Laurentians. Then the mountains seem to grow bolder and approach nearer, rising ever higher, until the summit of Mount Ste. Anne towers above the little town of the far-famed Saint.

The boat kept in close to the northern shore, which was every moment assuming a more rugged aspect. There were no more farms,

only barren rocks so steep that even the white birch and spruce could scarcely retain a foothold. No signs of the habitations of men, nothing but a desolate kind of grandeur, equalled only by the shores of the Saguenay. The only signs of life of any kind for miles were the white gulls circling about the barren headlands. The mountains beyond the shores were loftier than those further up the river, their blue peaks rising to the northward in almost endless succession.

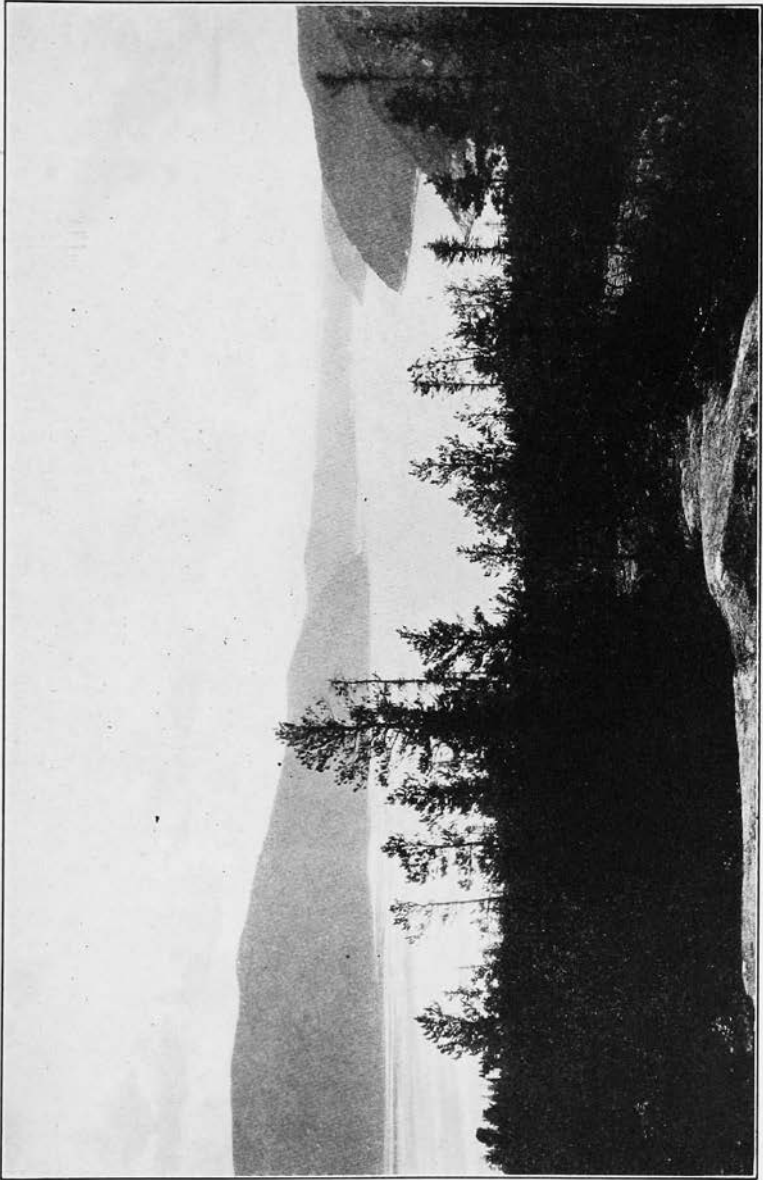
At last a sign of life! A whitewashed barn and a small house nestling among the trees, and the slender spire of the little church at St. François clinging to the narrow strip of land between the rocks and the sea. The south shore seemed far away, but was still visible—a long line of deepest blue. In fact, blue and gray were the chief colors of the picture, which were blended into a symphony of tints and shades—blue sky, bluer water, gray-blue rocks, and the dark purple of mountain and shoreline.

Three trim schooners loaded with timber passed close by as we rounded the point of Île aux Coudres. This is one of the largest islands in this part of the St. Lawrence, and besides its quaint beauty, it holds a great interest for the student of early Canadian history. It was here that Jacques Cartier, in 1535, landed on

the soil of New France, and caused to be celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving for protection on the perilous voyage, now safely accomplished. Here he erected a tall wooden cross to mark his landing-place, and to take possession of the new land in the name of King Francis. The cross was said to have been still standing in 1788.

Nearly opposite Île aux Coudres lies Baie St. Paul. The ancient town clings to its beautiful bay, around which lie lofty hills stretching back to rugged mountains. The deep green of the oat fields, and the lighter green of the pastures looked like banners hanging perpendicularly from the steep hillsides.

Pointe au Pic and Murray Bay, which are next reached, are somewhat similarly situated around a bay into which the Murray River flows. The old French village by the river is very attractive, and the newer town, consisting principally of beautiful summer residences and a splendid hotel, is one of the most popular summer resorts in Canada. Cap à l'Aigle is only a few miles further down the river, and lies along an elevated road overlooking the water. Here the St. Lawrence is more than a dozen miles in width and superb views may be had all along the shore. In fact the name "river" is quite wrong now when applied to the great water-way before us. It



THE SAGUENAY RIVER AT TADOUSAC

is the sea, salt, cold, and blue-green, ever powerful and relentless.

The headlands seemed to push more boldly out into the water, the fir-trees grew darker as the day declined, and the boat turned from the St. Lawrence into the Saguenay at Tadousac, as the sun was setting in orange and crimson clouds behind the dusky forests that clothed the giant masses of the hills.

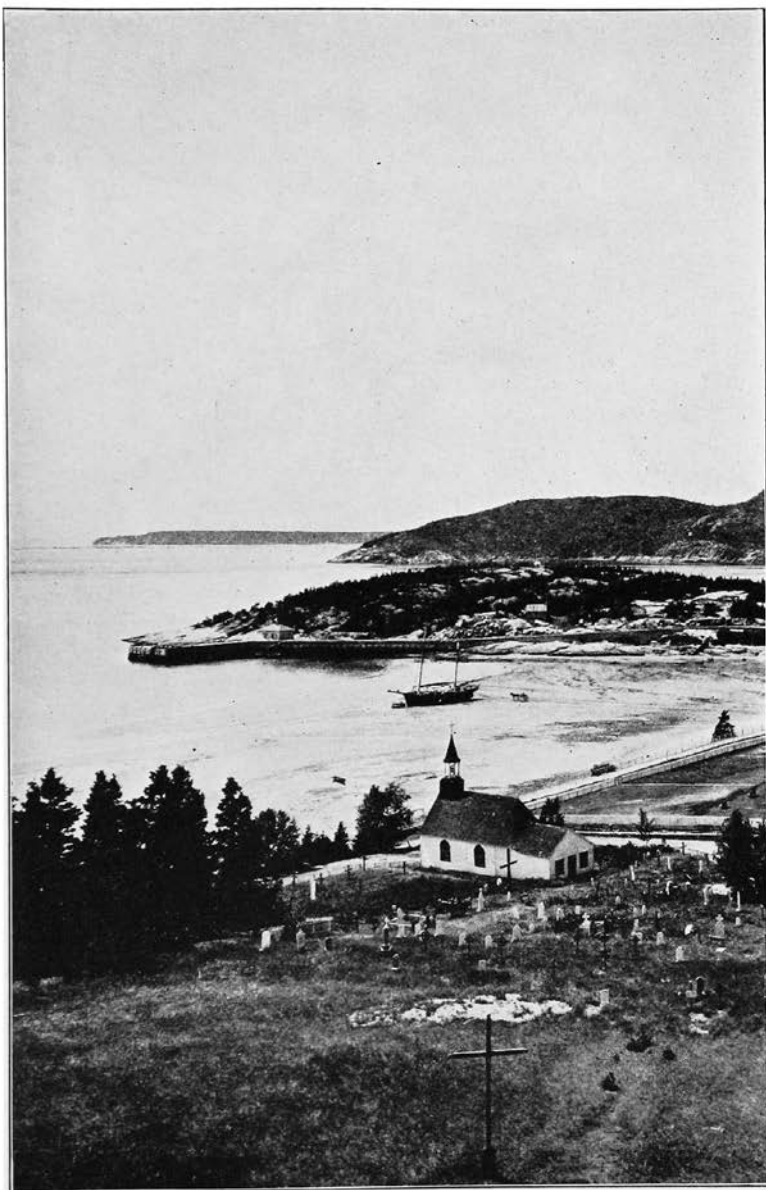
Historically, Tadousac is one of the most interesting places in French Canada, excepting Montreal and Quebec. But these places have grown into proud cities, and the early settlers would scarcely recognize even the mountain of the former or the rugged cliffs of the latter, could their spirits come back to visit their ancient haunts.

With Tadousac it is different. The granite hills that hem in the village, the crescent of the bay, and the green and blue heights that extend up the river as far as one can see, cannot have changed much in appearance since the time of Cartier and Champlain. True, the wharf, the large hotel, and the summer homes strike the eye at first, but it is easy to look beyond all these and to reconstruct the past. These dark waters bore canoes of Hurons and Algonquins, long before Cartier put in here to repair his ship, the *Grande Hermine*, in 1535. Pierre de Chauvin established a trading post here in

1600; and in 1603 Champlain caused his ship, the *Bonne Renommée*, to anchor under the shelter of these hills. He then ascended the river to a point above where Chicoutimi now stands, a distance of about seventy-five miles, and was probably the first white man to make the perilous journey.

During the early days of New France, Tadousac was one of the most important centres of the fur-trade. The Indians came down from the forests of the north to barter their furs with the French, bringing the pelts of lynx, beaver, bear, fox and martin. It is not difficult for the imagination to reconstruct the Tadousac of these ancient times, for the stage remains much the same, although the properties have changed and the actors have departed forever.

Tadousac was also the headquarters of the early missionaries—those men whose burning zeal to snatch even one soul from perdition, and to extend the influence of the church beyond the borders of the wilderness, cannot fail to win the admiration of all who admire bravery and sincerity. They were ever ready to undergo the greatest hardships, and to die, if need be, in the perpetuation of the truth as they saw it. Tadousac claims to be the place where the third religious ceremony was celebrated on the soil of Canada; but be that as it may, it was the place from whence went forth many of



THE INDIAN CHAPEL AT TADOUSAC

those intrepid wearers of the black robe to carry the torch of faith into the most distant forest.

Monseigneur Laval, the first Bishop of Quebec, administered the rite of confirmation to one hundred and fifty savages during a visit to Tadousac. Four hundred other converted Indians were assembled to do him honour, and the ceremony must have made an interesting scene. The Prelate in gorgeous robes, the mysterious rites at the altar erected on the shore, the red men kneeling for the Episcopal blessing, all combine to make an impressive picture; while the tides below beat upon ancient rocks, and the winds from tracts of northern country that remain unexplored to-day, wafted the incense into the primeval forest.

The chief historical relic at Tadousac is the little Indian chapel which, perched on the hillside, faces the water and the mountains beyond. It stands on, or near, the site of a primitive cabin of bark which served as a chapel as early as 1617. A stone chapel was erected later, but this being burned, the present structure was erected in 1747. It was built primarily for the use of the Montagnais Indians, but it served as a parish church at different times. It is in such good repair that outwardly it looks almost new, and only when one passes within does one receive the true impression of its age. The floor is of worn unpainted planks, and the walls

are covered with faded blue and gold. The little altar is also decorated with gilt; the roof forms a rounded arch. A faded picture of the Infant Jesus, said to have come from the church at Grand Pré, smiles across the tiny sanctuary at a portrait of Saint Charles Borromée, severe and important in his red robes.

The most interesting object in the chapel, and one that carries one back to the early days of the old régime, is a figure of the Infant Jesus, given to the Montagnais Indians in 1648 by Louis Quatorze. It lies in a little glass case, wearing a crown of faded roses and a robe of pink satin made by the King's mother, Anne of Austria.

The Indians, of course, have departed long ago for other and perhaps happier hunting grounds, Louis Quatorze and Anne of Austria are but names, but the little figure still remains to remind us of a time when a Bourbon sat upon the French throne, when the Indians were the only inhabitants of the upper Saguenay shores, and when Canada's emblem was the lilies of France.

The bell that hangs in the chapel belfry is the most ancient in Canada; and for nearly three hundred years its voice has echoed among the massive hills around.

As I went out from the tiny building I passed through the church-yard, where black crosses

and white slabs of marble mark the resting places of many converted savages, as well as those adventurous souls who came from Brittany and Normandy in the old days. Their ashes mingle with those of the children of the forest, and above them grow the white birches and wild roses of the new land.

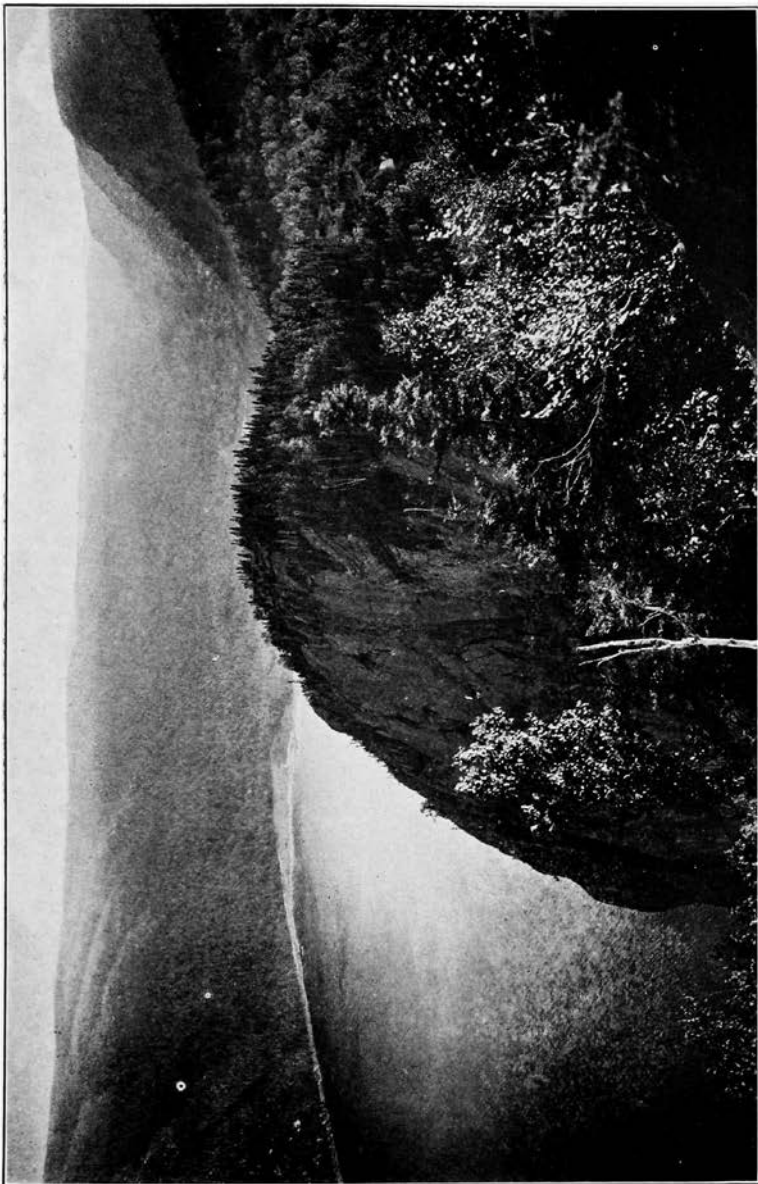
If I were to attempt, however vainly, to sum up in a phrase the glories of the Saguenay, that River-of-Deep-Waters as its name signifies, I should borrow from Mr. Michael Sadlier the title of one of his novels. "Desolate Splendor" does indeed express something of the predominating feeling that this river inspires. Its waters are at times dark and forbidding, at others blue and limpid as the sky above them.

Shaggy monsters of granite pushing out their snouts to drink the cold salt draught; miles of desolation and splendor combined; these are the things that confront one in first sailing up the strange and awe-inspiring river. I use the term "river" more because custom seems to demand it, than because it is really applicable to the Saguenay. It is not a river at all in the real sense of the word, but a great wound in the rocky breast of the earth, into which the sea-tides creep for nearly a hundred miles. The real river consists of two branches, the Grande Décharge and the Petite Décharge, that rush over rocky beds carrying the fresh waters of

Lake St. Jean to lose themselves in the waters of the sea at a point not far above Chicoutimi.

For miles along the shores there are no signs of life or of the habitation of men, nothing but sheer rocks covered with stunted trees; then suddenly one catches a glimpse of the little farm and weather-beaten buildings of some bold habitant who has snatched a bit of fruitful land from the clutches of the wilderness. Now and then a tiny village appears on a ridge of land between the rocks and the water. These villages are generally due to the lumber and pulp industries.

The fame of Capes Trinity and Eternity has spread far and wide. When I first saw the mammoth rocks rising from the water I was impressed by their great size, but not until I had seen them several times did I realize their real grandeur. They stand like ramparts of a great fortress at the head of a bay, as though they were placed there to guard the secrets of the wilderness from violation. Large boats can go close in beside them owing to the great depth of the water, and I once saw a stone, thrown from the deck of a steamer, rebound from the surface and disappear in the black water beneath. As the boat encircles the shores of the bay the whistle is repeatedly sounded. The rocks towering above them throw back the sound seemingly louder than before,



CAPE ETERNITY

after holding it in for several seconds. A tall white statue of the Virgin stands on the foremost cliff of Cape Trinity. It gleams in the sun against the dark firs behind; but seen at twilight, looming tall and white through the shadows, it is most impressive, accentuating the feeling of desolation that the lonely cliffs at all times inspire.

Cape Trinity is so called from the three peaks that crown its summit. There is an interesting legend that accounts for these three peaks, which is told by Mr. Damase Potvin in his book "L'Appel de la Terre."

The story goes that in the times before the white man came, the Great Manitou sent all the evil spirits to the bottom of the river beneath the towering rocks. One of these spirits, being mightier than the others, was only wounded and struggled for many years at the bottom of the river, especially during the times of the autumnal storms. Mayo, a mighty giant as tall as the highest trees, was one evening hunting on the shores near the cape, which was then only one towering peak reaching to the clouds. Suddenly the wounded demon beneath the waters arose and engaged in a mighty struggle with Mayo, seeking to devour him. Mayo seized him by the long tail that he wore, hurled him against the rocky cliff; and as his head hit the granite walls above, it made great indenta-

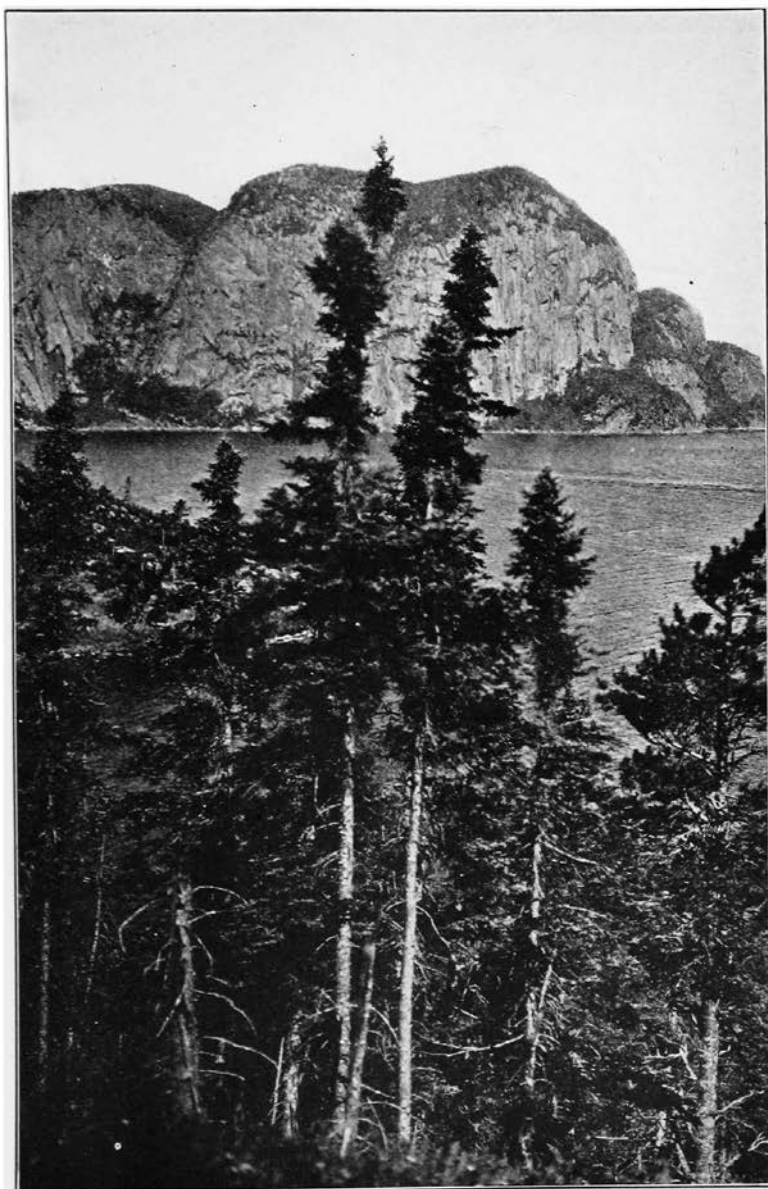
tions, thus causing the three peaks that to-day are plainly visible from the bay.

This is the legend; and viewed through the gathering dusk of evening, something monstrous and supernatural seems to tower above the giant rocks.

Ha! Ha! Bay is the deepest of the side gashes that spread from the main seam which forms the Saguenay's bed, and it has a gentler and more subtle beauty than Capes Trinity and Eternity.

Headlands upon headlands, of all shades of blue, green, and gray, push boldly into the water on both sides as the stream turns westward. It seems as though, in the eternal warfare between sea and land, that the land here were gaining the victory, and that the rocks, encroaching on the water, would drive out the sea forever. But the victory is an illusion, for day and night the rocks crumble and crash down, eaten away by storm, wave, and tide.

More miles of headlands, a few farms perched here and there on the rocks, stretches of forest; and at least Chicoutimi is reached. The boat cannot go further, for it is not many miles to the place where the turbulent waters of the Grande Décharge mingle with the smoother tidal waters of the Saguenay that creep up from the great gulf hundreds of miles away.



CAPE TRINITY, SAGUENAY RIVER

CHAPTER XII

THE COUNTRY OF MARIA CHAPDELAINÉ

THE places where genius has dwelt, and where great works of art or literature have been produced, possess a subtle but indescribable charm. A stage where Sarah Bernhardt has held an audience spell-bound by the beauty of her art still has an interest for the lover of the drama, even after the lights are extinguished, and the great tragedienne has left the boards forever. The house where Charles Dickens lived and worked, and the streets trodden by David Copperfield and Little Nell, never fail to stir the imagination of those who have learned to know and love Dickens. Although much of its old glory has departed, the shrine of Stratford-on-Avon draws thousands of Shakespeare-worshippers to it every year.

It is easy, therefore, to understand the attraction that the northern and eastern shores of Lake St. Jean hold for the admirers of the work of Louis Hémon. To travel over the region between St. Gédeon and Péribonka, and to pass

through the villages of La Pipe, Saint-Coeur-de-Marie, and Honfleur, whose names are now known to hundreds of thousands of readers in both Europe and America, is interesting indeed; but to visit the very people that served Hémon as models for his characters, and to converse with that easy intimacy that is possible only with the native of French Canada about the famous man whom they all loved for his own sake, is an experience not soon to be forgotten.

It was this desire to see the stage where the subtle drama was played, and to talk with those who, unknown to themselves, were the chief actors in it, but above all to visit places where Hémon lived and worked, that led me to make a journey to Péribonka. This is not an easy matter, especially if one is determined to go by land, and to travel the trails through the woods and settlements that Hémon knew so well.

Leaving a palatial Saguenay steamer at the village of St. Alphonse, in the pouring rain at 5 A. M., and starting into a bleak country for a long journey, partly by slow and uncertain trains, but mostly over almost impassable roads, may not seem attractive; but a slight element of adventure, joined with the desire to see and know the country of Maria Chapdelaine, urged me to undertake the trip, in the company of a friend—an enthusiastic admirer of French

Canada—whom I shall henceforth call the scientist.

I had been told that the easiest way to reach Péribonka was to go by train to Roberval and to cross Lake St. Jean in a boat. But as the lake is thirty miles broad, and the boat goes only once or twice a week, and especially as I should scarcely catch a glimpse of the real country of Maria Chapdelaine, I decided to go only as far as St. Gédeon by train, and to cover the other forty miles of the journey as best I could.

The Hotel Bagotville at St. Alphonse, to which we had been directed by a friendly native, is like any other hotel in any other French-Canadian village. Here one finds cleanliness, plenty of plain food, and a warm welcome. But at 5 A. M. on a cold rainy morning, even the cheerfulness that generally pervades these places was a little dampened. The fact that two priests were of the company gathered in the little parlor also contributed its share of solemnity. In fact, as we sat clustered around the stove conversing in low tones while waiting for breakfast to be prepared, I was reminded of a country funeral with the departed lying in the next room. But on being summoned to the dining room our spirits rose, and even the young priests soon found their tongues. The elder of the two sat at one end of the table, and

directly behind his head a large round plaque hung on the wall, which gave him the appearance of wearing a bright red halo. Beside it a picture of the Virgin smiled across at the lithographs of apoplectic peaches and sanguinary watermelons hanging opposite.

The train was lurking in the background when we reached the station, and it started punctually. But apparently satisfied with this virtuous act, it ambled along at a foot-pace, stopped at every siding, and seemed to be playing hide-and-seek with the conductor and trainman; and on one occasion it retraced its course by several miles as though it had forgotten something. Nevertheless, the journey had its interesting features. A crowd of moccasined young lumber-jacks boarded the train at a crossroad, and by the use of mouth-organs and voices succeeded in keeping us awake. Only the French-Canadian can be cheerful enough to sing under such circumstances and at such an hour.

The country alternated between level valleys with well-cultivated farms lying between the rocky hills, and long stretches of wilderness with huge burnt patches and stagnant pools, all swept by sheets of rain and icy winds. As the train slowed down I was straining my eyes to see the name of the station through the wet window pane.

“St. Gédeon!” called the trainman, and we

alighted. Here we were at last in the "old parish" so much regretted and longed-for by Madame Chapdelaine. When we descended into the blinding rain, with the gray clouds almost reaching the tops of the low buildings and stunted firs that crept stealthily through the mists, I wondered what Madame Chapdelaine found here to regret. Surely the shores of the Péribonka could not be more desolate than the country before us. However, seeing the comforting sign "Hotel" just behind the little station, we were making our way towards it when we were stopped by an energetic and determined young man. He politely but firmly insisted that we get into his waiting Ford, which he proudly stated was the only one for miles around, and that we should go to his father's hotel at some distance from the station. My will was like the wind-blown bushes by the roadside before his tempestuous persuasion. The Ford rattled, the driver spat, the mud flew, and before we knew what had really happened the energetic driver, Joseph, had dropped us before the door of his father, Louis Gagnon, the chief worthy of St. Gédeon, the first settler, and the man who really discovered the place. When we had been introduced with proper ceremony to Madame, who sat knitting by the white-curtained window with her housework all done at 9 A. M., our host conducted us to our room.

It was a small apartment with two windows overlooking the fields and forests beyond the one village street. Its principal furniture consisted of two corpulent beds which seemed to extend to us the same welcome as had been accorded by our host and hostess. On the floor were marvellous rugs made of sacking, to which wonderful roses of blue, red, and green homespun were sewn. On the walls were old-fashioned chromos of sacred subjects; above one bed hung a black crucifix, and above the other a palm leaf—the relic of some Palm-Sunday festival—together with a little bottle of holy-water tied round with a blue ribbon and fastened to the wall.

“I choose the holy-water,” said the scientist; “I’m far from home and I may need its protection.”

But there was no mockery in this, for we both had learned, in our wanderings through Catholic Quebec, the great part that pious objects and sacred pictures play in the lives of the country people, and that for this reason alone these objects were worthy of respect.

We had scarcely settled the matter of the beds when the moccasined feet of our host came shuffling up the creaking stairs, and a knock was heard at the door.

“Something to warm you up,” he said, presenting three small glasses of dark red wine,

carried on a glass celery dish which had been broken and carefully mended with putty.

“It is my wife who makes that,” said the old man proudly; “she makes it from sarsaparilla and blueberries.”

“Salut!” and it was gone in a twinkling. It was delicious, sweet, yet with a decided northern tang like the wind blowing outside.

Dinner was served in the little parlor, and we ate in solemn splendor amid the family crayon portraits and other treasures, while our host and hostess dined in the kitchen. Soup, pork and beans, and preserved wild strawberries formed the menu, followed by the wine made from sarsaparilla and blueberries.

On hearing the musical chime of bells peal out from the church across the way, I asked the cause of their ringing at such an hour.

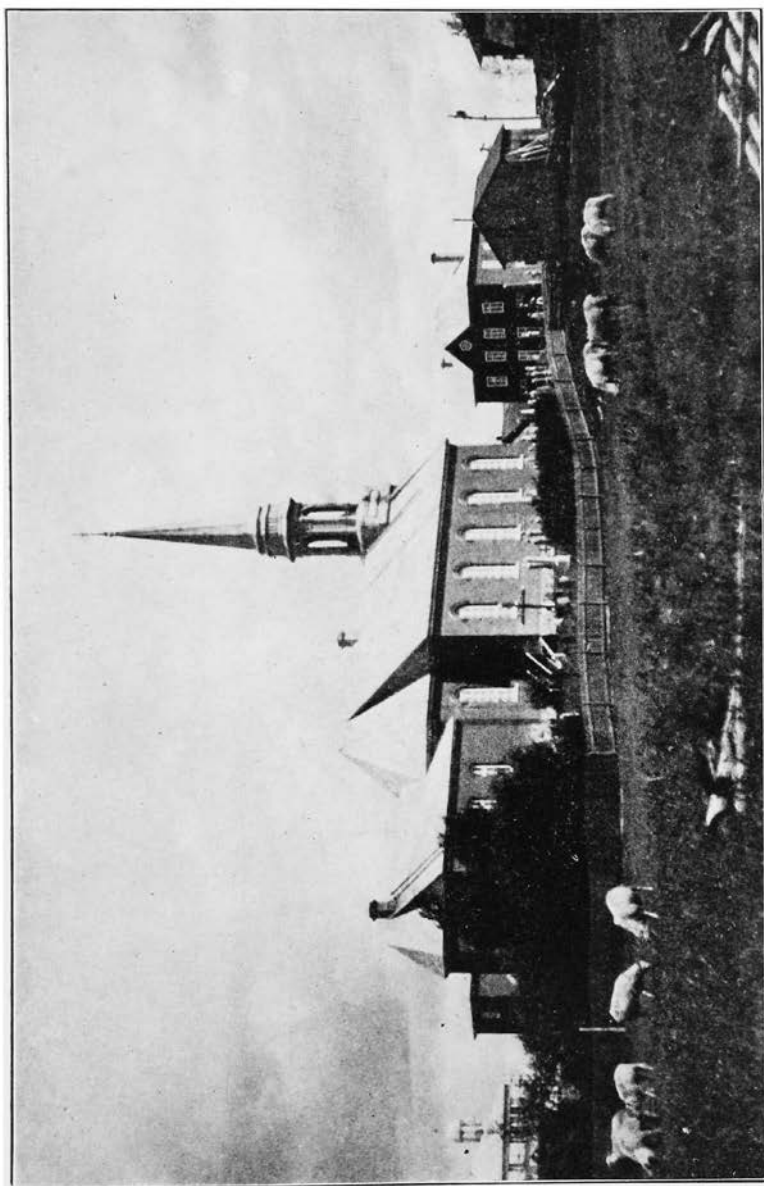
“It is a funeral,” replied Madame, calmly continuing her knitting. The French-Canadian regards death calmly, with a philosophy built upon a solid foundation of faith. Life is only a journey to a better place, and although there may be difficulties along the way, one must not be overpowered by them; they are only a passing phase, and the happy issue is certain.

After dinner, the weather having cleared a little, I started to take some photographs. I was bold enough to ask Madame to pose for me, and approached her with camera in hand.

There was great excitement—a smoothing of cap frills, an adjusting of skirt and apron, and the bringing out of the best parlor chair, a hideous yellow monstrosity from some far-off department store. Madame was quite visibly disappointed when I insisted that she should sit in her old kitchen rocker covered with homespun patchwork, and that instead of striking an attitude, she should continue to knit. What was the use of having one's picture taken just as one looked every day? This was apparently what Madame thought, but her innate politeness and her French-Canadian philosophy to make the best of everything prevailed, and I got the pose I wanted.

The sun having now appeared, our host invited us to go for a drive to see the lake, of which the old man seemed very proud, and the village and farms lying near it which he himself had helped to create. Bayard, the fat bay horse, was soon at the door, and although an icy wind was blowing across the thirty miles of water, the old man spurned both the overcoat and the blanket brought out by his wife.

The village of St. Gédeon, in spite of the fact that scarcely fifty years ago its site was primeval forest, presents the same characteristics as the older villages of Quebec. A gigantic brick church with lofty tower and the usual convent-school and presbytère form the centre. Farm



ST. GÉDEON

lands extend into the village itself, and sheep graze under the shadow of the church spire.

The shores of Lake St. Jean are for the most part low-lying beaches of fine sand, showing where the ancient and much larger lake has receded. The water of the lake is clear, and its dark blue surface was being whipped by the north wind into huge white-crested waves. If I had doubted before the wisdom of going to Péribonka by land instead of by water, I was now thankful that I had chosen as I did. Even the dauntless old Gagnon agreed that it would be impossible to cross the lake that day. Above the indigo-coloured water rolled great cumulus clouds extending down to the tossing waves in the far distance; to the right and left ran a low line of Laurentian hills, a deep purple in the clear rain-washed air. Large patches of brilliant blue were to be seen between the white and gray cloud-masses, where a struggle was going on between sunlight and storm. I feared that it would rain again, but Gagnon, with the usual optimism of the French-Canadians, who will seldom admit that Quebec ever has had bad weather or bad roads, assured me that it would not; and he was right.

When we had reached the open road again, we continued along the lake for some miles, keeping close to the shore. The farms became more infrequent, the forests more extensive, and

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masses of granite rose like prehistoric monsters from the deep green oat-fields or stump-dotted pasture-lands. The road became rougher and more grass-grown, then disappeared entirely.

“Voilà! we can go no further. There is no road beyond. Nothing but forest.”

Gagnon was pleased. We wished to see the wilderness; and here it was, dark and sinister. We had reached the Petite Décharge, or smaller outlet of the lake, which, with the Grande Décharge further on, forms the head-waters of the Saguenay. The river is broad and comes tumbling down apparently from the sky above it, for looking up stream no land can be seen except the spruce-covered shores. As it rushes past with a sullen roar, one can easily picture the tremendous force of the water coming down in early spring, when the lake is swollen by the melting of the snow of the great plains above. No less than seven rivers, some of them, like the Mistassini and the Péribonka, of great size, discharge their waters into Lake St. Jean.

I thought that our trip was finished, but Gagnon had saved a choice bit for us. We had talked of fishing and fishermen, and Gagnon, now on the homeward trail, reined his horse up to a little house not far from the tossing lake.

“Come and see the ounananiches,” he said, as he took us to a shed filled with ice, whereon

lay specimens of that splendid fish that would make a sportsman's heart throb.

“We shall have one for supper,” he said, and having purchased one for the sum of thirty cents we again took the road for St. Gédeon.

That night we sat about the stove in Madame Gagnon's shining kitchen and listened to the old man's tale of the early settlement of St. Gédeon. Louis Hémon dwelt here for some time, and is said to have written a part of *Maria Chapdelaine* in this village. I cannot but believe that he took Louis Gagnon as his model for Samuel Chapdelaine. But be that as it may, I have never met a *colon* who more nearly represented the character. Tall, sinewy and bearded, and with a heavy shock of iron gray hair, the old man wore his years lightly. He told us of his boyhood in Charlevoix County where it was so hard to make a living, and of his taking up his first section of land at the age of sixteen, in the trackless forest where the village now stands. In those days it took two weeks to perform the journey from his old home to the new land, along a road which the government had cut through the woods. Gagnon and four others had come up on foot, each driving a cow before him. Of this quartette of early settlers Gagnon was the only one surviving. He told of the heart-breaking toil—for Gagnon had helped to clear five farms; and of the

“famine winter” when the only food to be had was the fish caught through the ice of the lake; and finally of his first log-house, where he had begun married life. But it was all told simply and without boasting, like a story that has an interest chiefly for the one recounting it. The only emphasis or exclamation used by the old man at a particularly striking episode was “Bonsoir!”

During the afternoon we had passed the farm where the first little log-house stood, and the old man had pointed it out with a note of emotion in his voice. Then he had let his eyes rest for a moment upon the beloved acres that his own hands had “made,” for he was the *défricheur* who had cut down the trees, and cleared away the stumps. The farm was now occupied by one of the old man’s numerous sons, and a spick-and-span frame house stood beside the road. But the old house, strangely built of squared cedar logs, still stood its ground.

Gagnon’s description of the cabin in the old days was brief but concise:

“Twelve feet square, a bed here, a stove there, a table at one side and three chairs without any backs—that was all.”

The French-Canadian has an innate dramatic sense. The old man knew that he had sympathetic and interested listeners, but he never let himself be carried away by the story of the

hardships of the settlers. It all seemed so simple and natural to him. He reached his climax just as the clock struck ten—a very late hour in St. Gédeon. Going into the *grand'-chambre* he returned with a silver medal attached to a blue ribbon, together with a framed diploma that hung in a place of honour, among the crayon portraits.

These precious objects had been awarded to him by the County Agricultural Society for the best-kept farm in the district. Here surely was success in life! To start with virgin forest, and after years of toil to receive a medal and diploma for the best farm in a large county—what more could a human being desire?

Madame's white cap was nodding, and after a couple of glasses of her blueberry wine, we ascended the stairs to seek the corpulent beds.

But we had not yet visited the shores of the Péribonka, the real object of our visit to these regions.

The next morning, however, Joseph expressed himself as willing to undertake the trip; and at an early hour we were carried away by him in his chariot, amid a cloud of smoke from the engine and shouts of "*Bonne chance!*" from our host and hostess, and from a good part of the village as well, who had assembled to see us off. Old Gagnon promised quite solemnly that he would get his little grand-daughter to say

an Ave for good weather and for our safety. There was something about the solemnity of our departure that was not entirely reassuring; and now that I have travelled over the forty miles of rock, clay, and muck that separated us from Péribonka, I can understand it.

For a short distance the road was good, and the country settled and fertile; but after leaving the village of Alma we passed through long stretches of wild country, with only the semblance of a road.

La Grande Décharge was a place of great interest both on account of its savage beauty and of the great power works now in construction there. Through this river comes a large part of the water stored in Lake St. Jean, and almost unlimited power can be developed from its falls and rapids. In fact, it seems only reasonable to think that the rivers that flow into the lake, as well as its two outlets, are destined to play an important part in the development of this section of Canada. The brown waters that come tumbling down over the steep rocks carry with them untold electric energy.

But we had not come here to see great power dams; and after passing through various vicissitudes along the way, we landed at La Pipe, or as it is now called, St. Henri. Here it was that Maria sought counsel from the curé after the death of her lover, and was told not to grieve

for François Paradis, for he was now in the land of the blessed, but to say a mass for the repose of his soul, and to do her duty as became a woman of French Canada. A splendid church of native granite is now being built, which looks large enough to house the inhabitants of the whole countryside; but there is no doubt that it will be crowded to the doors on the days of high festivals, when everyone must attend mass.

After leaving La Pipe our first real difficulties began. The road crossed a series of steep hills which the recent rains had rendered almost impassable. In fact, a man of less determination than Joseph would have been daunted by them. Often we would jump out and push the panting car over the crest of a slippery hill, and with a satisfied "*Bon!*" Joseph again would take the helm.

The trail now presented a great deal of variety. Clay was succeeded by rocks, to be followed by long stretches of sand, and lastly by swamps composed of soft black muck. Just before we reached the village of Mistook, or Saint-Coeur-de-Marie, as it has recently been christened, the car shuddered and sank with a thud into a bed of muck that extended across the road.

Wilderness on both sides of us and no sign of a human habitation! But Joseph did not lose heart. Contenting himself with rather a

mild English swear-word, presumably to help express the feelings of his passengers, he brought fallen timbers from the roadside and, after superhuman efforts, the little Ford was again fluttering along the way. This Ford had a strange and almost reprehensible habit. Joseph carried with him a large can of what was said to be oil, and at frequent and regular intervals he would say. *Elle veut boire un coup!* (She wants a drink!) and with this powerful potion inside, the car seemed endowed with more than ordinary strength.

Beyond Mistook the country became wilder. Here the forest was still fighting with man, and the tide of victory seemed to flow first one way and then the other. In some places level oat-fields basked in the sun; in the middle distance the long lines of dark spruces advanced like a defeated yet still determined army; while between the fields and the forests stretched a sort of no-man's land strewn with up-rooted stumps like the fantastic twisted bodies of the slain; and farther away, monsters of gray granite crouched as though making ready to spring upon the helpless settler. Here, too, the *brulé* extended for miles its waste of burned trees and bushes, with only here and there a tall white birch, like a ghost stalking over the desolation. A strange sinister land!

When I first read "Maria Chapdelaine" I

thought that the coloring was a little too sombre; but since I have seen the eternal warfare being waged between man and the forest, I am convinced that the picture is a true one.

The next hamlet which we reached was that of Honfleur, to which Samuel Chapdelaine went for his family supplies. Here below the falls, the Péribonka is calm and beautiful between its rocky shores, but with a wild and austere beauty. It was in this place that Maria and her father crossed the river on the breaking ice, a feat which nearly ended in tragedy.

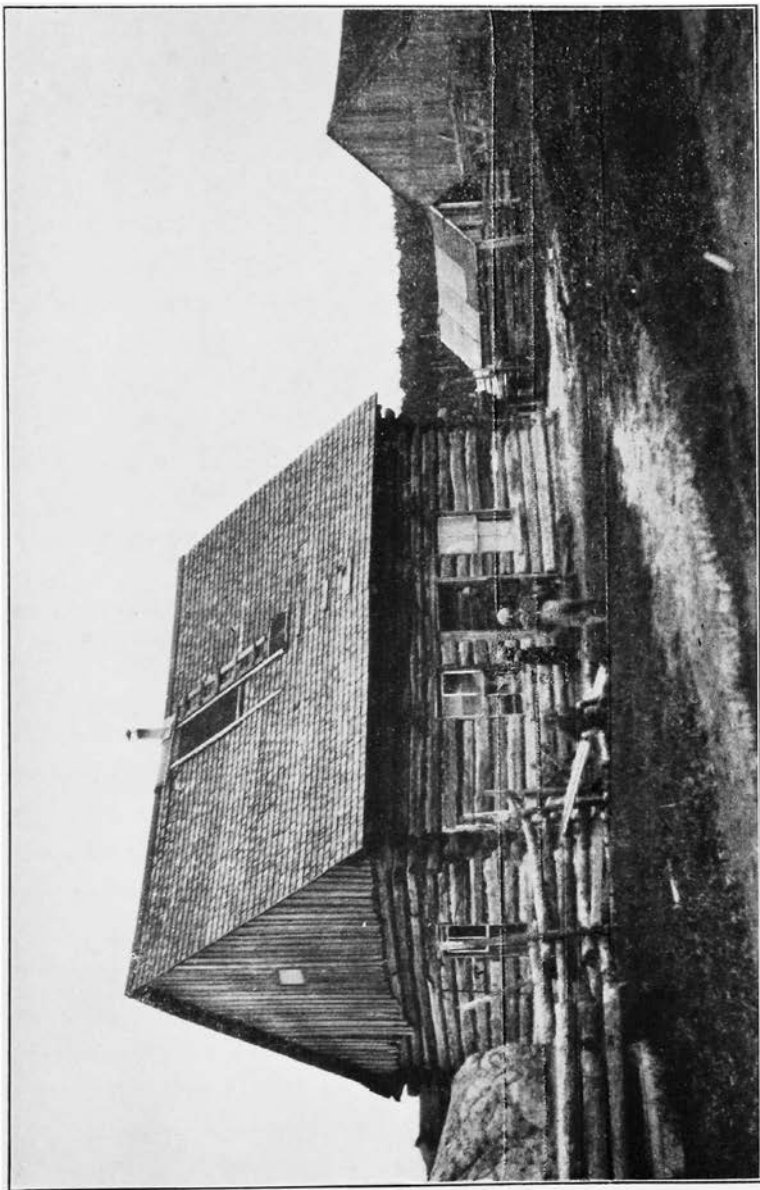
I had begun to despair of ever reaching Péribonka village on account of the condition of the roads, and but for the persuasion of the scientist and the optimism of Joseph, I think I should have turned back at this point.

“But a short ten miles to Péribonka, and a good, good road,” said Joseph, as we paused and looked at the wide expanse of water that separated us from the opposite shore. We crossed the river on a rude ferry that creaked and groaned under the weight of the car. The “good, good road” promised by Joseph failed to appear; instead there was a long stretch of sand with deep ruts out of which it would have been impossible to turn the car. The fact that we had the only car within many miles relieved us of such a necessity, and the driver of the

sole wagon that we met obligingly turned into the bushes and gave us the whole road.

It was above the falls of the Péribonka that Hémon in his story placed the Chapdelaine home. A little house could be seen not far from the water, and I fancy that this house may have suggested the scene, for we read of the roaring of the falls which could be heard by Maria as she baked the bread in the outdoor oven, and dreamed of François Paradis.

After a few miles we came upon the house where Hémon had lived when he worked for Samuel Bédard. It is now silent and deserted, but it was here that Hémon studied his characters and conceived the main theme of his story. It is a frame house with the usual barns and out-buildings, but as other occupied dwellings not far away suggested much more accurately the type of settler's house described by Hémon as the Chapdelaine home, I stopped to photograph some of them. These houses are generally of logs, and stand in the midst of a small piece of cleared ground facing the river, and with the forest-wilderness close behind. From this point north and east scarcely any settlements exist, the only inhabitants being trappers and Indians. Not far outside of Péribonka we met a party of Indian trappers with canoes and camp-equipment going towards the northern forests.



A SETTLER'S HOUSE ON THE PÉRONKA RIVER

Genius can throw a halo of light and beauty around the simplest objects and the humblest places. The genius of Louis Hémon has invested the rutted road, bordered on one side by mean wooden buildings and on the other by the broad river, with a never-failing interest. For this road, these buildings, and this river form Pérignonka, the spot around which the history of Hémon, now fast becoming a legend, is centred.

Of all the inanimate objects in the village, the low wooden church, that creeps so close to the road-side that it almost reaches the wheel-rut, held for me the greatest interest. Here it is that the story begins:

“*Ite, missa est.* The door opened and the men of the congregation began to come out of the church at Pérignonka.”

It is here, also, that we are introduced to Maria and her father and to François Paradis.

When I first read Hémon's “*Récit du Canada Français*” on its appearance in 1916, it did not interest me very greatly. In fact, its lack of colour and light-heartedness made it seem to me, who only knew the old parishes of the Richelieu and St. Lawrence valleys, to be unrepresentative of true French-Canadian character. But the stern conditions of life on the outskirts of civilization must of necessity af-

fect the temperament of the people who live there; and while the character of the habitant of the old parishes is more care-free and less sombre than in the northern concessions, the same sterling qualities form its foundation. A second reading of "Maria Chapdelaine" convinced me of its enduring qualities of truth and austere beauty, but it was not until I re-read the book on the shores of the Péribonka that I realized its full greatness. To sit on the weather-beaten steps of the Péribonka church, looking towards the blue river fringed with tall white birches and read "*Ite, missa est*" and the subsequent chapter; to look behind the church at the dark forest only a few hundred yards away, and follow the story of the death of François Paradis; then to glance at one of the gray-gabled houses and picture the passing of Madame Chapdelaine, all excites an emotion of reverence such as one might feel, when he sees for the first time, the original of a great work of art that he knew previously only through copies.

The sun which had remained partly hidden all the morning now shone forth in full splendor. The sky was a deep blue, for the air was blown clear of the last vestige of the smoke of forest fires which had been overhanging the district like a blue-gray curtain. In the gleaming river the cloud-masses were reflected, and



THE CHURCH AT PÉRIBONKA

beyond the fringes of the forest darker and heavier masses rolled away towards the north-west. A gilded figure of Christ, with arms uplifted in the attitude of blessing, stood opposite the church by the road-side, glittering in the brilliant sunshine. The strong contrast between the gray sky of April, and the dull white desolation of the snow that we see in Hémon's first chapter, contrasting with the beauty of sky and river and shimmering birches, seemed to me typical of the violent lights and shadows of these newly-settled regions.

I entered the church. It was long and low and finished entirely in unpainted spruce wood. There was no attempt to make a recessed chancel, but three small altars decked with candles and gaily-coloured flowers occupied the east end, and the ever-burning lamp flickered before the centre altar. The number of plain wooden benches provided for the worshippers told of the devotion and faithfulness of the inhabitants of the country for many miles around.

At a short distance from the church, facing the road and the river, stands a monument to Louis Hémon, erected by the *Société des Arts, Sciences et Lettres*—a single column of stone with a simple inscription, but a fitting memorial to a man, the key-note of whose work was simplicity. The cleared lands extended only a short distance behind, and I could see the tree-

tops of the forest bordering them—that threatening, mysterious forest that Hémon seemed always to feel closing in upon him. I stopped beside the monument, and two young men who were piling logs on the bank of the river looked at me curiously. “I knew Louis Hémon,” said one of them proudly.

I had been told that the Bédard family with whom Hémon lived, and after whose members he patterned his characters, now dwelt in the village; but I had come to Péribonka determined to view the vast stage and to make the actors play their parts once more for my benefit as I re-read the book; but not to see the models themselves, nor to interview the actors without their make-up, as it were, and deprived of the light that Hémon’s genius had shed upon them. I feared that such contact with the personages might disturb the illusion, or rather the reality of the story.

But Fate was against me. I had not reckoned on Joseph. The little car now ceased to flutter and throb. I looked to my right, and saw the sign “Samuel Bédard” in bold letter over the door of a combined store and hotel, and Joseph, with a smile of triumph, beckoned us to get out; for Bédard’s house being the only place where dinner could be obtained, we naturally gravitated to that point. And in the end I was not sorry; for to talk with those who



THE HÉMON MONUMENT

knew and loved Louis Hémon was a privilege that I had not counted upon, but was well worth going far to obtain.

I had also been informed that the family, particularly Madame Bédard, from whom Hémon drew his picture of Maria, were a little embarrassed by the fame that had been thrust upon them. I was therefore, rather diffident in broaching the subject of their connection with Hémon. We entered the store and, Bédard being out, inquired of Monsieur Bouchard, Madame's father, if we could get some dinner.

"But certainly, in twenty minutes," and he conducted us through the kitchen which was strewn with linen, and a passage likewise filled with it, towards the little parlor at the side of the house. It was wash-day in the Bédard home. A gurgle of musical laughter issued from the shed behind the kitchen, and a good-looking young matron with an abundance of black hair and large dark eyes ran forward to clear the passage, by gathering up the linen in her arms. This was my introduction to Madame Bédard, the model used by Hémon as a type of young French-Canadian womanhood.

Madame busied herself in the kitchen, and I went back to the store to talk to Monsieur Bouchard. He was not long in introducing the

subject of Hémon, probably suspecting that my interest in Maria Chapdelaine had brought me to Péribonka.

“It is my daughter, Madame Bédard, whom Louis Hémon took for the type, Maria Chapdelaine,” was almost the first information that he gave me. He then told me of his youngest son, Tit-Bé, who had died last summer.

“He was a fine fellow, with his big shoulders and strong,” added Bouchard in a low voice. I could not help feeling as though I had lost an old friend.

Presently Samuel Bédard came in, and I did not hesitate to ask him questions, which he seemed eager to answer. He told me of the day when he had discovered a stranger reading a book on the wharf, and, being in want of farm help, engaged him. The stranger was Louis Hémon. He would take only eight dollars a month as wages, as he was entirely without experience in farm work.

“And he knew nothing,” said Bédard, “but was willing, willing. And he would never spare himself. During the cold weather he slept on a bench beside the three-decker stove, and never complained either of the hardship or the cold. At times he seemed ill, and then he was sad and gloomy and did not talk. He seemed to want to be alone at those times; but at others he was very friendly. He loved the



ALMA-ROSE

children, particularly Alma-Rose, and never went to the village without bringing them chocolates. And I'll tell you a secret. Alma-Rose is a boy. He wore long curls when Louis Hémon lived with us on the farm, and Hémon used to tease him about them, saying he was a girl, and nick-named him Alma-Rose. Would you like to see Alma-Rose?"

Bédard called from the kitchen a handsome boy of about fourteen, his adopted son, for the Bédards have no children of their own.

"May I take your photograph?" I asked when he had been introduced by his foster-father.

"Yes, if you will give me one to send to my mother who lives in Montreal," was the prompt reply. And he quickly donned the frock-coat uniform of his college in Chicoutimi, and knotted about his waist a *ceinture* as blue as the Péribonka that flowed beyond the birches.

My interest in her children—for Madame has an adopted daughter as well—at once formed a bond of sympathy between Madame and myself. She had been rather shy and, I think, a little suspicious, as though she feared being asked embarrassing questions. But she now brought from a private room some of her treasures to show me, including some photographs of the old farm-house where they had

lived when Hémon was with them, and a picture of Alma-Rose with the curls.

I asked Bédard if they knew that Hémon was a writer. "He often showed us notes that he had written with such headings as 'The Time of the Blueberries,' 'The Time of Hay-making,' 'The Time of the Snow,' and told us that some day we would laugh over them together. But we have never laughed together again," concluded Bédard. "Oh, he was a fine, fine man."

After a handshake all round and promise to visit the mother of Alma-Rose when I returned to Montreal, we departed from Péribonka. I was especially pleased at Madame's friendliness, for I had watched her native courtesy and kindness struggling with doubt and suspicion; but our interest in her children had decided the matter. I do not wonder that Hémon chose her as a model of the *jeune Canadienne*.

The purpose of my journey had now been accomplished and I was ready to turn back towards St. Gédeon. But not so with Joseph. He insisted that, having come so far, it would be a pity to return without seeing the rest of the lake shore, which he assured me was a beautiful country with "good, good roads." He could accomplish the hundred and some miles around the lake and still reach St. Gédeon

in time for the night train to Chicoutimi which, I was solemnly assured, was always two hours late.

As usual my will bent before Joseph's flow of eloquence; and soon we were headed north-west towards the village of St. Michel de Mistassini. I think pride of country was the chief motive for Joseph's insistence; for he did not want us to go away with the impression that the whole of the Lake St. Jean district was like the forty-mile stretch between St. Gédeon and Péribonka.

Miles of sand with deep ruts formed Joseph's "good, good road" which led through immense tracts of barren land. These tracts, having been burned over some years ago, were now covered with blueberry bushes. It was harvest-time, and we passed several parties of blueberry pickers engaged in gathering the fruit that is shipped in car-loads from Chicoutimi and Roberval.

The road was now better and wider, and Joseph's spirits, never at a low ebb, bubbled over and he began to sing. He had a fine tenor voice, and the monotonous miles to St. Michel de Mistassini he enlivened by his songs. His repertoire was varied, ranging from popular love songs to the chants of the church service; but it was the old folk-songs that he seemed to love the best. "*Malbrough s'en va-t-en*

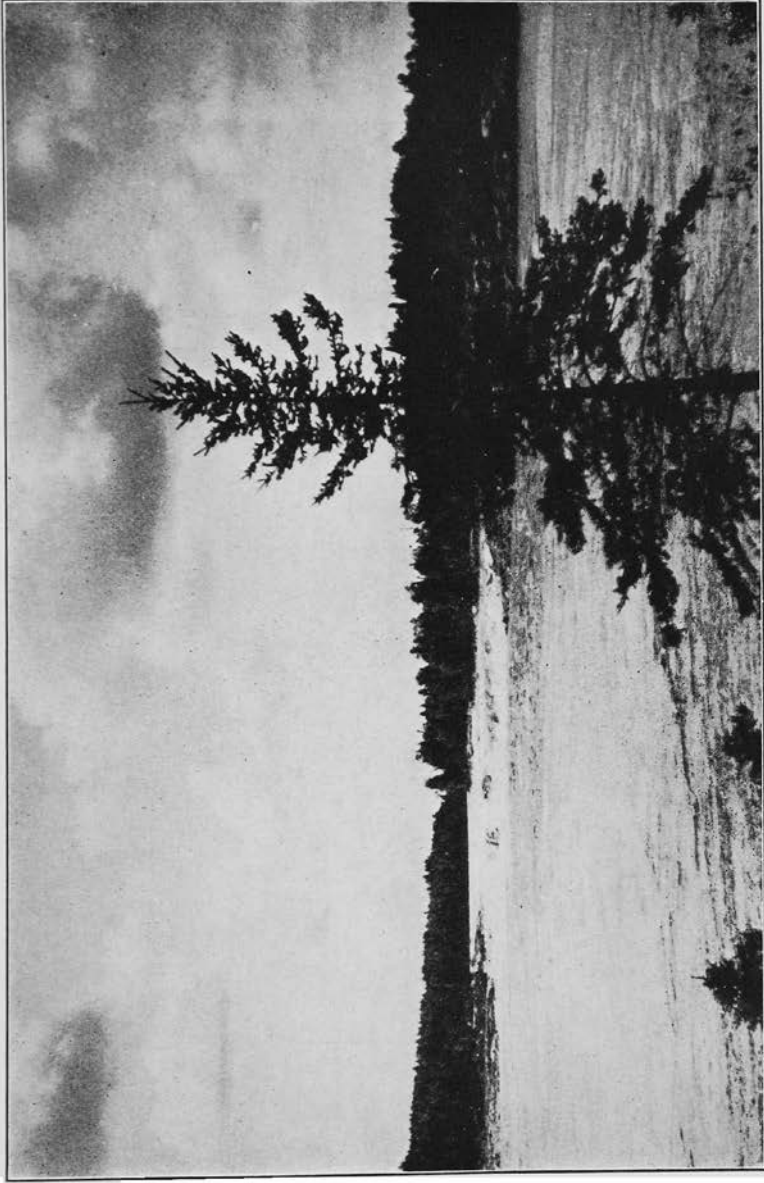
guerre," "*A la claire Fontaine*," "*Par Derrière chez mon Père*" echoed over the barren wastes; and a glimpse of the distant lake inspired him to sing a fisherman's song that I had never heard before.

"It is often sung," he explained, "when one fishes on the lake—after drinking a bottle of beer," he added reminiscently.

We now reached a wide river flowing between cultivated fields, and at the right rose a stone monastery standing among vegetable gardens. A little further along a covered bridge was seen, and at the right another large river, the main branch of the Mistassini which came tumbling down over the rocks, its waters seething and gleaming in the sun. As we alighted near the bridge to get a view of the falls, a passage from "*Maria Chapdelaine*" occurred to me:

"They (Maria and François Paradis) had spent the last evening at Mistassini viewing everything in the full light of the afternoon: the great wooden bridge covered in and painted red, not unlike an amazingly long Noah's ark; the high hills rising almost from the very banks of the river, the old monastery squatting between the river and the heights, the water that seethed and whitened, flinging itself in wild descent down the staircase of a giant."

St. Méthode, St. Félicien, St. Prime passed



THE MISTASSINI RIVER

in quick succession, for the road was now gravel or macadam. Between St. Félicien and Roberval there is a beautiful section of country that compares very favorably with the old settled parts of the Province. The busy hands of the *défricheur* have in a comparatively short time turned the forest into fine agricultural land.

Roberval, an attractive town with neat white houses, nestles close beside the lake. It is the centre of this northern district and has an importance next to that of Chicoutimi.

The beauty of Lake St. Jean is best seen by following the road from Roberval to St. Gédeon. Here the ground rises and one can see a great expanse of water encircled by rounded blue hills.

One more incident awaited us. On leaving St. Jérôme, a pretty village on the lake shore, Joseph took a short cut to St. Gédeon along a road made across the sand that borders the lake. The recent winds had blown the sand into little hillocks, one of which was at least thirty feet high. Joseph, in some mysterious way, knew of this obstruction, for before coming to it, as he overtook one of his friends driving to St. Gédeon, he made arrangements to be pulled out in case we stuck in the sand. Workmen had been making a corduroy road with young trees across this miniature desert;

but at the last rise, which had not yet been covered, we stuck fast. The wind swept down across the lake, bringing with it a shower of sand, and darkness was coming on. I had reconciled myself to spending the night in St. Gédeon, for I felt sure that the train must have gone, but Joseph settled himself comfortably and lit his pipe.

“Don’t worry,” he said, “we shall reach St. Gédeon before the train arrives.”

In due time Joseph’s friend appeared, and hitching his horse to the car, pulled us to firm ground.

Joseph’s promise was kept. When we reached the station the train had not yet arrived, and we should have time to go to the village and take leave of our host and hostess.

A friendly handshake, a noisy good-bye, and a promise to return at some future date, then one last raid on Madame’s store of blueberry wine, and we were back again at the station.

Joseph walked proudly about the station platform, exhibiting us to the major portion of the villagers, as some friends of his whom he had taken for the tour of Lake St. Jean in *one* day. I think he might have added—“in spite of themselves.”

CHAPTER XIII

LEGENDS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE

ALMOST every old Quebec village has its legend—some marvellous event which is handed down from generation to generation. This is especially the case with the villages along the St. Lawrence, whose very waters seem to engender the legends that find a home everywhere along its shores. These stories are sometimes bits of history into which some supernatural element has been introduced, or newer versions of old tales brought from France.

I have come upon many such legends that stir the imagination, but none more than those told me by my host in a tiny hotel near the village of Trois Pistoles. This village is perched high upon hills overlooking the majestic waters of the lower St. Lawrence, which is here always spoken of as the sea; for it is entirely salt, and it is many miles across to the mouth of the Saguenay on the opposite shore.

It was a Sunday afternoon; the country people were driving in towards the towering domed

church. I had just returned from a walk along the crest of the hills. A silver mist overhung the green water, and drifted up so thickly that at times the crosses on the domes of the church were veiled from sight. Blue patches of sky would reveal themselves an instant and then would be obscured by the fog. Beyond the village I had seen a gigantic black cross rising from a rocky island shore, and stand for a moment as though resting on the waves; then it was enshrouded by the creeping, ghostly clouds.

I asked my host the meaning of this cross, for I felt that it was not the usual shrine but that it must have some special significance; and he, settling himself comfortably in his split-bottom chair, lighted his pipe and started to tell me its legend. My host was an old man of imposing appearance, with white hair and beard, half sailor and half farmer, but now retired, and making a modest living by turning his house into an inn when occasion offered.

“The black cross, monsieur? It has a history—a great history. There has been a cross there on the rocky reef nearly a hundred years. Shall I recount you the story?”

Nothing could please me more; and after several puffs at his pipe during the pause that followed, the old man began his tale.

“It was long ago, monsieur, nearly a cen-

ture, when Trois Pistoles was not the fine town that you see to-day.”

This was said with a tinge of civic pride as he looked across the fields to the towers of the great church.

“It was my father who told me this, and he had it from my grandfather, who was one of the young men concerned in the story.

“It was the day before Christmas—*Mon Dieu!* how cold it was! But clear! so clear that one could see the mountains of the north shore rising behind the blue hills that guard the entrance to the Saguenay. The sky had not a cloud. The island where the cross stands looked so near that it seemed as though one could jump across the water and land on the rocks. The snow creaked sharply underneath the feet of the people going up and down the street—for we then had only one street—and no sidewalks at all.” I smiled as I recalled the crazy board-walks over which I had just been stumbling.

“But a strange sight presented itself to the people of Trois Pistoles. The sea was not to be seen. Instead, one saw big fields of ice—many, many *arpents*—all along the shore. When the sun was well risen, a large number of inhabitants came out to watch the ice-fields. And the strange thing was that upon the ice were many small black dots which moved in the

sun. The current had brought the floes in close to the shore, and thousands of these black spots could be seen. What were they? Seals. In a few hours the whole parish was on the shore watching with greedy eyes the easy booty. For seal-skins and fat were worth something in those days. And our ancestors were of Norman blood and had Norman instincts.”

This last was said with a knowing wink to express the cupidity of his forefathers, which, although he admitted it, he felt it would be unseemly to mention.

“All the men of the parish armed themselves with clubs, knives, and axes, or anything else that would serve to take the life of a seal. Then the massacre began. The red blood stained the white floes scarlet, for the poor animals were helpless before their butchers. I believe it was wrong to kill when there was no need. It is well to kill a deer for food, and pigs and calves that one has fed, but all these helpless wild things belonged to the *Bon Dieu*. You will see that He spoke to the people of *Trois Pistoles*.

“The butchery went on for hours and the December day was drawing to a close. One began to think of carrying the booty away. But in the excitement the skins and blubber had been piled in confusion upon the ice as best one could. And now the people began to

dispute with one another. I think the devil came and made them crazy. Or perhaps so much killing and the sight of much blood had mounted to their heads. They quarrelled and disputed until darkness came down, and the sky and the river had become the colour of these *bleuets*."

He pointed to a large bowl of dark-coloured blueberries that Madame was carefully picking over, while listening with approval to the story that she had probably heard a hundred times before. Beyond the wide-open window, orange marigolds and red poppies were in bloom, nodding against the background of white mist and blue sea.

"It must have been terrible to see the dark forms of the men slipping about the blood-washed ice in their *bottes sauvages*, and the dead seals lying about—more than seven hundred of them—like the dead after a battle. My grandfather said that he was very much afraid of something, he knew not what.

"Suddenly a cry like a moan arose from the women who were watching their men from the shore. The wind had changed. It was blowing from the landward, and the floe was slowly drifting from the beach, leaving a widening stretch of black icy water between. Then a cry of despair was heard from the men on the ice: 'Let us save ourselves; the floe drifts out to

sea!’ Everything was abandoned—sleds, axes, seals—and everyone ran to the side of the ice-field. A few succeeded in swimming across the open space that was every moment becoming wider. But more than two hundred remained. The cries from the shore became more piercing and more heartrending. Hoarse shouts of ‘Help! help! we perish!’ came out of the darkness that was fast covering the floe. Driven by the wind, it drifted with the current towards the north-east. The crowd on the shore, mad with grief, implored heaven to intervene. Many rushed to the church to pray before the altar. But the priest stood before the holy building in the light of lanterns which the villagers had brought, and with hands uplifted and face turned towards the sea, he prayed—prayed for a miracle. He implored heaven that the men on the floe might see once more their church tower, their families; and that, after life was over, they might rest in sacred ground beneath the shadow of the cross. Suddenly he cried: ‘Kneel, my children; I am going to give them absolution!’ And the kneeling crowd sobbed out the response: ‘*Ainsi, soit-il!*’ After the absolution, the curé prayed again, while the despairing echoes were heard to cry out from the floe in one long supplication. Then the echoes died away in the darkness, and the crowd beside the

church heard only the beating of the waves on the rocks.

“The moon came up and its light fell across the dark water. It was seen that large pieces of ice had separated from the main field and were drifting with the current. The floe was breaking up. No hope now. All lost!”

My host paused here to see if he had obtained the dramatic effect he expected. Looking from the window I could see that the wind had driven the mists away from the sea, and it danced and glittered in the sunlight. Some boys were fishing from the rocks. A small sail-boat lay at anchor, lazily rocking. White gulls wheeled about the black cross, and a circle of foam broke on the rocks at its foot. But the very contrast of the peaceful scene only heightened the dramatic qualities of the tale. My host saw that I was all attention, waiting for the dénouement of the drama.

“Now,” he continued, “while the curé and the people were praying in unison, suddenly the wind changed. The floe stopped drifting. It seemed to be impelled by some miraculous force, like an unseen hand driving it back towards the shore. Soon a crunching noise was heard, and the floe was hard and fast upon the rocks—at the very spot where the cross now stands. By nine o’clock everyone was rescued from the reef—*les petites Razades*—

and the whole village went wild with joy. The next day was Christmas. You can imagine that the good people of Trois Pistoles felt very pious that day. The church was filled to overflowing with those who had come to give thanks for the miracle. For it was a miracle, *monsieur*, and a great one."

The church bells now began to ring, and my host arose. "You like my *conte*? I will tell you another when I come back from Vespers." And with Madame following close behind he walked swiftly towards the church, his white beard tossing in the wind.

When my host returned from vespers he was as good as his word. In fact, that peace of mind that follows a duty well done made him more expansive than ever. I had mentioned to him that I was going on down the coast as far as Bic, and this probably influenced his choice of a story.

"I will tell you a legend," he began, "that one hears told all along the St. Lawrence. It is of the Indian massacre at l'Islet du Bic before the white man came. Is it a true story? I believe it is. I have often seen the cave where the massacre is said to have taken place, and not long ago many bleached bones were found there. These were bones, it is believed, of the Micmacs, who perished at the hands of their ancient enemies, the Iroquois."

Bleached bones! Micmacs! Iroquois! This sounded interesting. What more could one want, amid that drowsy peacefulness that pervades a French Canadian village on a Sunday afternoon, than to have evoked before one's eyes the "old unhappy far-off things," and especially by a *raconteur* like mine host? The ever-present pipe was lighted, and we were away again to the land of legendary lore.

"It was spring in the neighbourhood of Temiscouata. The hunting had been good, and now it was time for the Micmacs to leave the forests and descend to the sea to fish. About fifty families, therefore, left their wigwams in the back country and came down to the Bay of Bic. This bay is one of the most beautiful along the whole coast, as you will see. At the water's edge rise the gray cliffs, and far away one sees the outline of blue mountains standing above the darker water. It is beautiful, beautiful! And the islands! There are several of them far out, but two stand in, very close to the shore. Opposite these islands is a high plateau overlooking the sea. Here the village is built. And here it was that the Indians erected their cabins of birch bark, little dreaming of the fate that was awaiting them.

"One night two young men returned to the encampment, bringing the news that the Iroquois, in returning from a raid into the upper

country, had changed their course and were following the trail of the Micmacs. They were but one day's march away. Stealthily when night came down over forest and water, the Iroquois crawled through the darkness close up to the silent wigwams of the Micmacs. But they came in vain. No one was there. The dwellings of bark were empty. In the morning, however, an Iroquois chief walked along the beach and saw a wisp of smoke curling above a rocky peak on the largest island. He ran back to the camp where the Iroquois warriors lay, and uttered the dreaded war-cry. No answering voices came from the island, but the Iroquois were sure that their enemies were hidden there. The tide was low and they went forward over the sand to the island. Then a horrible hand-to-hand conflict ensued. The Micmacs were fighting for their lives and those of their women and children. This rendered them strong and fierce. They fought the Iroquois until they withdrew, carrying their dead with them. The Micmacs, in the short space of time that intervened, barricaded themselves in the large cave in the side of the island. They piled up fallen logs and small fir-trees—anything to protect them from the enemy. In a few hours, when the tide had gone out again, the Iroquois returned. This time they brought lighted torches with them and set fire to the

barricade. Many of the Micmacs perished inside the cave, suffocated by the smoke of the burning fir-trees. Of those that came out not one escaped. Warrior, squaw, or papoose, it made no difference—all were slain. The scalps were taken from the warriors, and the Iroquois spent the night by huge fires lighted on the beach, around which they danced and sang songs of victory. The island is still known as l'Islet du Massacre. There are ghosts on the island, and I would not go there at night. *Un bon conte, hein?*" My host shook out his pipe and filled it again.

The next day I continued my journey to Bic and stopped to see the ghost-haunted island. A long gray village occupied the plateau; the distant mountains rose from the dark blue water, as my host had said; and on the beach, washed by the ebbing tide, some boys had lighted a fire and were dancing about it, playing they were Indians. L'Islet du Massacre covered by fir trees was basking in the sun, and at the very mouth of the cave the waves danced and leaped about a crumbling wharf.

On returning to Quebec I made inquiries from a historian as to the truth of the story of the massacre at Bic. I was told that Jacques Cartier mentions in his journal a story told him by one of the Indians about a terrible massacre of Micmacs, which had recently taken

place on an island opposite the mouth of the Saguenay.

A historian of the St. Lawrence—M. Taché—has written of this legend as follows:

For many years, the story goes, the ghosts of the victims have been seen wandering at night about the island, mingling their cries with the moaning of the sea. Often, too, have been seen on dark nights phantoms carrying pale torches dancing with horrible contortions on the strand. It is in keeping with these traditions that the two capes which guard the entrance of the Bay of Bic have been called Cap Enragé and Cap aux Corbeaux. Only a few years ago the remains of bones of Indians were found in the depth of the cavern. Even to-day the native of the district will hesitate to visit the place after night-fall, when the wind moans through the fir-trees and the clefts in the rocks like a soul in torment.

I have said that almost every village along the Saint Lawrence has its legend or the story of some supernatural occurrence. Some villages, however, seem to be more favored in this regard than others. L'Islet, situated on the south shore of the river about fifty miles below Quebec, is a village that possesses some interesting legends. One of these is in connection with the building of the stone church that stands in the centre of the village beside the St. Lawrence. This legend was told by Angèle Boulet, an old servant in the family of Dr. Cloutier. Various versions of a legend in



THE CHURCH AT L'ISLET

which Satan is made to aid in the construction of a church are to be found at Saint Michel, Saint Augustin, and Sorel, but the version concerning L'Islet is the most complete and dramatic. The story is told by Mémère Angèle as follows :

You know, my children, that there was not always a church at L'Islet. A very long time ago, in the time of my great-grand-father, there was a curé only at Cap-Saint Ignace. At that time, in order to go to the Easter celebration, to get married, or to have children baptized, it was necessary to go to the Cap. You can see that this was very inconvenient at all times, and it was a poor business when the roads were bad as they often were—mud and mire, nothing more nor less.

But of course there were not many people in the parish then ; a house here, and a house there. Two or three on the hill : the Chaissons, the Cendrés, and Bénoni Cloutier at the foot of the hill ; he is the one whose wife was said to have brought him, when they married, a half bushel of French dollars. There were also some other fine farm houses : first the Seigneur Monsieur Casgrain, then Amable Bélanger, who was one of the most important habitants of the parish, then further down the river towards Trois Saumons there were the Carons and the Bouchers. But besides these there were poor people who began to clear the land and build little log houses. It was only cleared along the river ; at the place called Belles-Amours they had only made a beginning. *Mon Dieu*, there was hardship then ; people had to work more than hard. You do not know what it is to take forest land

and make it ready for the plough. The stumps that had to be pulled out and the stones piled up!

The curé from the Cap came to say mass every fortnight in a little wooden chapel which stood where the chapel for the dead now stands. Then one fine day the news came to the habitants of L'Islet that they were to have a curé of their own. I do not need to tell you that this caused great joy. But *Mon Dieu*, it is a wonder that the poor curé who came to take charge of the parish did not die. No church, no *presbytère*! He was obliged at first to ask shelter from the *seigneur*. Then they built him a kind of *presbytère*, a very poor one where the poorest people to-day would scarcely live. But *monsieur le curé* was happy. He was not proud, this good Monsieur Panet. All priests are good, my children, but this one was a saint, a true saint.

Some time after his arrival it was decided to build a church. But *monsieur le curé* did not know how to get the stone carted that was necessary for the building. There were few horses in the country then, just enough for the spring sowing and other work. There was always work to be done.

So, one night when *monsieur le curé* was thinking how the stone might be drawn, he heard a voice call his name. "I felt a great fear," he said. It called a second time. Then he felt his fright pass away. "I am in a state of grace," he said to himself; "I have nothing to fear." And he replied, "In the name of God, who are you, and what do you want?" Then he saw a beautiful White Lady appear before him. "Do not be afraid, François," she said, "I am Notre Dame de Bon Secours; only trust and take your rest. To-morrow morning when you arise you will find a horse tied before your door. Use him to

cart the stone for your church; you may give him a heavy load to carry, for he is very strong. But one precaution must be taken. Never take off his bridle. His bridle is holy, and if it is taken off he will disappear for ever." The apparition vanished; then Monsieur Panet fell asleep in his chair.

It was the month of May, 1768. At half past four the sun lit up the curé's room and he awoke with a start. He recalled the vision of the night, but he thought he had been dreaming. He knelt to say his morning prayers, when suddenly outside he heard the pawing of a horse. He cast his eyes towards the garden, and was surprised to see, tied there, a magnificent black horse. Two or three times he passed his hand over his eyes to make sure that he was awake. At last he went out to the garden to persuade himself that he was not dreaming. The vision that he had during the night had come true. He put his hand on the horse's neck to assure himself once more that he was not mistaken. The horse trembled, but he did not stir a foot.

At five o'clock the workmen arrived to begin their day's labor. "My friends," said the curé showing them the horse, "some one has lent me this animal to cart the stone for the church. He seems to be a good horse, but he is a bit wild; you will have to be careful, and especially don't unbridle him to let him drink or eat, because if you do he will run away." "What's the name of the horse, *monsieur le curé*?" asked Germain Caron. "Oh, yes, let's see," said the curé; then after some moments of reflection he replied, "call him Old Nick. I will entrust him to you, Germain." "Ah, well, I'll see to him, *monsieur le curé*; all the same, that's a queer name for a horse, Old Nick; but no matter, if he is not possessed by the devil, it

will be all right.” “As for that,” said the curé smiling, “I can answer for it.”

Then they harnessed Old Nick to the cart with low wheels to cart the stones. They put on at first an ordinary load, but Old Nick went off with that as though it had been air. The curé, who was watching, told them not to worry, but to put on a heavier load. This did not seem to tire the horse at all. They got another cart twice the size of the first, then loaded it up as high as a load of hay. The wheels cracked, but Old Nick always went straight ahead.

What a horse this Old Nick was, my children! Black as jet, not a white hair on him, and four strong legs. Besides that, a fine back and a beautiful arched neck. And the way he carried his tail! Oh, but he was a fine horse. A little touchy, it was true, and he had a wicked mouth. The curé had told them to look out for his mouth and to keep away. Since they did not unbridle him, that was easy. From time to time *monsieur le curé*, who was always with the workmen when he was not with the sick or at the confessional, would ask Germain, “Ah, well, my Germain, how do you like Old Nick?” “Number one, *monsieur le curé*,” Germain would answer.

He was always the one to drive him. But one day he could not come; there was a baptism to be attended to, and Batisse Bernier replaced him. Batisse was a good fellow and a great worker, but stubborn; and one who thought he was more cunning than any one else. And boastful, too. To hear him talk you would believe that only his things were worth anything; his horse—words could not describe him; his cow—she was a spring and her milk was cream; his pigs—they got fat by only lying in the sun; his dog knew more than most people; his hens laid two eggs

each day; it was his wife who made the best pancakes; his daughter had refused all the best suitors in the parish, and was just then expecting a lawyer from Quebec, who kept coming but could not persuade the girl. Besides all this he was a horse-jockey, *Mon Dieu*, such as one did not often see. He was really half horse himself. For a long time he had been watching Old Nick and criticising Germain behind his back. So when he found himself with this splendid horse to drive he was much pleased. One would have thought that it was his very own. It was "my hoss" here, and "my Old Nick" there. "Get up there! Whoa!" One could hear nothing but his clack. Germain had warned him not to unbridle the horse to let him drink, but Batisse had replied, "Don't you worry, my Germain, I know hosses; this is not the first I have bridled, and if I wish to unbridle him, the devil take me if I can't put his bridle back on again."

All that day Batisse enjoyed himself. They were drawing the stone from the other side of the Turtle River. It was the middle of the day, and hot. When crossing the river, Batisse, who was thirsty, stopped the horse right in the middle and drank out of the hollow of his hand. Then he tried to get his horse to drink, but the horse did not seem to want to do so. Batisse thought, "Its on account of his bridle. Just as if it was sensible not to unbridle a hoss to let him drink! Who ever saw anything like that? What do curés know about hosses? Poor Old Nick! I am going to take off his bridle, for I am sure he is thirsty."

He put his hand on his mane to hold him, then unbuckled the throat-strap, then gently took out the bits and removed the bridle. *Pou——i—i—iche!*

Old Nick darted away at full speed, leaving harness and cart in the river. Batisse had fallen fifteen feet away and was struggling in the water, and Old Nick was going as hard as he could go along the *chemin du Roi*.

He arrived at the hill on which the "monument" stands to-day. Monsieur Panet, bare-headed, was just going to take the blessed sacrament to a sick person, when he saw the run-away horse. Having recognized Old Nick, he placed himself in the road and made a great sign of the cross. Then the horse reared up, and leaving the road entirely, he flew straight north on to a rock which overhangs the river. There was a frightful noise; the rock split from top to bottom, making a cleft six feet wide, and Old Nick disappeared into a deep cavern in the rock. It is now called the "Devil's Hole." There's no one in this whole parish who does not know the "Devil's Hole"—that cavern dug into the earth at two fathoms above level ground, and whose black mouth turned towards the river seems to defy the winds from the sea and the great northern tempests. It was not for nothing that the old people called this cave the "Devil's Hole" or the "Gate of Hell."

Monsieur Panet was much vexed at the loss of Old Nick; not that he liked him much, for *monsieur le curé* knew too well what sort of a horse he was. But as enough stone was now drawn to the place, he did not worry much. To tell the truth, this good curé did not intend to trade Old Nick off when he was done with him. He was too honest and feared God too much for that.

Old Nick, who was really the devil, as you may have guessed, was much insulted when he was made to draw stones for the church in spite of himself. There-

fore, he promised himself that he would have his revenge by playing vile tricks and casting spells upon the habitants of L'Islet

So for years and years not a Christian could drive his wagon past the "Devil's Hole" without some damage being done. Sometimes a tug or a whiffle-tree broke; at other times the horse stumbled and went lame; or else the wagon was stopped by a wheel being blocked. There were horses which, having been driven there, would begin to snort and refuse to pass. For many, many years never would a horse pass the place without pricking up his ears and trembling, as though he perceived some frightful thing which no one could see. At night, moans and the clanking of chains were heard. At other times there was seen coming out of the cavern a black beast like a wolf, with a terrible mouth spouting flames. A curious thing was that when *monsieur le curé* carried past the *bon Dieu*, nothing happened. This showed that it was the devil. It became so bad that the young men did not dare to go to see their sweethearts.

And it was all the fault of Batisse. *Dam!* It was quite clear. If he had listened to the curé this would not have happened.

All the curés of the parish had for many years done their best to cause these sorceries to cease. They had prayed; they had hung crosses and medals in the "Devil's Hole," together with blest palms, candles, and all kinds of holy things. They had blest the rock on all sides. Nothing did any good. But people still said, "God is stronger than the devil; it will come to an end sometime."

But the sorceries still went on. Then, one evening when *monsieur le curé* Delâge had prayed to Notre Dame de Bon Secours, the patron saint of the

parish, he saw in a dream the Holy Virgin who said, "If you wish to deliver your parishioners from the evil deeds of the demon, have a cross erected on the rock."

Early next morning the curé began to carry out the desire of the Holy Virgin. He spoke to the chief men of the parish, and every one set to work. A great "bee" was organized; some brought cut stone; others fine beams of pine; others cedar logs well squared; others lime, pegs, and iron nails. Soon there was to be seen upon the rock, since called the Rocher du Monument, that beautiful cross which the piety of the faithful of L'Islet has since kept in place.

To concentrate the monument, good Monsieur Delâge wished to have a great retreat in the parish. This was preached by Monseigneur Maillot, who was called the *grand vicaire*. He was almost a bishop, for he was dressed like one, in a beautiful cassock with violet buttons, with violet collar and cap. And he spoke so well! You should have heard him. Always so sensible, and I can tell you that he did not spare the drunkards and swearers. People came from everywhere; from the third, fourth, and fifth, and even the sixth concessions. They were seen passing by in wagons—women, children, old men and old women, and people that one had never seen there before. All came to the retreat. Half of them could not get a seat, but filled the aisles and balconies of the church. First the people from a distance went to confession, and then all the others went to the church to perform their devotions.

There were many men from the lumber camps who had not been to confessions for ten, twenty, or thirty years, men who had been *loup-garous*, my children, who were converted. Oh, it was fine! It was

decided to bless the monument on the closing day of the retreat.

All along the *chemin du roi* from the church to the rock they had planted saplings, and around the cross they had put evergreens, bouquets of lilacs and all sorts of flowers, and flags of all colors. After the high mass every one went in procession, singing hymns. The head of the procession reached the rock before the last had left the church. Then every one gathered around the cross, on the rocks, in the road, and in the near-by fields, and the *grand vicaire*, wearing the beautiful golden cope, with *monsieur le curé* Delâge and the curé from the Cap as deacon and sub-deacon, mounted the staircase that led to the cross, accompanied by several priests and serving boys.

They all circled around the cross with the great holy water vessel, *monseigneur* sprinkling the cross and the people in all directions; at the same time he said prayers in Latin. Then the *grand vicaire* preached the most eloquent of his sermons. Almost everyone wept. At the end he made the men promise at the foot of the cross not to drink or swear any more. He blessed us all once more, and intoned the *Te Deum* in a solemn voice, while the procession went back to the church. Since then the devil has not dared to come out of his cavern.

Such is the story of the church at L'Islet as it was told by Mémère Angèle to Dr. Cloutier. Historians tell us that Monsieur Panet was not the first curé of the parish, and therefore could not have built the church even with the aid of the devil. But what have historians to do with

an account such as this? The spirit of it is true, and that is the main thing. And the beautiful old church with its dignified facade, bearing the date 1768, still stands. Its triple spires tower above the little village on one side and the broad, tide-swept St. Lawrence on the other. Within the church is the tablet over the burial place of Monsieur Panet, who served the parish for fifty years, and at the outskirts of the village the cross still rises on the rock above the "Devil's Hole," where it watches the tides sweep up and down. And best of all, I can truthfully say that in my visits to L'Islet I have failed to find any trace of the devil either in his cavern or in the hearts of the villagers.

CHAPTER XIV

FOLK LORE

A PEOPLE like the inhabitants of French Canada, springing from an old and somewhat primitive civilization, could scarcely fail to have preserved among their most precious possessions a large store of legend, folk lore, and folk song. In fact this store is so great that the chief difficulty in making a sketch of it is to know what to select. The Federal Government, at Ottawa, is very wisely making a serious effort to collect this folk lore and to put it into tangible form, and it is through the kindness of Mr. C. M. Barbeau of the Department of Anthropology, whose extensive collections have been placed at my disposal, that I am indebted for a large part of the material used in this sketch. During the past ten years more than six thousand folk songs, legends, and folk tales have been collected, and the work is still going on. It will be seen from this fact alone how great is the extent of this particular field.

The study of folk lore is one which, for most people at least, contains special appeal, for in its quaint and naive stories, its primitive drama,

its dwarfs, giants, sprites, princesses, and enchanted or haunted places, we may return to that fairy wonderland of make-believe, in which all of us, as children, used to dwell.

There are many reasons why such a large body of lore and legend should be preserved for us, a great deal of which is still current to-day and in which many of the country people still believe. The chief of these reasons are the isolation of many of the settlements and lumber camps, the scarcity of French magazines and news-papers in outlying districts, and the conservatism of the mind of the habitant, who naturally clings to what is ancient; but strongest of all is the French-Canadian's innate love of the dramatic and mysterious.

In former times the "*conteur*" or story teller was a well-known and important personage, and many of the older generation can still spend hours in recounting wonderful stories from memory, or in singing the old chansons. Here is a word-picture of the *conteur* and his hearers:

The fire roared loudly in the double stove,
Until its sides like burnished copper glowed;
Outside the snow fell, and the north wind drove
White, ghostly figures down the frozen road.
They listened, open-mouthed and open-eyed,
To Jean's weird stories of the Wendigo
That haunts the woods, and of Pierre who died
Because he saw the Walker of the Snow.



A CONTEUR RECITING A FOLK-TALE

He told the story of the Phantom Bell,
And Ghosts and mighty hunters came and went;
Like children frightened by the tales they tell
They listened until half the night was spent;
Then Jean arose, looked out and shook his head
“*Fa nwerre! Je va rester icitte,*” * he said.

Perhaps the most ancient of primitive beliefs is that concerning hidden treasure, whether it be the pot of gold at the rainbow's end, the spoils from a wrecked galleon, or the treasures hidden by robbers and pirates. All along the St. Lawrence these beliefs are met with, from Gaspé to Quebec. According to these legends, the Little Gray Man still guards the treasure of Sauteux on the Gaspé coast, the spirits of dead sailors still haunt the gold sunken off the coast of Kamouraska, and the remembrance still remains of the enchanted kettle at Port-neuf. Here is the story of Sauteux as told by an old *conteur* of La Tourelle.

“The Sauteux are two big mountains between l'Anse-à-Jean and Cap-aux-Renards. They form a range about three miles long, the height being nearly three thousand feet. They rise close to the sea at a distance of only a hundred yards. Near the edge of the sea are great rocks and reefs, and here many ships have been wrecked. The cannon of wrecked war-ships are to be seen at Ruisseau-Vallée. At the foot of

* “How dark it is! I will stay here.”

the Sauteux mountains there are dead men buried. On All Saints Eve strange lights are seen passing over the cliffs, which always flicker out at the same place on the shore. It is here that is buried a strong box full of gold hidden by some sailors long ago. They feared either capture or shipwreck, so they left their gold buried at the foot of the mountains. When the question of a guardian for the treasure was talked of, they drew lots, and the sailor who had to remain with the gold was killed and buried on top of the casket. His ghost used to guard it, but now it is guarded by the Little Gray Man (*Le petit bonhomme gris*). Perhaps it is the sailor himself who has changed himself into the Little Gray Man. Dead men can do that, you know.

Many people of La Tourelle have seen him. He comes out in a puff of smoke. He is not always the same size, but is always short and very gray. Once, when some fishermen approached the place, stones were thrown at them from the top of the cliff; and when they had lighted a fire, behold it walked off the beach and disappeared in the sea! Then, in the darkness, a great strong hand seized one of the sailors by the neck from behind. *Mon Dieu*, how he howled! This howl frightened away the Little Gray Man, but all night long he threw stones from the top of the cliff. The fishermen did not

sleep that night, and next morning at daybreak they put out to sea, leaving the Little Gray Man sitting on the top of the cliffs and still throwing stones.”

Gnomes or goblins appear frequently in the folk-lore of French Canada. They are nearly always kindly-disposed to mortals, or they play some comparatively harmless prank. Unlike their European brothers, the sprites of Quebec nearly always confine their activities to the stable, and seem to have a particular liking for horses. They feed them with care, and if oats are lacking, they go and steal from a neighbor's stable in order to give food to their favorite mounts. When the habitant finds the manes of his horses knotted together, he is sure that the goblins have visited his stable. They have tied the strands together in order to make stirrups for their short legs as they rode through the night, sitting astride of the animal's neck.

There are different means of getting rid of the goblins. One is to hang in the stable a palm branch that has been blest on Palm-Sunday by the curé. Another favorite way is to place in the stable door a bowl of ashes. In taking out the horse, the bowl is almost sure to be upset, and, as the sprite is compelled by mysterious power to pick up the ashes grain by grain and fill the bowl again, he generally decides to make his nocturnal visits elsewhere.

A *conteur* of Saint-Marie-de-Beauce tells, among several anecdotes, the following:

“Mother Prime Bolduc, a widow who had just lost her second husband, one day heard a great noise in the stable. She went in softly, only half opening the door, and found her mare very much frightened. She went closer and found something that she took for a cat sitting on the mare’s back. It was a goblin, and he disappeared down a hole in the hay. Approaching the mare, Mother Bolduc found her mane braided and tied together ready for the goblin to take his midnight ride. She was very angry and began to unbraid the mare’s mane. Then, as there was no hay in the mare’s manger, the woman took the pitch-fork and tried to pull out some hay from the place where the goblin had disappeared. She pulled and pulled with all her might. Without any reason it stuck fast, then suddenly came loose, and she fell backwards into the dungheap with her feet straight up in the air. ‘I pulled down my skirt quick,’ she said, ‘but I heard a burst of shrill laughter from the goblin hidden beneath the hay. I heard him as plainly as I hear you talking to me now.’ ”

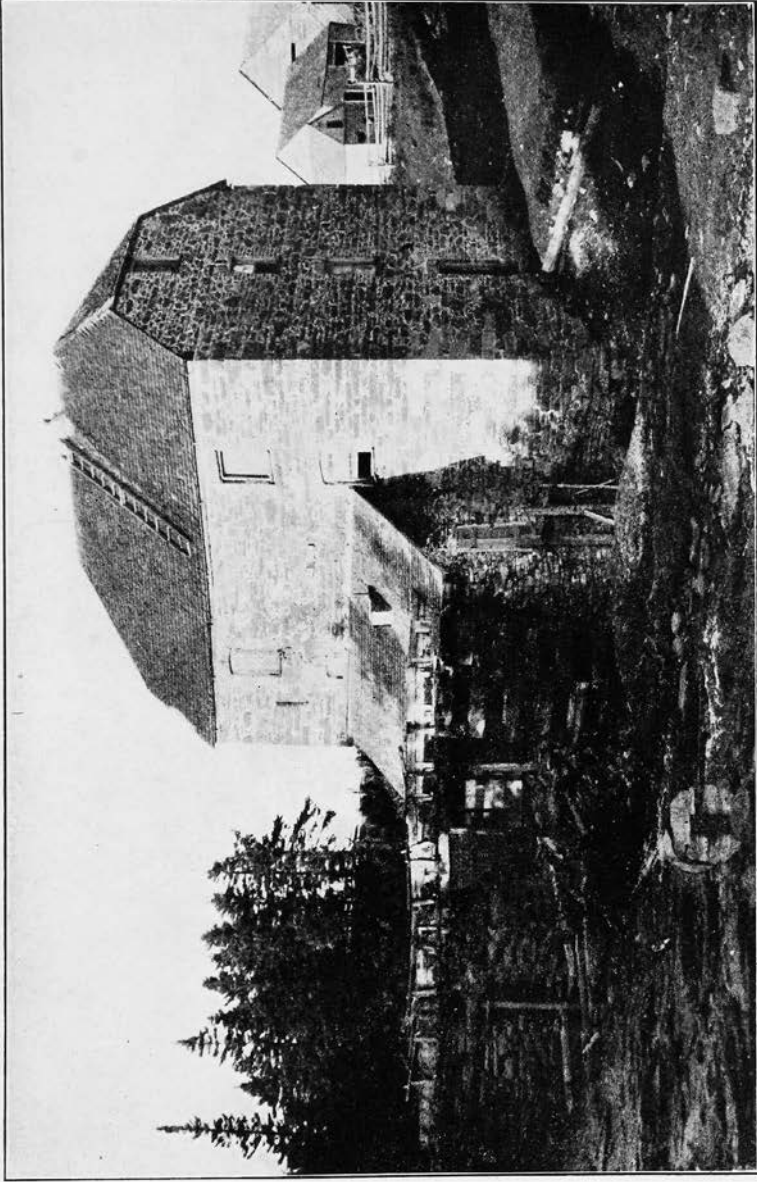
With a belief in ghosts and goblins widely accepted, it is not strange that there should be many stories current of haunted houses or places. In fact, these are so numerous that

it is difficult to make a choice for an illustration. Strange lights are often seen hovering over haunted places, and strange sounds are heard, generally at midnight. Sometimes these sounds resemble the bellowing of a bull or the baying of a hound, but more often they are moaning and weeping. This latter always comes from souls in torment.

The Rocher-Malin at Notre-Dame-du-Portage and the Anse Pleureuse are two places famous for the sounds that echo around them at certain times, particularly on very dark nights. Here is a story told by the old *conteur* of La Tourelle.

“It was at the Anse Pleureuse. It was here that often wailing noises were heard. And for that reason it was called Anse Pleureuse (Wailing Cove). The curé of this parish had several churches along the coast, Sainte-Anne, Mont Louis, La Madeleine, and others. One day *monsieur le curé* started on his trip along the coast in a large boat with several men. In rowing along, the men began to speak of the Anse Pleureuse, which was six leagues from La Madeleine. The curé said to his men: ‘If it is possible, we shall stop for the night at Anse-Pleureuse, to see if we really can hear the wailing that I have heard so much about.’ The men replied: ‘It is all true, *monsieur le curé*.’ One went on to say: ‘I stayed there one night

and I heard much more weeping than I wished for. It does not seem to harm one, but it is terrible to hear.' The curé smiled and said, 'I am very curious to hear this wailing. I think it is only an old grandmother's tale.' 'You will see, *monsieur le curé*,' said the man solemnly. On arriving at Anse Pleureuse they moored their boat in the little river, then lighted a good fire on the beach. Soon darkness came down. They began to hear voices weeping and wailing, which first came from the shore, and then seemed to go towards the dark forest. The curé was the first to hear the wailing. Then another cry was heard and then another, louder and nearer. The curé looked anxious. He quickly seized his surplice and stole and put them on. Then he felt braver. He looked out into the dark from which the moaning came. He saw by the light of the camp-fire a man with his head bound up in a blood-stained cloth. The man went to the sea and put water on his head, as the curé does in baptizing. The curé then knew that it was an unbaptized soul, suffering in torment. After that he vanished into the forest. The curé seized his mass-book and followed. The men who stayed behind were too frightened to move. After half an hour, which seemed very long, the curé came back from the forest, pale and as wet as if he had been in the sea. The men said: '*Monsieur le*



OLD MILL AT GASPÉ

curé, was not that one of the weepers of Wailing Cove?' The *curé* replied, 'My children, you will hear them weep no more.'

"The wailing was from poor souls in torment but they are now at rest. Now weeping and wailing is seldom heard at Anse-Pleureuse, but there are other places where I myself have heard it, along the Gaspé shore."

The *chasse-gallery* legend has often in some form or other appeared in European folk-lore; in fact, it gets its name from a Seigneur Gallery of Poitou who, for his sins, was condemned to follow the hunt for ever. The Canadian versions, although differing widely, generally concern a hunt of some sort, conducted in a gigantic canoe which flies through the air, paddled madly by lost souls and commanded by the Devil himself.

Many instances are told by the *conteur* of this gigantic canoe having been seen. One is told by Francois St. Laurent, who still lives in the village of La Tourelle. He was travelling on foot in springtime to carry the mail to a neighbouring village. "I left," he says, "to go on my way, and arrived at Mont-Louis at nightfall. The post-master said to me, 'You will not go on this evening in the dark?' I replied, 'Yes, I will go on; it is fair weather. I am late. I shall have to make a good distance to-night.' About two miles above Mont-Louis

there is a place called Écorchis-de-la-Rivière-Pierre. There are mountains terribly high. And when I got opposite them, I heard a horrible noise which came from the south-west, and seemed to be something coming fast like a railway train. The nearer it came the greater the noise. And it came so straight at me that I thought all was over with me. I said my act of penitence pretty quick, I can tell you. After that I had only time to say '*O, mon Dieu!*' and I buried my face in the snow. It was a great canoe that seemed to pass at about the height of thirty feet. I could hear a snarling, a howling, a clanking of chains and noises of all kinds, like pieces of iron being shaken up in a kettle. The noise was so great that my ears rang ten minutes after it had passed. The canoe then went towards the north-west.'

The *loup-garou* occurs also in European tradition in the form of the werewolf. In French Canada the *loup-garou* is seldom a wolf; sometimes it takes the form of a dog, an ox, a calf, a white horse, or even a sack of wool rolling along the highway. These are persons still living who, for not having attended to their religious duties, are compelled to leave their human form at stated intervals, and become a *loup-garou*. One man is condemned for neglecting to take the sacrament for years, an-

other for not going to confession for a long period.

The habits of the *loup-garou* are strange and perverse. The *loup-garou* of the cemetery is a monster that digs up dead bodies; the *loup-garou* in the form of an ox contents himself with the rooting up of trees. Husbands who have been changed into *loup-garous* amuse themselves by devouring their wives. Women, for some unknown reason, never become *loup-garous*, probably because they are more attentive to their religious duties. The man who has been forced to "*courir le loup-garou*," as it is called, may be delivered by certain religious rites, by a hard blow dealt on the forehead, or by a wound which causes blood to flow.

Here is another story told by the same *conteur* who saw the *chasse-gallery*:

"What I am telling you took place in a parish not far below Quebec, I could not tell the exact place. There was a man who lived alone with his wife, they having been married fourteen years and having no family, which is curious. Every evening, at ten o'clock, the husband went out and did not return until midnight. The next morning he did not get up—he was worn out, half dead. Naturally the woman was very suspicious, and at last she summoned up courage to ask her husband about

it. You must remember that the man is lord and master in the habitant home. The husband owned that he had been condemned to "*courir le loup-garou*" for ten years, because he had neglected to go to confession for that time. He further explained to his wife that there were fifteen of them who were turned into fierce white horses, and who, every night, rode madly through the country until midnight came. Then they were released and allowed to return home. He also told his wife that she could deliver him if she were brave enough. She was to take an iron fork and hide in a corner of the garden close to the highway. If she inflicted a wound on the horse's head, he would be delivered; but if she missed her aim she would be devoured by the *loup-garou*. Being a brave woman, the next night she hid in the garden; just before midnight a fearful noise of the beating of hoofs was heard, and fifteen white horses came sweeping like the wind through the darkness. The last one in the procession paused at the garden, and then rushed straight at the woman with his mouth open to devour her. But the woman took aim and hit the horse in the forehead with the fork, and then the horse vanished and the husband fell at the woman's feet. 'Poor husband,' said the woman, 'this is a terrible business that you have been carrying on for so long.' 'But it

is not my fault,' said the husband, just as husbands will. 'Not your fault,' replied the wife, 'you who have not been to confession for ten years! You will go to confession with me tomorrow morning.' They went on the morrow, and after the husband had spent three whole days in confession, the priest baptized him over again and gave him sacrament, and he never became a *loup-garou* again."

The *conteur* also tells wonderful stories of the witch of Rivière Ouelle, of the white Magic of Alexis Dulac, a wizard who dwelt long ago in St. François on the Chaudière River. Also tales of the Enchanted Churn, the Bewitched Maple Syrup, the Selling of the Black Hen, the Wandering Crosses, the Will o' the Wisp, and many more.

Let us pass from this species of story, which is general and which concerns some wide-spread belief, to folk-tales which centre around certain characters. We have variations of the stories of the Sleeping Beauty, of Blue Beard, of the Little Red Riding-Hood, of Rose Tulippe, which is a version of the Faust legend, and many stories of kings, queens, princesses and enchanted castles. We have also other stories of Indian origin such as the Wendigo, the Manitou, The Thunder Bird, and The Ghostly Walker of the Snow. Lastly we have the stories of 'Ti-Jean, Pois Vertes, and Pipette,

and other well known characters. As an example of these character stories I may outline that of Pipette and his effort to gain heaven, as related by Paul Patry, a well known *conteur* of St. Victor-de-Beauce.

“Pipette was a cunning good-for-nothing who wished to live without working and generally got the better of everyone.

“In his travels he met Our Lord and St. John, who were at that time accustomed to go about together. Pipette had spent all his money. St. John guessed this and said: ‘Good-day, my poor Pipette, good-day, I am certain that you have nothing left.’ ‘No,’ answered Pipette, ‘I am as poor as a church mouse.’ Good St. John said: ‘Pipette, you have a good heart. You have always been generous towards your fellows, that is perhaps why you are so poor; I will make you a gift. Here is a ring; anything that you wish for, it will give you, if you put it on and tell our Lord what you wish.’ ‘Thank you,’ said Pipette, and put on the ring. Our Lord then said: ‘What do you wish?’ ‘I don’t know,’ said Pipette. The good Saint went behind Pipette and pulled his cloak. ‘Pipette, ask for paradise at the end of your life. It is our Lord who speaks.’ ‘Leave me alone,’ whispered Pipette. ‘I’ll gain paradise like the others, by myself.’

“Our Lord spoke again, ‘What shall I give

you?’ ‘Give me a pack of cards that will win wherever I play with them,’ Pipette answered. And our Lord gave them to him. Pipette lived for many years an evil life, I fear. One day the *Bon Dieu* said, ‘Do you know that we have forgotten to send for Pipette.’ ‘Well, I won’t go for him,’ said Death, ‘you will have to send the Devil.’ So the Devil was sent to fetch him. Now Pipette still had his pack of cards, and when he saw the Devil had come for him, he piled the fire high with wood, placed the Devil’s chair close beside the fire, and his own as far away as possible, and asked the Devil to play a game of cards with him before they left. They played and played, and the fire became hotter and hotter, but the Devil never could win. He got so interested in trying to beat Pipette that he did not notice that his toes were so hot that they glowed like burning coals. At last, disgusted with his ill luck and nearly burned up, he vanished through the keyhole. Pipette grew very old, and at last he died and went to the gate of paradise. St. Peter would not let him in, but told him to go and seek his friend the Devil. Pipette went to the Devil’s abode far, far, down below, but the Devil would not have him there. ‘I won’t have you here, you nearly burned me up on earth.’ So Pipette went back to the gate of paradise. ‘Now just listen, great St. Peter; the Devil won’t

have me and I've got to sleep somewhere; let me just hide behind the door of paradise.' So St. Peter let him in, and Pipette crouched down upon a small white cloud behind the door, and for once had nothing to say. But this became wearisome, and at last Pipette pulled out his cards and asked a neighbour, seated on the cloud next up from him, if he would like to play. 'We will play for an exchange of places,' said Pipette, and he won the game. After Pipette had moved to the second cloud, he said to his neighbour next above, 'Would you like to have a little game? We will play for each other's places,' and again Pipette won, for they were the cards that our Lord had given him long ago.

This went on until Pipette found himself seated beside the Great Throne. 'Bon Dieu,' said Pipette, 'will you play a little game with me for each other's places?' But the Bon Dieu knew Pipette and said, 'Pipette, you are lucky to be here at all. Go back to your cloud behind the door.' Pipette went back and began to play a little game with his neighbor seated on the cloud next above. And this is all we know of Pipette.

Perhaps, by way of variety, it may be fitting to close this chapter with my ballad of the Magic Fiddler, founded on a well-known story which appears in Le Moine's "Legends of the

St. Lawrence" and in several other collections as well.

THE MAGIC FIDDLER

Tomorrow morning Lent begins;
Who dances after midnight sins.

Between dark rows of forest firs
The silent frozen river lay,
And level trails along the ice
Stretched in the distance far away;
And over the forest and fields and town
Was a sky as blue as the Virgin's gown.

The villagers had come *en masse*
To celebrate the Shrovetide feast,
And jingling bells and cracking whips
And boisterous laughter seldom ceased;
As all the winter afternoon
The racing sleighs dashed to and fro,
Driven by youths whose scarlet *tuques*
Were like red poppies in the snow.

But northern winter days are short;
Already now went dropping down
The sun behind the silver spire
That rose above the snow-girt town;
When from the west a stranger came
Driving a horse with eyes like flame.

He swept along the ringing ice,
The other jockeys gave him way;
His *tuque* and braided sash were red,
Like fire gleamed his shining sleigh;
And when his tall dark shadow passed
Across the level sunset glow,
It left behind a crimson trail
Like blood upon the trodden snow.
"I challenge any driver here,"

—The stranger's voice was loud and bold—
“Tomorrow morn at rise of sun
To race me for a purse of gold;
In the ruined manor tonight we'll hold
High revel and dance the night away,
For I will fiddle till dawn of day”—
Just then the angelus tolled.

A shudder shook the stranger's frame;
His black horse neighed and pawed the snow,
And in his eyes the livid flame
Burned for a moment dull and low.
“But what care we for priest or Lent?
A hundred candles we shall light,
And in the haunted manor's hall
The village youth shall dance tonight.”

Tomorrow morning Lent begins;
Who dances after midnight sins.

They smoked their pipes and drank *sangrée*
And youths and maidens gaily swung
In *cotillon* and *valse* and *gigue*
Until the midnight hour had rung;
But when the dancers wished to stay
Their dancing feet as half afraid,
The tireless magic fiddler played
Mad tunes no human hand could play.

And then the hundred lights burned dim,
A cold wind rattled at the door,
But still the magic fiddler played
Weird tunes far madder than before;
The dancing feet could never stop,
Though guttering candles flickered low,

For every dancer's eyes were fixed
Upon the magic fiddler's bow.

And when the curé came at dawn
To call his erring flock away,
Like pine trees moaning in a storm
He heard the magic fiddler play.
Yet not a living soul he found,
But there to the fiddle's wailing sound
Red *tuques* were dancing round and round.

Tomorrow morning Lent begins;
Who dances after midnight sins.

CHAPTER XV

FOLK SONGS

CLOSELY allied with folk tale and legend is the folk song. As a matter of fact, folk songs form an important part of folk lore in general. Such a large number of songs still being extant in the Province of Quebec, no description of French Canada could be considered complete without some reference to them. They are familiar to all who have lived for any length of time in Quebec, as they are still extensively sung both by the people and by professional musicians. I have heard them sung in the wilderness north of Lake St. Jean, by the settlers at work on their land, at rural merry-makings, and by prima-donnas at concerts in Montreal. The old Noëls, or Christmas songs, although perhaps not folk-songs in the strict sense of the word, are sung in every church on Christmas eve, and *Ça Bergers Assemblons-nous* and *D' où Viens-tu Bergère* still echo from the habitant home, sung by those too far away, or too infirm to attend Midnight Mass.

Formerly the folk songs of French Canada

were a part of the daily life of the people. The *coureurs-des-bois* in the forests, the *voyageurs* on the lakes and rivers, and the habitant on his farm, all sang them as they worked. The exploration of many northern rivers has been made to the tune of "*Fringue, Fringue sur la Rivière,*" or "*Parmi nos Voyageurs.*" No evening party in the "jours d'antan" took place without the singing of the old songs, and the singer who could remember the greatest number was held in especial esteem.

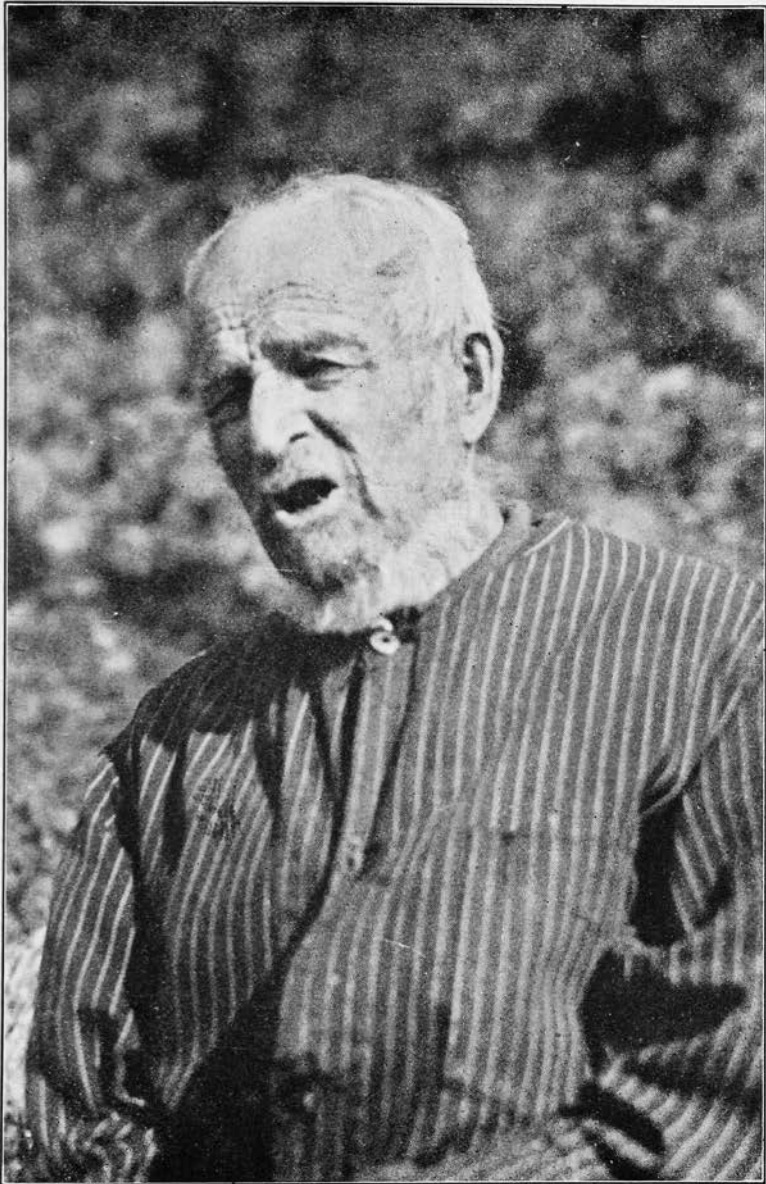
The origin of the folk songs of French Canada is interesting. They are, perhaps, a direct legacy from the troubadours of mediaeval France. Yet their style is seldom that of the courtly and polished musicians who journeyed from castle to castle in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Besides, many of the folk songs of France date from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is more likely that some of them at least were composed by the more humble *jongleurs errants* whose aim was to amuse the peasantry and common people of the towns. It is likely, too, that many are composite in their make-up. They were not composed as we have them now; they grew, and each decade may have brought some alteration or addition. "They are the voice of nature; they sleep in the depth of the woods; God alone knows who created them." This was the ver-

dict of Theodore Storm in regard to the German *Volkslieder*. The same is probably true of many of the *chansons* of French Canada.

It is claimed that at least ninety per cent of our folk songs were brought over from Normandy and the valley of the Loire between the years 1608 and 1670. In these early days, when the colonists were always exposed to dangers and intense hardships, the singing of songs must have afforded a welcome means of relaxation. Hence the great number that were in vogue and their careful preservation.

These same songs are still to be found in all parts of French Canada, remembered for the most part only by the older people. In the larger towns they are fast being forgotten, but in the remote country districts, such as Gaspé, Kamouraska, and Temiscouata, they still live.

A good work is being done at the present time by the Federal Government in the collection and preservation of the French Canadian folk songs. Mr. C. M. Barbeau and his colleagues have collected the music and words of nearly six thousand with the various versions as well. The method of collection is generally a first-hand one. Mr. Barbeau and some of his associates visit some remote village and seek out some of the older inhabitants. These are induced to sing the songs of their youth, which are recorded by stenography and also on



A FOLK-SINGER

phonograph records, the melodies thus being taken direct from the singers themselves. Many records have been secured during the last ten years and carefully preserved in the Victoria Museum at Ottawa. The memory of these old folk-singers is remarkable. To find a singer who can sing more than a hundred songs is not rare, and some have been found who could sing more than three hundred. In one village alone seven hundred songs were recorded. As has been said, the singers nearly always belong to a past generation, and when these are gone there will be few to take their place. Thus the importance of this work can be readily seen. There is, however, in the French Canadian character an element of tenacity where things that belong to the past are concerned, and it is this conservative element that will help to save these beautiful old *chansons* from oblivion.

The translation of songs from a foreign language is difficult, particularly if the verse happens to be a lyric rather than a ballad. In French they may run and ripple like a native stream, but they are often made after an obsolete pattern which is hard to render into another language. Besides, certain rhyme-schemes and repetitions lend to the poetry much of its charm, and this is generally lost in translation. In the following English versions

I have endeavored to portray the spirit rather than the letter of the verse, and in some cases have slightly shortened the songs. They will, I hope, serve to give some idea of the beauty and simplicity of the originals, and perhaps lead to their being sung in the French language. I am indebted to Mr. Barbeau's "Folk Songs of French Canada," to Gagnon's "*Chansons Populaires du Canada*," and to the unpublished collections in the Victoria Museum for some of the versions given here, although most of them are familiar to me from hearing them sung in various parts of the Province of Quebec.

For lyric beauty few folk songs surpass "*À la Claire Fontaine*." It is also one of the most widely known and sung of all the old *chansons*. In speaking of it, Gagnon says, "Depuis le petit enfant de sept ans, jusqu' au vieillard aux cheveux blancs, tout le monde au Canada sait et chant '*À la Claire Fontaine*;' on n'est pas Canadien sans cela."

À LA CLAIRE FONTAINE

*À la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener,
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné.
Lui ya longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai.*

*J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné;*

*Sous les feuilles d'un chêne
Je me suis fait sécher.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Sous les feuilles d'un chêne
Je me suis fait sécher;
Sur la plus haute branche
Le rossignol chantait.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Sur la plus haute branche
Le rossignol chantait.
Chante, rossignol, chante,
Toi qui as le cœur gai.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Chante, rossignol, chante,
Toi qui as le cœur gai;
Tu as le cœur à rire,
Moi je l'ai-t-à pleurer.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Tu as le cœur à rire,
Moi je l'ai-t-à pleurer:
J'ai perdu ma maîtresse
Sans l'avoir mérité.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*J'ai perdu ma maîtresse
Sans l'avoir mérité,
Pour un bouquet de roses
Que je lui refusai.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Pour un bouquet de roses
Que je lui refusai.*

*Je voudrais que la rose
Fût encore au rosier.
Lui y a longtemps, etc.*

*Je voudrais que la rose
Fût encore au rosier,
Et moi et ma maîtresse
Dans les mêm's amitiés.*

VARIANTE :

*Et que le rosier même
Fût à la mer jeté.
Lui y a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai.*

UNTO A FOUNTAIN CLEAR

Unto a fountain clear
I went one summer day,
So cool I found the water
I plunged into its spray,
 A long time have I loved you,
 And I will love alway.

So cool I found the water
I plunged into its spray;
And underneath an oak tree
In the cool freshness lay.
 A long time, etc.

And underneath an oak tree
In the cool freshness lay;
Among the highest branches
A bird sang blithe and gay.
 A long time, etc.

Among the highest branches
A bird sang blithe and gay;
Sing nightingale, sing ever,
Sing loud your merry lay.
A long time, etc.

Sing nightingale, sing ever,
Sing loud your merry lay;
Your heart is free from sorrow,
But mine is sad to-day.
A long time, etc.

Your heart is free from sorrow,
But mine is sad to-day;
My sweetheart she has left me
And all the world is gray.
A long time, etc.

My sweetheart she has left me
And all the world is gray;
She asked a bunch of roses
And I did say her nay.
A long time, etc.

She asked a bunch of roses
And I did say her nay;
I wish the cruel roses
In the dark ocean lay.
A long time, etc.

I wish the cruel roses
In the dark ocean lay,
That I and my dear sweetheart
Might live in love for aye.
A long time, etc.

“*Malbrough s'en va-t-en Guerre*” is a song of later origin. It was composed during the reign of Louis Quatorze, and was first sung in Paris as a lullaby to the young Dauphin by his peasant nurse. Marie Antoinette and her maids of honor held it in high esteem, and it soon was sung everywhere in France. Chateaubriand speaks of hearing it in Palestine, and Beethoven incorporated it into his Battle Symphony. In 1830 the familiar words “We Won't Go Home Till Morning” were composed to the same tune. The story contained in the quaint ballad is said to concern the Duke of Marlborough, known to the French as Malbrough. The version given here has been slightly abridged.

MALBROUGH S'EN VA-T-EN GUERRE

*Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine,
Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre,
Ne sait quand reviendra. (ter)*

*Il reviendra-z-à Pâques,
Mironton, etc.
Il reviendra-z-à Pâques,
Ou à la Trinité. (ter)*

*La Trinité se passe,
Mironton, etc.
La Trinité se passe,
Malbrough ne revient pas. (ter)*

*Madame à sa tour monte,
Mironton, etc.
Madame à sa tour monte,
Si haut qu'ell' peut monter. (ter)*

*Elle aperçoit son page,
Mironton, etc.
Elle aperçoit son page,
Tout de noir habillé. (ter)*

*—Beau page, ah! mon beau page,
Mironton, etc.
Beau page, ah! mon beau page,
Quell' nouvelle apportez? (ter)*

*Quittez vos habits roses,
Mironton, etc.
Quittez vos habits roses
Et vos satins brochés. (ter)*

*Monsieur Malbrough est mort,
Mironton, etc.
Monsieur Malbrough est mort,
Est mort et enterré. (ter)*

*J'l'ai vu porter en terre,
Mironton, etc.
J'l'ai vu porter en terre
Par quatre-z-officiers. (ter)*

*L'un portait sa cuirasse,
Mironton, etc.
L'un portait sa cuirasse,
L'autre son bouclier. (ter)*

*Sur la plus haute branche,
Mironton, etc.*

*Sur la plus haute branche
Le rossignol chanta. (ter)*

*On vit voler son âme,
Mironton, etc.
On vit voler son âme,
A travers des lauriers. (ter)*

*La cérémoni' faite,
Mironton, etc.
La cérémoni' faite
Chacun s'en fut s'coucher. (ter)*

*J'n'en dis pas davantage,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine,
J'n'en dis pas davantage
Car en voilà-z-assez.*

MALBROUGH TO WAR IS GOING

Malbrough to war is going,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine,
Malbrough to war is going,
None knows when he'll return. (ter)

But he'll return at Easter,
Mironton, etc.
But he'll return at Easter,
Or else at Trinity. (ter)

But Trinity was over,
Mironton, etc.
But Trinity was over,
Marlbrough did not return. (ter)

Madame went up her tower,
Mironton, etc.
Madame went up her tower,
As high as she could go. (ter)

Then came to her a page boy,
Mironton, etc.
Then came to her a page boy,
All dressed in garments black. (ter)

O do you bring glad tidings,
Mironton, etc.
O do you bring glad tidings
About my absent lord? (ter)

Leave off your broidered satins,
Mironton, etc.
Leave off your broidered satins,
For mourning you must wear. (ter)

Malbrough was killed in battle,
Mironton, etc.
Malbrough was killed in battle,
And buried in the ground. (ter)

I saw him carried graveward,
Mironton, etc.
I saw him carried graveward
By four brave officers. (ter)

And one did bear his cuirass,
Mironton, etc.
And one did bear his cuirass,
Another bore his shield. (ter)

And on the highest treetop,
Mironton, etc.
And on the highest treetop
The nightingale did sing. (ter)

We saw his soul a-mounting,
Mironton, etc.
We saw his soul a-mounting,
A-mounting to the skies. (ter)

When these sad rites were over,
Mironton, etc.
When these sad rites were over,
We all went home to bed.

And no more can I tell you,
Mironton, etc.
And no more can I tell you
For this is quite enough.

The *complainte* is a frequent form among the folk songs of all nations, and narrates some tragic event. It is often a dirge or lament and, as a general rule, has no refrain, but narrates the story in a direct manner. Many of these *complaintes* among the folk songs of French Canada possess a simple and austere beauty that is not found in other types. “*Les Trois Roses Empoisonnées*” is an interesting example of a *complainte* that has some historical foundation. Folklorists have tried to identify the king and marchioness, and have generally agreed that the story refers to that of King

Henry IV and the beautiful Gabrielle d'Estrée, who died in Paris under tragic circumstances at Easter, 1599.

LES TROIS ROSES EMPOISONNÉES

*Quand le Roi rentra dans Paris,
Salua tout' les dames;
La premièr' qu'il a salué,
Ell' lui a ravi l'âme.*

*“Marquis, t'es plus heureux qu'un roi
D'avoir tant jolî femme.
Si tu voulais m'en fair' l'honneur
J'en aurais l'avantage.”*

*—“Sire, vous avez tout pouvoir,
Pouvoir et la puissance;
Car si vous n'étiez pas le Roi,
J'en aurais la vengeance.”*

*Le Roi l'a pris', l'a-t emmené'
Dans sa plus haute chambre.
Nuit et jour ell' ne cess' d'pleurer
Pour son honneur défendre.*

*“La bell', si tu voulais m'aimer,
Je t'y ferais princesse.
De tout mon or et mon argent
Tu serais la maîtresse.”*

*—“Gardez votre or et votre argent;
N'appartient qu'à la Reine.
J'estim'rais mieux mon doux Marquis
Que toutes vos richesses.”*

*La Rein' lui fit faire un bouquet
De trois roses jolies,
Et la senteur de ce bouquet
Fit mourir la Marquise.*

*Le Roi lui fit faire un tombeau
Couvert de pierre grise;
A fait marquer tout alentour
Le nom de la Marquise.*

THE THREE POISONED ROSES

When the King returned to Paris,
He saluted lord and dame;
But one maid who bowed before him
Set his heart and soul aflame.

“Marquis, thou art three times happy,
Holding one like her in fee;
If thou wish to do me honor,
I a secret friend would be.”

“Sire, you, a mighty monarch,
Hold the power of life and death;
Were you not my king and liege-lord
This would be your dying breath.”

Then the lady fair was taken
To a chamber in the keep;
Whether day or whether night-time,
There she never ceased to weep.

“Lady fair, my own beloved,
Wilt thou love for me confess?
I'll lay before thee gold and silver,
And thou shalt be the first princess.”

“Keep your gold and keep your silver,
Take them to your lady Queen.
I would give for my dear Marquis
All the gold that’s ever been.”

The Queen then sent the lady roses,
Three roses in a bouquet tied;
The lady pressed them to her bosom,
She breathed the perfume—and she died.

The monarch raised a tomb of granite
Built to do honour to her fame,
And on the gray stones deeply carven
He wrote the faithful lady’s name.

As has been already said, the folk song was most often used as a work song. One of the most common and popular types was the one that could be used as a canoe song, in which the rhythmic beats of the music would correspond to that of the paddle. A good example of this kind of canoe song is “*La Fille du Roi d’Espagne*,” with its plaintive story and swinging tune. The theme is an old one that has often been used by poets. Perhaps “*Der Taucher*” by Schiller is the best known, although Italian and French poets also used the story in differing versions.

LA FILLE DU ROI D’ESPAGNE

*La fill’ du roi d’Espagne
Vogue, marinier, vogue!
Veut apprendre un métier,*

*Vogue, marinier!
Veut apprendre un métier!
Vogue, marinier!*

*A battre la lessive
La battre et la couler.*

*Un battoire on lui donne
Un beau banc à laver.*

*Au premier coup qu'ell' frappe
L'anneau d'or a tombé.*

*Ell' s'est jetée à terre
Ell' s'est mise à pleurer.*

*Mais par ici luy passe
Son gentil cavalier.*

*Que donneriez-vous, belle
Si j'allais le chercher?*

*Un doux baiser, dit-elle
Deux, trois, si vous voulez.*

*Le galant s'y dépouille
A la mer s'est jeté.*

*Dès la première plonge
La mer en a brouillé.*

*Dès la seconde plonge
L'anneau d'or a sonné.*

*Dès la troisième plonge
Le galant s'est noyé.*

THE KING OF SPAIN'S DAUGHTER

In Spain a lovely princess,
Row, boatman, row ;
A new trade wished to know,
 Boatman, Row!
A new trade wished to know,
 Boatman, Row!

This lovely Spanish princess
A-washing she would go.

A mallet then they gave her,
And a bench by the water's flow.

But as she beat the washing
Her ring fell down below.

And as it sank in the water
"Alas!" she cried, and "Woe!"

Her cavalier was passing ;
Her grief he wished to know.

"What will you give, my princess,
If I dive down below?"

"A sweet kiss I will give you
Or more if you will go."

He cast his garments from him,
And dived to the depths below.

At first plunge the water
Went dancing to and fro.

At his second plunge the diver
The lost ring did bestow.

But the knight sank in the water
And ever lay below.

As the soul of the peasant is the natural dwelling-place of religion, generally primitive and elemental, it is to be expected that folk songs which have been either preserved or created by the peasant population should contain a large number of religious themes. The two most commonly found in French Canada are those which are concerned with some event of the life of Christ, or with the Holy Virgin. In songs of this kind the Virgin or Christ are often shown as walking upon earth, giving comfort and admonition to mortals.

*La sainte Vierge s'en va chantant
Avec ses beaux cheveux pendant.
Dans son chemin elle fit rencontre
D'un boulanger.—Bon boulanger,
Veux-tu me donner du pain pour Dieu?—
Le boulanger en a eu pitié;
Trois petits pains lui a donnés.*

*La sainte Vierge s'en va chantant
Avec ses beaux cheveux pendant.
Dans son chemin elle fit rencontre
D'un cordonnier.—Bon cordonnier,
Veux-tu me donner des souliers pour Dieu?—
Le cordonnier n'a pas eu pitié;
Trois coups de pied lui a donnés.*

*La sainte Vierge s'en va pleurant
Avec ses beaux cheveux pendant.
Dans son chemin elle fit rencontre
D'une petite fille.—Bonne petite fille,
Veux-tu me donner du sang pour Dieu?—
La petite fille en a eu pitié;
Trois gouttes de sang lui a données.*

*La sainte Vierge s'en va chantant
Avec ses beaux cheveux pendant.
Le boulanger sera sauvé,
Le cordonnier sera damné,
La petite fille sera reçue
Aux pieds du saint Enfant-Jésus.*

LEGEND OF THE VIRGIN

The Holy Virgin walked along
The King's highway and sang a song.
She met a baker on the way;—
"O give to me I humbly pray
A little bread, for love of God!"
The pitying baker bowed his head,
And gave to her three loaves of bread.

The Holy Virgin walked along
The King's highway and sang a song.
She met a cobbler in the street;—
"O give me for my bruised feet
A pair of shoes, for love of God!"
The wicked cobbler shook his head,
And gave to her three blows instead.

The Holy Virgin ceased her song
And softly weeping walked along.
She met a maiden on the road;—

“O give me alms for love of God!”
 The maid was poor and had no gold;
 “I cannot give thee alms,” she said,
 But gave three drops of blood instead.

And still the Virgin walks along
 The King’s highway and sings a song.
 The maiden sits in Paradise
 With little Jesus in the skies.
 The baker joins the saints in heaven;
 But the cobbler to the flames is given.

*Notre Seigneur s’habille en pauvre.
 Chez l’avare s’en est allé:
 “Voudrais-tu, mon bon avare,
 Voudrais-tu m’faire’ la charité?”* (bis)

—“*Que dis-tu, pauvre bonhomme?
 Je n’ai rien à te donner.*”

—“*Les miett’ qui tomb’ sous la table,
 Fais m’en donc la charité.*”

—“*Les miett’ qui tomb’ sous ma table,
 J’ai mon chien pour les manger.*”

—“*Ton chien peut vivre au lièvre,
 Et moi, pauvr’, je crèv’ de faim.*”

*La dame ouvr’ la port’ de sa chambre,
 Entend ce pauvre homme parler.*

“*Rentrez ici, mon bon pauvre;
 Avec moi vous souperez.*”

*Mais quand ils eur’nt bien soupé,
 Il demande à se coucher.*

*La dame ouvr’ la port’ de sa chambre,
 Aperçoit un’ grand’ clarté.*

*“Ah! dites-moi, mon bon pauvre,
La lune s'est-ell' levé?”*
—*“Ce n'est pas la lun', madame,
C'est votre grand' charité.*

*“Votre place est dans le ciel;
Elle sera bien gardé',
Pour vous et pour vos hôtes,
Ceux que vous logerez.*

*“Madame, vous êtes enceinte
D'un homme qui sera damné.
Dieu, dans sa miséricorde,
A voulu vous protéger.”*

OUR LORD IN BEGGAR'S GUISE

Our Lord in beggar's garments dressed
To a miser went one day;
“Good miser wilt thou give to me
Some charity, I pray?”

“O my poor man, what sayest thou?
I've naught to give away.”
“The crumbs that lie upon the ground
Are all I ask to-day.”

“For crumbs that lie upon the ground
My hungry dog does bay.”
“The dog may eat the hare, but I
All night must fasting stay.”

The woman listening at the door
Heard what the man did say.
“Come enter, thou shalt rest thee here
And sup with me to-day.”

And when the beggar well had supped
 He asked all night to stay.
 The woman opened wide her door
 And saw a wondrous ray.

“Ah, tell me what this splendor is,—
 The moon upon her way?”
 “It is your bounteous charity
 That makes the night as day.

“A place in God’s great Paradise
 Is kept for thee alway,
 And for the humble beggar guests
 Thou didst not turn away.

“And thou art pregnant by a man
 Who for his sins shall pay;
 But in his mercy God will keep
 Thee safe from harm for aye.”

The *Noëls*, or Christmas songs, form a class by themselves. “*D’où Viens-tu, Bergère*” is one that belongs exclusively to the people, as it is seldom or never used as a church carol.

D’OÙ VIENS-TU, BERGÈRE

—*D’où viens-tu, bergère,
 D’où viens-tu?*
 —*Je viens de l’étable,
 De m’y promener;
 J’ai vu un miracle
 Ce soir arrivé.*

—*Qu'as-tu vu, bergère,
Qu'as-tu vu?
—J'ai vu dans la crèche
Un petit enfant
Sur la paille fraîche
Mis bien tendrement.*

—*Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus?
—Saint' Marie, sa mère,
Qui lui fait boir' du lait,
Saint Joseph, son père,
Qui tremble de froid.*

—*Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus?
—Y a le bœuf et l'âne
Qui sont par devant,
Avec leur haleine
Réchauffent l'enfant.*

—*Rien de plus, bergère,
Rien de plus?
—Y a trois petits anges
Descendus du ciel
Chantant les louanges
Du Père éternel.*

SHEPHERDESS, WHENCE COMEST THOU?

Shepherdess, O tell me,
Whence comest thou?
I come from the stable,
And as my flocks I led,
I saw a sight of wonder
In that lowly shed.

Shepherdess, O tell me,
 What sawest thou?
In the oxen's manger
A little child I saw,
Smiling at the shepherds
From his bed of straw.

Shepherdess, O tell me,
 Sawest naught beside?
I saw the arms of Mary
The little child enfold,
And Joseph close beside them
A-tremble with the cold.

Shepherdess, O tell me,
 Was there nothing more?
I saw three shining angels
Coming from the skies,
And heard to God the Father,
Songs of praise arise.

The families of French Canada are large. I stopped the other day at a stone farm house near St. Césaire; eleven children were playing in the yard. I asked the oldest, who appeared to be about fourteen, if those were all. "No, there are two more in the house," she answered, and immediately produced them for my inspection. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that children's songs are carefully preserved among the folk songs of Quebec. "*La Poulette Grise*," "*A Cheval, A Cheval!*" "*Pipandor à la Balance*," "*Sur le Pont d'Avignon*" and many other songs for children are well known.

Of all these the lullaby, "Sainte Marguerite," is one of the most beautiful. Of this song Gagnon says:

It is singular to see how the most insignificant words coupled to a few poor notes of music are repeated from country to country and from century to century. While I was reading not long ago at le Bony, France, I heard sung the following lullaby:

*"Dodo, berline!
Sainte Catherine,
Endormez ma p'tite enfant
Jusqu'a l'âge de quinze ans!
Quand quinze ans seront sonnés
Il faudra la marier."*

At the very moment when I am reading these lines here in Quebec, a thousand leagues from France, I hear a nurse singing the following in a neighboring room:

SAINTE MARGUERITE

*"Sainte Marguerite,
Veillez ma petite!
Endormez ma p'tite enfant
Jusqu'à l'âge de quinze ans!
Quand elle aura quinze ans passé,
Il faudra la marier,
Avec un p'tit bonhomme
Qui viendra de Rome."*

SAINTE MARGUERITE

Saint Marguerite in thy keeping
I leave my baby sleeping!
Lull to sleep my little one
Until fifteen years have gone;

When has passed her fifteenth year
Send to her a cavalier,
Who will take her home
To the great city of Rome.

I have stated elsewhere that over ninety per cent of the folk songs of French Canada had their origin in France. There are, however, a good number native to the soil. The songs of the lumber-jacks and shanty-men form probably the largest part of these. They are generally concerned with some local happening, or a longing for home and sweetheart; and while inferior in sentiment to the older songs, they are always interesting. The tunes are for the most part of a very lively and rollicking nature, and it is clear to see that the music meant more to the composer than did the words.

“*Envoyons de l'Avant nos Gens*” is a specimen of this type of song.

ENVOYONS D'L'AVANT NOS GENS

1

*Quand on pâtre des chanquiers
Mes chers amis, tous le cœur gai,
Pour aller voir tous nos parents
Mes chers amis, le cœur content.*

REFRAIN

*Envoyons d'avant,
Nos gens!
Envoyons d'avant!*

2

*Pour aller voir tous nos parents
 Mes chers amis le cœur content,
 Mais que nos amis nous voyent arriver,
 I (ls) vont s(e) mett (re) à rire, à chanter.*

REFRAIN

3

*Mais que nos amis nous vo(y)ent arriver,
 I (ls) vont s'mett (re) à rire, à chanter.
 Dimanche soir à la veillée,
 Nous irons voir nos compagnées.*

REFRAIN

4

*Dimanche soir à la veillée
 Nous irons voir nos compagnées
 Ell(es) vont nous dir' mais en entrant
 V(oi)là mon amant! J'ai l(e) cœur content.*

REFRAIN

5

*Ell(es) vont nous dir' mais en entrant
 V(oi)là mon amant! J'ai l(e) cœur content
 Et au milieu de la veillée
 El (les) vont nous parler d'leu(r) cavalier.*

REFRAIN

6

*Et au milieu de la veillée
 El(les) vont nous parler d'leu(r) cavalier.
 Ell(es) vont nous dir(e) mais en partant
 As-tu fréquenté des amants?*

REFRAIN

7

*El(l)es vont nous dir(e) mais en partant
As-tu fréquenté des amants?
A composé cette chanson?
C'est Jos Blanchet le joli garçon.*

REFRAIN

NOW FOR A PULL TOGETHER

When lumber camps are far away
Our hearts will be both blithe and gay;
Then to our village we shall go
To visit all the friends we know.

Now for a pull together, boys,
Now for a pull together.

Then to our village we shall go
To visit all the friends we know;
And when we meet our friends we think
It's time to take a little drink.

Refrain

And when we meet our friends we think
It's time to take a little drink;
When Sunday evening comes around
It's with our sweethearts we'll be found.

Refrain

When Sunday evening comes around
It's with our sweethearts we'll be found;

And when they see us they will say,—
 “My lover comes, my heart is gay!”

Refrain

And when they see us they will say,—
 “My lover comes, my heart is gay.”
 But long before the evening’s through
 They talk of other lovers, too.

Refrain

But long before the evening’s through
 They talk of other lovers, too;
 And as we leave they ask each lad,—
 “How many sweethearts have *you* had?”

Refrain

As some of you may wish to know,
 Who in the woods all white with snow
 Composed this song, now don’t forget—
 It’s that fine fellow, Joe Blanchet.

Refrain

“*Mon Canot d’Ecorce*,” while not a lumberman’s song, is clearly of Canadian origin. This version was obtained from Joseph Roussele, of Montreal, a native, however, of Kamouraska, who possesses a repertoire of over one hundred and fifty songs. In reading the works of the Abbé Casgrain, I recently came across a poem which closely resembles this

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song. Whether the song is derived from the poem, or the poem from the song, I cannot say.

MON CANOT D'ÉCORCE

*Dans mon canot d'écorce,
Assis à fraîche[ur] du temps,
Où j'ai bravé tout(es) les tempêtes, } (bis)
Les grand(e)s eaux du Saint-Laurent. }*

*Mon canot est fait d'écorces fines
Qu'on pleum(e) sur les bouleaux blancs;
Les coutur(es) sont fait(es) de racines, } (bis)
Les avirons, de bois blanc. }*

*C'est quand je viens sur le portage,
Je prends mon canot sur mon dos.
Je le renvers(e) dessus ma tête: } (bis)
C'est ma cabane pour la nuit. }*

*Le laboureur aim(e) sa charrue,
Le chasseur son fusil, son chien;
Le musicien aim(e) sa musique; } (bis)
Moi, mon canot, c'est [tout] mon bien! }*

*—T(u) es mon compagnon de voyage!—
Je veux mourir dans mon canot.
Sur le tombeau, près du rivage, } (bis)
Vous renverserez mon canot. }*

MY BARK CANOE

**In my canoe of birch bark,
When the wind is blowing free,
I paddle the great St. Lawrence,
As onward it flows to the sea.**

I peel the bark from the birch trees
That cover both cliff and glade;
The seams are filled with balsam,
And the paddles of basswood are made.

In my bark canoe I can paddle
Through rapids that boil and foam;
I carry it over the portage,
And at night my canoe is my home.

The hunter may love his rifle,
His pouch, and his hunting-dog, too;
The fiddler may love his fiddle;
I ever shall love my canoe.

And when I must leave the great river,
O bury me close to its wave,
And let my canoe and my paddle
Be the only mark over my grave!

CHAPTER XVI

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

ONE cannot dwell many years in the Province of Quebec without observing the fondness of the inhabitants for processions. The Laval students love to crown themselves with strange and wonderful head-gear, and march noisily through the streets of Quebec. The boys of classical colleges, wearing black frock coats and sky-blue sashes, don their funny little forage caps and march in long lines through the streets of the larger towns, followed by two or more black-robed friars. The girls of the convent-schools go in chattering files under the direction of two hooded nuns, and seem to enjoy the importance that corporate action lends to them. Even the children from the orphanages of the Gray Sisters wind through the streets in long orderly lines. This inclination to form processions seems in-bred, and even the grown-up French Canadians delight in them.

The two processions most commonly seen in the streets of Quebec towns and villages are



PROCESSIONAL, SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

those of St. Jean Baptiste and Corpus Christi. The former has certain political as well as religious aspects, for St. Jean Baptiste is the patron saint of French Canada. An effigy of St. Jean is carried through the streets, generally on a cart, and the rest of the parade is made up according to the material at hand and the taste of the organisers.

An incident happened in a parish of the St. Francis Valley, in connection with one of these celebrations, which shows the good-fellowship that often exists in Quebec towns of mixed English and French population. There was a small English church in a large French village. The sexton of the Protestant church happened to be French and a devout Catholic. He was a very trustworthy sexton, and as a reward for his faithfulness he was given certain privileges by the Protestant clergyman. Among these was the occasional use of the pastor's horse. The Protestant parson was rather surprised, however, when, on mingling with the crowd that lined the main street as the St. Jean Baptiste procession passed along, he saw his horse drawing a cart upon which was perched an effigy of St. Jean and the Lamb, followed by the curé and all the worthies of the town. Everything went well until the procession reached the spot where the parson stood. Then the horse, which was a petted

member of the minister's family, spying his master in the crowd and probably expecting some dainty from his pockets, bolted towards the sidewalk where the parson stood, stopped short, and refused to budge. There was general consternation in the ranks, for one cannot have a St. Jean Baptiste procession without St. Jean, and disorganization was imminent. But the kindly parson, rather than see the whole show spoiled, took the horse by the bridle and led him solemnly to the end of the route. Some of the good Protestants of the town were much scandalized; but the curé, in thanking the pastor for coming to the rescue of St. Jean and the Lamb, said: "You have caused a miracle to happen, *monsieur*, for I distinctly saw the little St. Jean smiling as we marched along."

But by far the most important and imposing procession either in city or village is that of Corpus Christi. In Montreal and Quebec immense processions are formed, sometimes numbering thousands; while not many parishes are so small that a few devoted nuns, a band of well-trained school-children, and a long straggling line of faithful parishioners cannot be brought together to follow the consecrated Host through the streets.

The origin of the feast of Corpus Christi dates back to the thirteenth century, when it

was instituted for the purpose of further honoring the doctrine of the Real Presence. It falls annually on the first Thursday after the festival of Trinity. The feast was instituted in 1264 by Pope Urban IV. There had been an increase in devotion to the Blessed Sacrament previous to that time, but the institution of the feast is said to have been hastened by the experience of a priest at Bolsena, a town in Italy, which in ante-Christian days had been one of the twelve Etruscan cities. This priest had harboured a doubt regarding the doctrine of transubstantiation, but, it is recorded, his faith was restored when he beheld blood issuing from the Host he had just consecrated; and the chronicler related that the blood penetrated the corporal and entered into the marble of the altar.

In country places the festival is generally held on the Sunday following Trinity, as it is easier to get the people together on a Sunday than on a Thursday. The procession varies in different places according to the people taking part in it; but always the central idea is the adoration of the Host, which is carried through the streets and deposited in an open-air *repositor* erected and decked with flags and flowers for the purpose. The houses and shops of the streets along the route are gaily ornamented with bunting, flags, green boughs, tin-

sel, or anything to lend brightness; and often in country places an avenue leading up to the *reposoir* is formed of white birches or dark spruces stuck into the ground.

It was my privilege recently to witness such a procession in one of the larger towns on the shores of the St. Lawrence. I had seen many village processions, but nothing approaching this one in size and magnificence. It was a June morning, and the drive from a point a few miles outside the town was delightful, and put one into the proper mood for what was to follow. The river was overhung with a heavy mist, as is often the case on spring mornings, drifting up and clinging about the buildings along the shores. But the mist was low and luminous; and as I approached the town, the spire of the parish church pierced through the gray covering, and stood out sharply against the blue sky. As I came still nearer, the whole outline of the church loomed up before me, surrounded by gray stone convents and red brick schools. These buildings, all veiled by the mist and dominated by the enormous spire, presented a picture like that of a mediaeval cathedral rising above an old-world city.

The church, built of rough stone, stood in the centre of the town, facing a small square. About its doors slung a scent of burning incense. In different parts of the square there



A CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION

was a murmur of subdued excitement, as boys from the neighbouring college, orphans under the command of the Gray Sisters, and girls in black dresses and white veils from the convent schools, were arranged in proper order for the procession.

Mass was going on inside the church, and as many of the people of the parish as could crowd in were in attendance. The ceremony was a simple one, followed by a short sermon on the meaning of the festival. The tall lancet windows filled with yellow glass shed a golden light on the congregation that was intently listening.

As soon as the mass was over and the procession was being formed before the church, I left the square and made my way to a small park overlooking the river, where the *repositor* had been erected. It was a structure that in form bore a suspicious resemblance to the bandstand from which the town musicians had been discoursing jazz music the evening before; but to-day it was almost hidden beneath green branches and spring flowers, and an altar of white and gold had been raised in the centre. White gulls rose from the river and circled on graceful wings above the *repositor*. The mist had melted away, and a blue haze overhung the water and veiled the sharp outlines of the hospital opposite. Its dome rose above the steep

roof and double row of dormer windows, shaded by tall elm trees; and when the procession drew near, its bell pealed forth and echoed with the church chimes over the river below.

From my point of vantage at the corner of the square I could see the long line approaching, filing slowly down the street. First came the laymen of different orders wearing gaudy regalia, looking rather self-conscious as they walked along in pairs. These were evidently the least important part of the parade and had been sent first. Directly behind them came the cross-bearer, carrying a large golden cross that glittered in the sunlight, and followed by little acolytes carrying candles. Their round smooth faces wore a look of great seriousness, but not of self-consciousness like those of the lay brothers. A large choir of men and boys came next, dressed in black cassocks and short white surplices, chanting as they went. The surplices were bordered with deep hand-made lace stiffly starched and of many patterns and told of long hours of work on the part of the women. One little boy could not resist the lure of the pattern; and, he as passed by singing lustily, he traced its outline with his fingers. After these came the women wearing large rosettes of different colors to indicate different societies. The smallest boys formed the next group,

and acted as an advance-guard for many white-veiled girls, who marched in the form of a cross, carrying baskets of rose-petals which they scattered along the way. Then followed a group of twenty-four ecclesiastics wearing ceremonial copes and vestments of white and gold. Next came a prelate in purple robe, attended by a chaplain in white. This personage I took to be the bishop of the diocese or his representative.

The most picturesque portion of the whole procession was a group of twelve tiny acolytes dressed in scarlet and pearl gray robes, six of them bearing candles and the others carrying ceremonial lanterns. Their childish faces were very solemn, and their dark eyes so intent on the candles or lanterns which they carried that they never looked to right nor to left. Acolytes with swinging censers continually perfumed the way with incense. It is impossible to give all the details of the picture. Long lines of school-boys singing in Latin and school-girls chanting the "Ave Maria," passed by, while in the distance the college band played slow and solemn strains.

Not the least interesting was the large crowd of spectators that lined the streets all along the way. These joined in the ceremony, and many voices made in unison the humble appeal: *Ora pro nobis*. Then a band of

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singers, evidently trained for the purpose, led the people in singing: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum.*

Banners of scarlet, blue, and gold were blazing all along the street; and, as various orders of black robed nuns and brown-robed monks passed by, a sort of religious awe seemed to take possession of the crowd and imposed silence. One very stout woman, wearing a dress of scarlet and green, becoming carried away by the fervor, rushed from the sidewalk and joined the procession of friars and nuns. She looked rather like a peacock that had fallen among a flock of blackbirds, but no one seemed to pay any attention to her, and she passed along singing loudly.

The banners had all passed by, and now a gorgeous canopy appeared, carried by four men. These were preceded by youths who at times walked backwards, swinging censers. Beneath the canopy the officiating priest carried the covered ciborium. This was solemnly deposited among the flowers on the white and gold altar amid a profound silence. Then all the people, both those in the procession and in the crowd, fell on their knees and bowed their heads while the Host was exposed for a moment. When it was returned to the ciborium the procession started back towards the church.

As I passed by the rear of the altar I saw written there in large blue letters: *Sola Fides Sufficit*. The tide that creeps up the St. Lawrence from the distant sea was beating on the rocky shores below, and it suggested to my mind the thought that the sea of faith was still at its full as far as French Canada was concerned.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HANDICRAFTS OF FRENCH CANADA

IT is, I believe, correct to say that in no part of Canada or the United States do the ancient handicrafts of spinning and weaving flourish more extensively than in the Province of Quebec. If you visit the Bonsecours Market in Montreal, or the markets of other large towns of the Province, you will often find rows of hand-made socks and mittens, and sometimes *tuques*, exposed for sale. These are generally of bright hues and gay patterns, for the habitant has a keen eye for color. Certain shops specialize in the beautiful homespun fabrics woven on the hand looms. Besides this homespun, you will also see bed-spreads, table-covers, and curtains of lovely soft colorings—blue being the favorite—ornamented by geometrical designs of white wool, fashioned by loops of the yarn. These arts have been fostered by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild which has done much to prevent them from passing away. But it is only when you visit the outlying districts in the newly-settled

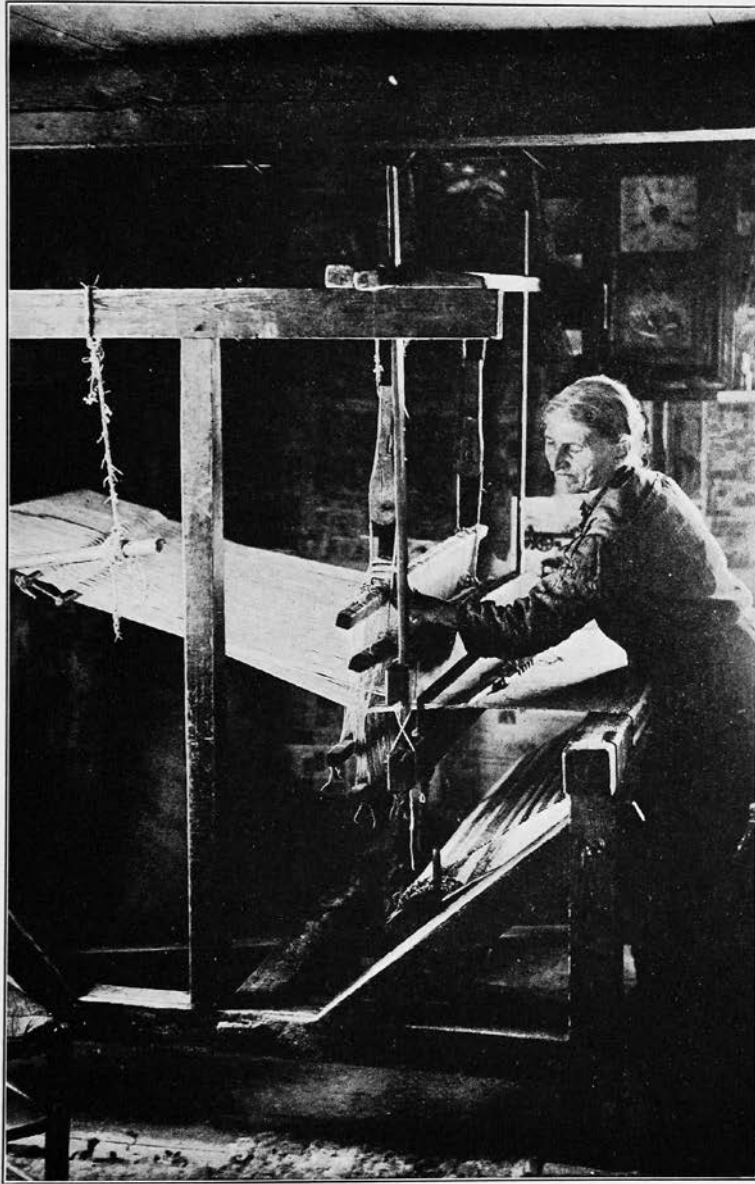
regions, or some older portion of the Province far away from any town, that you will see the handicrafts of spinning and weaving carried on for the sole purpose of providing clothing for the family, and carpets, blankets, and curtains for the home. It struck me as most unusual to see in certain thriving villages in the Lake St. Jean district, brand new spinning-wheels exposed for sale in the general stores. I had come to think of a spinning-wheel as some ancient relic generally stored in an attic among old lumber, and it was a distinct surprise to see new wheels of shining white wood awaiting purchase by the thrifty habitant women.

The old hand cards have, I believe, gone practically out of use, and carding mills have taken their place. During my youth my father owned a woolen factory to which a carding mill was attached. In holiday-time I have earned much pocket-money by running one of these carding machines, and have spent many hours carefully watched by the sharp eyes of some French customer who was fearful lest I waste her wool.

The mill was on the Yamaska River, and beside it grew large patches of elderberry bushes. The stems of the elder have a pith which can easily be removed, leaving a hollow tube that may be used as a bobbin or spool. The most industrious of the habitant women

who came to the mill used to spend the hours, while waiting for their wool to be carded, in making bobbins out of the elder stems. But they never forgot to come into the mill every half-hour to see how the carding was getting on.

Besides spinning, knitting, and the weaving of homespun, which has become something of an industry in certain villages, the weaving of the *catalogne*, or rag carpet, is extensively carried on. Nearly every habitant home of any pretensions is carpeted upstairs and down with this handmade fabric. But it is the homespun that attracts me the most, for much of it is of different soft shades of blue, and its honest and homely workmanship, combined with its beautiful colors, represents to me a symbol of habitant life at its best. For blue is always the color of the Virgin's robe, whose gently smiling face presides over every habitant home; and blue also represents fairy lore and legend, *conte bleu* in the language of old France meaning fairy tale. And this belief in the Virgin Mother still lives in new France side by side with the belief in the supernatural beings of folk lore. Some time ago I saw an old woman weaving a web of blue homespun, and I have composed the following sonnet descriptive of the picture that the loom, the old woman, and the blue homespun made.



WEAVING A *CATALOGNE*

BLUE HOMESPUN

Beyond the doorway of the tiny room
The yellow autumn sunshine died away
Into the shadows of the waning day;
Wrapped in the twilight stood old Marie's loom,
A shapeless mass of timbers in the gloom;
But one small window cast a golden ray
Upon a bench where sky-blue homespun lay,
Lighting the dusk like sheaves of chicory bloom.

Above the loom the Holy Virgin hung
Blue-robed and smiling down; and old Marie,
After the evening angelus had rung,
Arose and touched the picture lovingly
With rough, brown hand, then turned and looked once
more
Upon her sky-blue cloth, and closed the door.

Besides the carpet already referred to, the women are skilled in the making of braided and drawn-in rugs. I have seen very fine specimens of this handicraft in many of the farm-houses, particularly in the lower St. Lawrence region.

Flax, too, is spun, though not to the same extent as wool, and sturdy brown linens are produced that will stand the wear of years.

But of all the arts and crafts of French Canada, the one to which the greatest interest is attached is almost a purely ornamental one, although the article produced may serve a use-

ful purpose as well. I refer to the woven or braided sash, called the *ceinture fléchée*, which was very popular sixty or seventy years ago, but which has now gone out of use to such an extent, that the making of this *ceinture* has become almost a lost art. The well-known antiquarian, Mr. E. Z. Massicotte, has made considerable research as to the origin and method of manufacture of these sashes, and I am indebted to him for most of the following information on this subject.

The name *ceinture fléchée* is given to this belt or sash on account of the arrow-like pattern which is woven into it. The use of some kind of sash dates back to the seventeenth century, when it formed part of the costume of the scholars of the seminary of Quebec. A *ceinture* of some brilliant color still remains part of the uniform of the boys attending the Quebec colleges, which adds a great deal to the picturesque appearance of the costume. Sashes of a similar nature were also worn in the early days by the *coureurs des bois*. But these were not the sashes of finely-twisted wool and elegant workmanship that are popularly known as the *ceintures de l'Assomption*. The first mention in any printed document of the true *ceinture fléchée* is in 1845. It is mentioned again about forty years later in an article describing life in old Montreal, where it is stated that a good

A HABITANT WEARING A CEINTURE FLÊCHÉE

From a Photograph by James Russell



ceinture cost at that time from ten to twenty dollars. This article also states that the North-West Company imported a kind of sash from Scotland for the use of their employees, but that the prices were so exorbitant that the French Canadian mothers, whose sons were going to the North-West, learned to make sashes in order to save the expense of buying them. As the company recruited its helpers chiefly from the neighborhood of L'Assomption, this fact may give support to the theory that L'Assomption was the place where the true *ceinture* originated.

Tradition, however, has more to say upon this subject than history has, and in such cases tradition is almost equally important. At an exhibition of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild some years ago in Montreal, a very choice collection of *ceintures* was exhibited. After a good deal of difficulty a habitant woman was found, named Madame Vennes, then over seventy years of age, who had originally come from L'Assomption, and who could not only explain the structure of these sashes, but could weave them as well.

“Incidentally,” says Mr. Massicotte, “in the course of an interview, she told us the origin of the tissue that she wove as an artist. According to her statements, the true *ceintures fléchées* were made only in L'Assomption, that

is to say, in the region through which the river L'Assomption flows, and that it is only the Brouillette family, to which she belonged, who knew the secret of this art. This is how it came about: Her grandmother, who came from Acadia, received one day a visit from one of her countrymen, driven out of his country 'by the great upheaval.' He wore a curious sash which he presented to her. As she was skilful in all kinds of weaving, that of the *ceinture* pleased her much by its originality. Seeing this, the Acadian taught her how the weaving was done. These sashes captured the public favor at once. The whole Brouillette family, men, women, boys and girls, devoted themselves to the work, and bequeathed the art to their descendants.

Madame Vennes was only eight years old when she began work; since then she has made many sashes in the course of a long life. Nevertheless, none of her children had wished to become masters of the art, 'for young people to-day,' she said with an accent of regret, 'think this beautiful work does not pay well enough for what it demands of time and patience.'"

About the year 1700 the *ceintures* worn by the scholars of Quebec were white. Then green was adopted, but it was not until the early part of the nineteenth century that a design of different colors appeared in the weaving. This took

the form of arrow-heads with many variations. The colors most often chosen were red, which occupied the centre and borders, dark and light blue, two shades of green, yellow, and white.

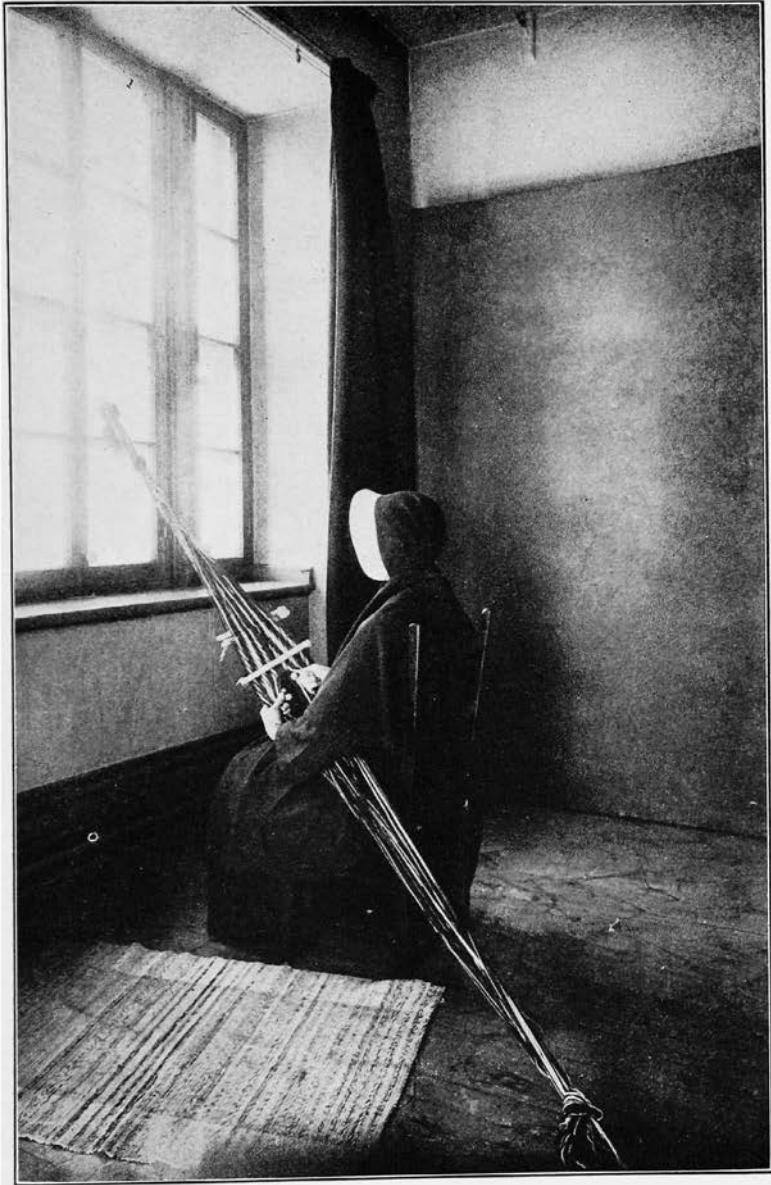
The quality of the wool has always interested those who examined it closely. It is fine, hard, lustrous, and very tightly twisted. It was impossible to buy such wool, and those who worked at the weaving of *ceintures* used to get the best yarn possible, then re-spin it by a special process. The manner of weaving is difficult to describe. About three hundred to four hundred threads some fourteen feet in length are first prepared, one end of these being fastened to the floor and the other to a hook or window-handle. These are kept spread by means of a small wooden arm, and the weaving is done entirely with the fingers. The work is very slow, a good weaver not being able to make more than six or eight inches in ten hours. As these sashes are from eight to ten feet long, it is easy to see that a great deal of work is involved. The cost of these sashes was, in 1875, as much as fifteen dollars; and some of the best specimens are to-day valued at from two to three hundred dollars.

Some antiquarians have thought that these *ceintures* were of Indian origin, but Mr. Massicotte decides against this theory, concluding that "the *ceinture* of re-twisted yarn with the

zig-zag or arrow-shaped pattern is a piece of domestic handicraft peculiar to a certain part of French Canada.”

Fifty years ago, no winter costume was complete without a *ceinture*. For snowshoeing, walking, or driving, the properly dressed habitant always wore his *ceinture* over his overcoat.

A revival in the art of making these beautiful specimens of French-Canadian handicraft has recently taken place. At the request of the Folk Lore Society of Quebec, the Sisters of Providence have undertaken the work of re-establishing the almost lost art. The Sisters have learned the art from one or two of the few habitant women who still know it, and at the present time two members of the community, Sister Léonide and Sister Marie-Jeanne, have been set apart for the pursuit of this art. For art it is, and an art worthy to be ranked beside that of the carver in wood or stone.



A SISTER OF PROVIDENCE WEAVING A *CEINTURE*

CHAPTER XVIII

WINTER IN FRENCH CANADA

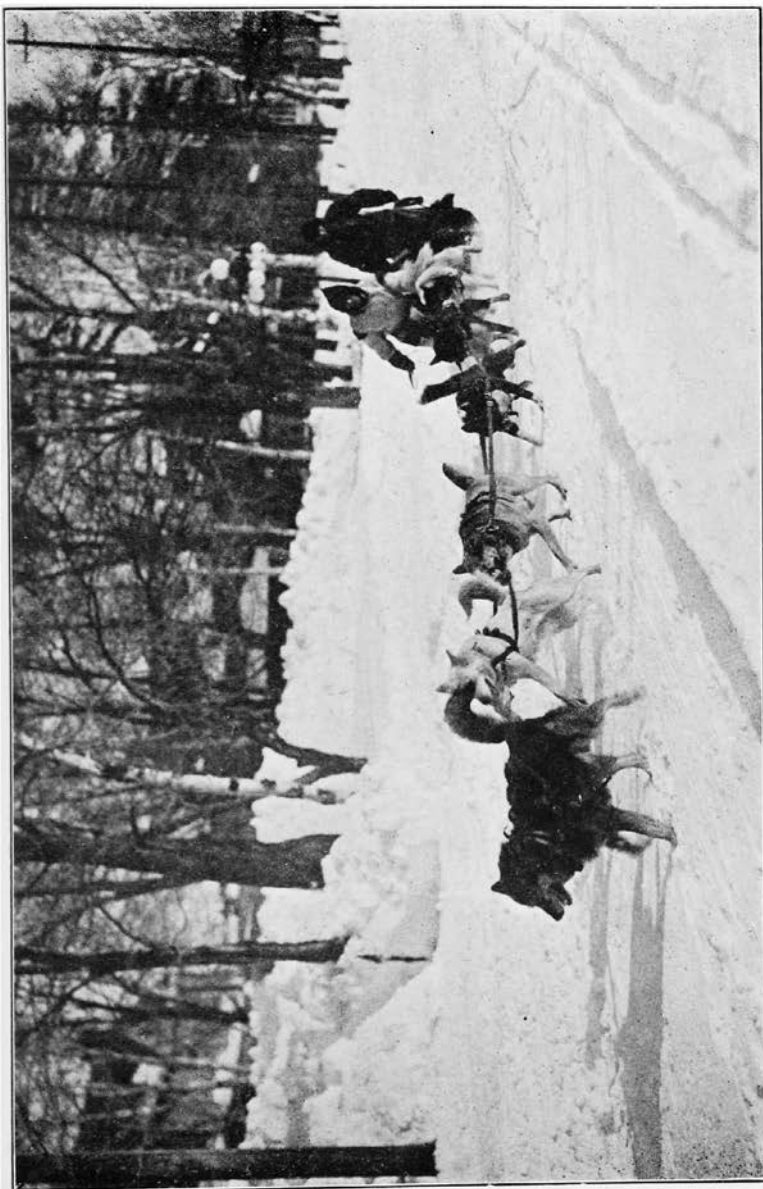
IF this picture of French Canada is not to be wanting in an important particular, a brief reference must be made to the sports that in winter exert such a strong spell among the devotees of the ski, snowshoe, toboggan, etc. The "few acres of snow," as Canada was contemptuously called at King Louis' court, have become an important centre for all sports of which ice and snow are a requisite. But long before these sports became popularized, the hunter on his *raquettes* and the traveller with his dogs and sledge or toboggan were familiar figures. The ski has been more recently introduced, and all kinds of winter sports are organized in Montreal and Quebec.

But these centres are not the only place in which winter sports are to be enjoyed. Each country town has its hockey rink and the rivalry between local teams is very keen. Besides these, exist also in French Canada many snowshoe clubs, for it is the old time *raquettes* that the French Canadian seems to love the best. Long files of young people dressed in blanket

suits of various bright colors and wearing red or blue *tuques* upon their heads are often to be seen as a picturesque color note of the white Canadian winter. These clubs generally adopt some descriptive name such as "*Tuque Rouge*," or "*Tuque Bleue*," and the "bounce" is often a part of the ceremony of initiation.

The dog derby has more recently become an important feature of the winter sports of Quebec. The following is a description of the finish of the last race held in Quebec as reported in the Montreal "Gazette."

"Quebec, Feb. 21.—The real north took a hand in the Eastern International Dog Sled Derby to-day and gave the spectators, as a thrilling climax to the great race, their first notion of what drivers and dogs are frequently up against on the long trails. The hardy mushers, white from head to foot, and the teams, sheathed in ice and half-blinded by the merciless wind, brought the Arctic very near to onlookers who watched them battling through country and weather which temporarily duplicated those of the polar zone. The well-known sled types, huskies, malamoots, and out-side dogs born to the work, close kin to Balto, the hero of the recent Nome epidemic, were in their element as they bored through the bitter head wind and flying snow, which the other dogs could barely face.



A DOG TEAM, QUEBEC

“The fight with the storm left most of the men dazed. The majority had no idea of their standing or time as they raced in, and their teams, though fresh enough, were shivering with cold. ‘The wind was like a stonewall and cut like a whip,’ Harry Beauvais declared. St. Goddard, the winner, whose fine driving and modesty have gained him a great popularity, got a magnificent ovation. Young Brydges, last year’s winner, came in good style, and regret was expressed that his luck was not better. Roberts, the inexperienced Englishman, who drove his local dogs in their first race so pluckily when fate was against him from the start, and who came in fifth, also received an ovation, as did the veteran Weldon, of New Hampshire, with his fine old leader, Chinook. The crowd was naturally delighted with the brilliant advance of the local men, Chevrette and Therrien, to second and third place. The old-timer Rus-sick and his beautiful tawny huskies achieved similar popularity for his showing and good sportsmanship.

“The romance of the Arctic and of old Quebec were delightfully blended as these fine outfits fought through the blizzard over the historic battle-fields on which was once decided the fate of the continent, to the winning post by the picturesque old drill hall near the ramparts within a few yards of the spot where Wolfe

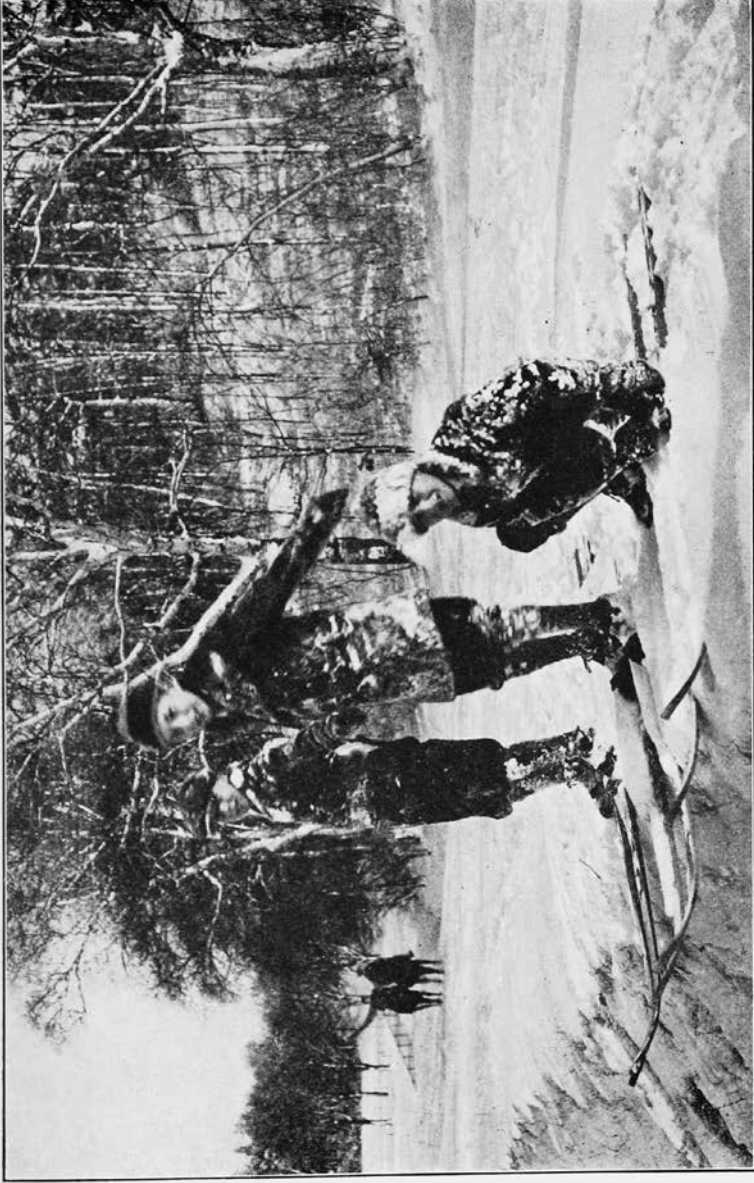
drew up his army and Montcalm fell. Thousands of Quebeckers and winter sports visitors in gay costumes braved the storm to see the finish, and the good-natured police had their hands full clearing a track through the mass of sleighs, shouting French Canadian children, and motor cars, in Grande Allée. The movie men were everywhere, most of them lamenting their fate that the density of the snowfall to a great extent marred their chance to get the finest red-blooded action they ever saw."

The *Fête de Nuit* is also a spectacular event and appeals to the Montrealer in the same way that the dog derby does to the people of Quebec. The following is a description of a *Fête de Nuit* on Mount Royal, also from the "Gazette."

"Early in the evening, however, a goodly number of people gathered about the park slide, and at nine o'clock the fireworks began, continuing for half an hour or so, and culminating in the lighting of a big bonfire on the flat to the left of the slide.

"The slide was decorated with Japanese paper lanterns. The crowd was fairly dense about the bonfire, skiers steering through here and there, and snowshoers tramping about. The road was filled with sleighs and toboggans.

"Hundreds of children enjoyed the pyrotechnic display, and cheered the rockets, Roman



SKIING ON MOUNT ROYAL

candles and other fireworks. The bonfire burned well in the still winter air, and finally crumpled up shortly before ten o'clock.

“The fireworks were plainly visible from the western part of the city, and furnished a spectacular curtain of multi-colored lighting effects against the leaden black sky. The dark, starless night was particularly suitable for a *feu d'artifice* of this type.

“Many of the spectators came up from the big uptown hotels in kingfisher and other sleighs provided by the hostelryes. The American visitors were much impressed with the unusual sight, and the many sports costumes in vivid hues and designs made the scene the more picturesque.

On the broad hillside to the left of the park slide the children were having a great time with sleighs and toboggans, while their parents watched the fireworks. There were young girls timidly practising the art of skiing, helped by more seasoned devotees of the old Norwegian national winter sport, and there were young girls boldly tackling the more ticklish hills, and showing that they knew how to keep their balance on skis, telemarking with the utmost of ease and grace at the bottom of the hill.”

In the country districts sleigh-driving is most popular, as is also the racing of horses

upon the ice of the rivers. To own *un bon joul* is still the ambition of many a habitant.

To understand the people thoroughly one must not be content merely to see them at work. One must observe them as they play or celebrate some great religious or civil festival. This is particularly true of a people in whom religious and race feeling are strong, as is the case among our people of French origin in Canada. One of the most important of the religious festivals in Quebec is, of course, that of Christmas. I use the expression "religious festival" because it always is this, although it is not necessarily a time for family gatherings to the same extent that it is among English-speaking Canadians. It is in its religious significance, culminating in the Midnight Mass, that its importance lies. The family gatherings are often postponed until New Year's day, which is the great day for family reunions.

The Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve is the great ceremony at which every Catholic tries to be present, and in every parish church throughout the whole country the people gather from miles around. The streets of the smallest village then present an animated appearance, as the church bells peal out at midnight, announcing that Christmas day has arrived. Then the crowd enters the brilliantly-lighted

church and listens to mass followed by the Holy Communion. It is the custom to repair after mass to the house of a friend in the vicinity, where a feast is held.

The well-known poet, Louis Fréchet, has devoted a whole book, "*Le Noël Au Canada*," to stories and anecdotes which centre around Christmas. In the Foreword of his book he says:

"Among our ancestors in Normandy and Brittany, Christmas Eve was the occasion for gatherings, especially at the manor or castle, where all the villagers assembled to wait the hour of Midnight Mass. Logs were cast upon the fire in the great fireplaces and the people sat in a circle around the hearth. A glass of wine was poured upon the Yule-log as the words, "In the name of the Father," were pronounced, and small cakes called *nieulles* were distributed—probably the origin of our *croquignoles*. We should notice that the *croquignoles* are, in the country parts, the food *par excellence* for Christmas. Good housewives would believe that they were neglecting the good old customs if, on the return from Midnight Mass, the family and the neighbours could not sit down around an appetizing heap of golden *croquignoles* encrusted in their covering of sugar frosting.

"Among French Canadians, where unfortu-

nately some of the old traditions are slowly being abandoned, the people still hold firmly to the Midnight Mass. During long weeks of expectation the children see in their dreams the solemn celebration as a gateway to Paradise. It is a mysterious ceremony, the yearly return of which even the old people cannot witness without feeling in their hearts the ever vibrating gamut of the innocent joys and emotions of childhood.

“Who can, on entering one of our churches on Christmas Eve, hear without emotion those songs so beautiful in their simplicity and grace, floating beneath the echoing vaults, mingled with the roll of the organ; those songs of tradition which have been made for us by unknown singers to whom Christian art owes so much:

“*Adeste Fideles*, that invocation broad in rhythm and graceful in form; *Nouvelle Agréable*, that melody full of the power so fitting to the jovial voices of our fathers; *Dans Cette Étable*, that hymn whose majesty causes us to bow our heads before the great mystery; and finally, and best of all our carols, *Ça Bergers, Assemblons-nous!*”

One of the quaintest and most beautiful of the Christmas customs of old Quebec is the erection of a *crèche* in the parish churches, and sometimes in the homes. This consists of an image of the “petit Jésus” lying in a manger,

the Virgin Mother and Joseph, and generally the adoring shepherds and the Three Kings, offering their gifts. In some of the larger churches this crèche is very elaborate, and has many figures, including the oxen and sheep and the camels on which the three kings rode. But it is the less pretentious crèche that possesses the surest appeal. The rude stable is often realistically depicted, and naïve figures of the Divine Child upon a bed of golden straw, the Holy Virgin in the usual blue robe, and gray-bearded Joseph in brown smock, together with a burly ox and a woolly sheep, all combine to make a picture to bring one back to the days of childhood. For it is the children that the crèche particularly attracts, and many visit it to pray or light a votive candle.

The custom of erecting a crèche is a very old one in French Canada, the first mention of it in Canadian History being in the "*Relations des Jésuites*" for 1644-45:

"The Indians experienced an especial devotion on the night which was lightened by the birth of the Son of God. They built a little chapel of cedar and spruce branches to receive the crèche of the little Jesus; they wished to undergo penitence in order to prepare themselves to receive Him in their hearts on that holy day, and even those who were more than two days' journey distant were present at the

place indicated to sing chants in honor of the new-born child and to approach the table where the divine food was placed; neither the depth of snow nor the rigor of the cold could lessen the ardour of their devotion; that little chapel seemed to them a glimpse of paradise."

In "*Au Coeur de l'Histoire*," Mr. Raoul de Lormier has reconstructed the scene thus:

"And now, trusting in the bounty of Him who did not disdain to enter into the meanest house, they raised in the midst of their camp a little chapel of cedar and spruce branches to receive the crèche of the little Jesus. This little cabin they have covered with interlaced branches to receive God in the form of a child, the son of the Great Spirit, before whom redskin and paleface are equal. As to the interior of this rustic chapel let us imagine that the Indians have completely lined it with fragrant evergreen branches and with the furs of the silver fox, the martin, and the beaver.

"Upon a primitive altar there is the little tabernacle with its curtain ornamented with wampum. Above is a cross, probably blue or red. Perhaps, also, there are besides the cross two little pewter candlesticks in which burn slender candles. The whole altar has a background of deerskins stretched upon the wall, and in one corner of the chapel is the little Jesus resting on a bed of green, silky moss.

Did a savage carve the figure from a white birch branch? Let us fancy so; and further, that the squaws have dressed it in a robe of white ermine embroidered with porcupine quills. The red light of a pine knot planted in the midst before the altar lights up the scene. Then, at the hour when the stars in the cold clear night have finished the half of their journey, the Indians, assembled in the chapel of branches lost in the white and vast solitude of New France, intone in their own language the triumphal song of the angels announcing to the world the beginning of a new era: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men.' "

Again, Mr. de Lormier, in his charming gallery of historical pictures, has painted a delightful and life-like scene representing a Midnight Mass celebrated in Montreal—then Ville-Marie—on Christmas Eve, 1665. It is supposed to be a letter written by a drummer-boy of the Carignan regiment to "Jolie Marquise, ma mère," at La Rochelle. While the drummer-boy is a fictitious character, the other personages are historical, and the events are so well authenticated by historical documents that one feels that a truer picture of the times is presented by the author, thus letting his imagination play upon the dry bones of history, than if he had confined himself strictly to historical facts.

“This missive,” writes the drummer-boy to his mother, “I am writing from the Hôtel Dieu, thanks to the kindness of good lady Mance, founder of the institution, who has given me pen, ink, and paper. Now I ask myself when you will receive this letter. I do not know, for the ice has now shut us in, and closed for the season the highway to the open sea. Will it be the month of July? Possibly later? That is very likely.

“At the moment that I trace these words I see through the window, on the other side of the path, Mademoiselle Mance coming out of the house of Sister Bourgeoys, who lives over the school that she founded seven years ago (1658), the first in Ville-Marie. This house was formerly a stable surmounted by a dove-cote, and was given her by Monsieur de Maisonneuve. To-day the stable is the school and the dove-cote her abode.

“A few hundred rods to the west from here I can see the manor of the Seigneurs of Montreal, which is also a seminary. A little farther on, situated on a point of land formed by the St. Lawrence and a little river called the St. Peter, the old fort of the company of Notre-Dame slumbers in the snow.

“Towards the east, across the stumps of trees, I can perceive very vaguely the chapel which Sister Bourgeoys erected eight years ago,

giving it the name of Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours. A little beyond that, the flag with its *fleurs-de-lys* of azure floats above the fort which dominates the forest from the top of its hill. In the distance the frozen river, a desert of whiteness; then the sea. And always, so far away, the shores of the fatherland, where I can see as through a mist the castle of my fathers in the plain of La Rochelle. Entering in spirit into the great oak-pannelled hall, hung with the portraits of my ancestors, I embrace a beautiful marquise with white hair.

“To-day is Christmas day. Last night I went to mass in the oratory of the Hôtel Dieu, where the religious ceremonies of the parish take place. This little church, built of stone in 1656, is the third constructed in Ville-Marie—there has existed one of bark and one of wood inside the walls of the fort, since the founding of this place—but already it is too small, and it can no longer hold the whole population. Last night it was completely filled. Nevertheless it must serve as the parish church until a larger one can be built on Place d’Armes, behind the hospital. And it will soon be necessary.

“Ville-Marie now numbers six hundred and twenty-five French inhabitants, besides nuns, soldiers, and Indians. At the present time the chapel is well decorated, having a fine

tabernacle and flowers of gold and silver placed pleasingly upon the altar by the nuns.’’

Then follows a long list of those attending, including many illustrious names. The letter continues:

“Besides these, there were savages dressed in deer-skin garments, decorated with bead-work and furs. Everyone knelt and prayed, the greater part taking communion. Messire l’Abbé Souart, the superior and representative of the gentlemen of Saint-Sulpice, the lords of the Island, sang the mass. Pierre Gadbois, one of my friends, was the server, wearing a beautiful red cassock. The Abbé du Bois, our chaplain, assisted at the sanctuary.

“As for the music, it was finely sung by a choir composed of colonists and soldiers, with a strong accompaniment. Monsieur de Bransac of the West Indian Company and Maitre Basset, the notary, played the lute; two soldiers, the viol; the surgeon, Monsieur Bouchard, the archelute; and I, the little flute. Therefore, a little before mass, at about a quarter of an hour before midnight, while Messire l’Abbé intoned the *Te Deum* and the choir responded, the harmony was most pleasing. The *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* were from a mass by Palestrina, and the other parts of the service in unison. During the offertory, it was your son, Madame la Marquise, who sang a beautiful *motet* by Cam-

bert which he himself taught me at the court of His Majesty.

“After the ceremony we were all invited to a feast by Messire l’Abbé, who received us in the seignorial mansion. Just before leaving the feast, Messire l’Abbé invited us to drink the health of His Majesty, the Queen-Mother, and all the Royal Family.”

A different picture than the one so vividly portrayed in “*Au coeur de l’Histoire*” presented itself to me last Christmas Eve. After reading the story, and reconstructing the scene of the Midnight Mass in Ville-Marie in 1665, I felt a strong desire to witness a mass celebrated in Montreal, Ville-Marie’s successor, two hundred and sixty years later. The obvious place to see this would be at Notre Dame church, whose twin towers rise only a stone’s throw from the spot where the chapel of the Hôtel Dieu used to stand long ago.

On application to the Reverend Father Perrin, curé of Notre Dame, I found that I was rather late, as all of the ten thousand seats in the great church had been allotted. But with characteristic courtesy, Father Perrin, on hearing the reason for my request, went to a good deal of trouble and succeeded in giving me a seat in the very centre of the nave.

The scene in Place d’Armes, when I arrived there shortly before midnight, was an animated

one, and, under the brilliant lights of the square, one of great beauty. There had been a fall of soft snow during the day, and the bronze Indian and colonists, crouching at the base of Maison-neuve's monument before the church, were all wearing white furry garments. The afternoon had been mild and damp, but a sudden lowering of the temperature had caused a white frost to come out upon the towers and facade of the church, which gleamed like uncut marble. Above the two towers the stars glittered, and one particularly large and bright, shining in the patch of sky between, gave to the picture a peculiar suggestion of Christmas. Crowds of people had gathered in the square, and crowds were pouring into the church through the lofty arched doorways. Then suddenly there burst forth from the height of the towers a music of bells such as I have never heard before in Canada. "*Le gros Bourdon*," the largest bell on this continent, rang out with deep-toned voice, supported by ten others, of differing key, the whole forming a glorious cloud of music that floated out over the city.

The chimes had continued for about ten minutes, when I was almost literally carried from the church steps where I was standing by a wave of chattering and excited boys. They were the choir-boys, who immediately mounted

to the organ-loft and took their places like well-drilled soldiers.

Inside the church all was silent and rather dim after the glitter of the lights outside. The thousands of worshippers took their places. Then the great organ burst into the strains of "*Venez Divin Messie*," just as the many hundred lights above the high altar flamed out, and the solemn procession of priests and assistants filed in, wearing red cassocks and white surplices. A blue cloud of incense filled the place, scattered through the chancel by several serving-boys. The *Kyrie*, the *Credo*, the *Sanctus*, and the *Agnus Dei* followed in swift succession, or at least it seemed swift to me, for the beauty of the music made me wish that it would endure as long as possible. But beautiful as were these stately chants, it was not until the old Noël's were sung that I realized that I was listening to carols which at that moment were resounding through the many churches of this vast Province, and which have been thus sung in Canada for nearly three hundred years.

"*Ça Bergers, Assemblons-nous*," "*Dans le Silence de la Nuit*," "*Nouvelle Agréable*" were sung in chorus, while "*Dans cette Étable*" was sung as a solo by a boy with a voice like a flute. After the "*Adeste Fideles*" the faithful began to throng towards the altar to take communion,

which was administered by three red-robed priests.

As I left the church, the organ was sending forth the strains of "*Il est né le Divin Enfant,*" while the crowd filed out of the church and again filled the square.

The picture of two and a half centuries ago, which had been evoked by the drummer-boy's letter, rose suddenly before my mind as I passed beneath the archway, and I half expected to see a few rude gabled buildings rising from the snow and overhung with darkness. But the glare of the electric lights and the clang of the street-cars dispelled this illusion, and I was soon seated in a comfortable motor, speeding homewards along lighted streets that ran for miles between lofty stone buildings.

CHAPTER XIX

AN OUTPOST OF FRENCH CANADA

IN these pages the name of the intrepid mariner, Jacques Cartier, has frequently occurred in reference to the St. Lawrence. He did not, of course, confine his explorations entirely to the shores of the river. In his first voyage in 1534 he did not reach the river at all, but explored the Gaspé coast as well as the Baie des Chaleurs. The first land, then, sighted by Cartier and his followers was probably one of the rocky islands along this shore, and it is also certain that he made the acquaintance of the gigantic rock that stands just off the coast of Gaspé, an outpost of French Canada that links it with the open sea.

On July 4, 1535, Cartier visited the harbour now known as Port Daniel. It was St. Martin's day, and he is supposed to have gone ashore here to celebrate the first mass said in Canada. This, however, is a disputed point.

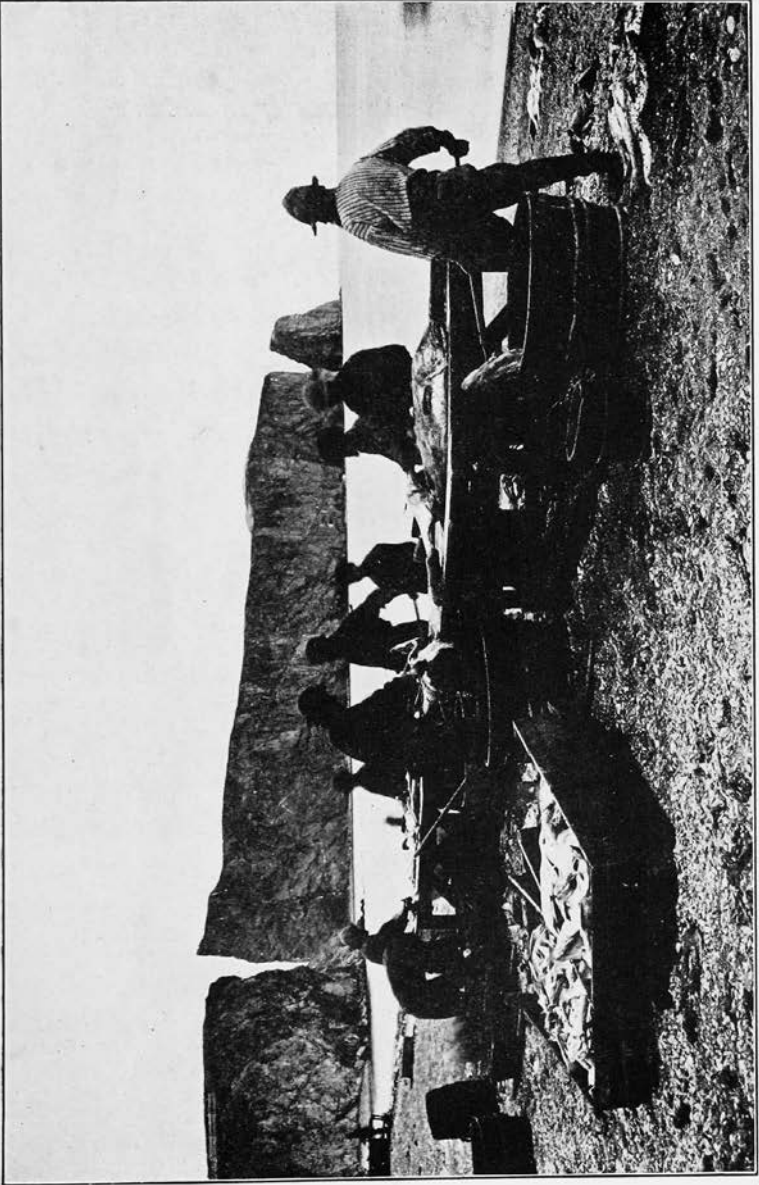
Cartier had skirted along the Magdalens and Île St. Jean, now Prince Edward Island, and had entered the Baie des Chaleurs, a name which he himself gave it on account of the great

heat. He speaks of the great number of birds inhabiting the islands in the Gulf, and here to-day the largest bird colony in North America is to be found. Bird Rock, Bonaventure Island, and others of the Magdalen group, afford shelter for many wild sea-birds, including the rather rare gannets.

A storm arose and the little fleet anchored under the lee of Percé Rock. He waited here for some time and was then forced to seek a better shelter in Gaspé bay. Here Cartier went ashore and erected the cross marked with the arms of the King of France, thus taking possession of the whole of the northern half of the continent in the name of King Francis I.

Other great explorers and colonizers have followed the pathway that Cartier marked out. Champlain, Frontenac, Talon, and Marquette have all known the Gaspé coast, as their ships felt their perilous way along the rocky shore. Later, Phipps and Wolfe came here, not as explorers but as destroyers. The gigantic rock which stands guard upon the threshold of French Canada must have been a familiar landmark to many of the adventurous Frenchmen who came to found an empire in the New World.

Not only was L'île Percé known to the early French explorers, but the ghosts of Spanish buccaneers still haunt the waters beneath it; and in the caves of its rocky shores the treasures



PERCÉ ROCK

of Captain Kidd still lie hidden. Around it to-day the fishing-boats ply, and almost underneath its shadow the catches of cod are spread for drying.

It is inevitable that such a region as this should be the home of legend, folk song, and story. One of the legends most often told is that of the Phantom Ship, which sails the Baie des Chaleurs, there being many old people about Percé who declare that they have seen it. It is a square-rigged pirate brig, and a beautiful woman in the dress of old France is upon the quarter-deck. The brig is wrapped in a mass of flames, but whenever a boat puts out towards it, the ship vanishes. A few years ago it was seen by the habitants of Grande Anse as they were coming home from midnight mass. It appeared as a sheet of flames amid the ice floes. Again it appeared at Petite Roche. This time the decks were crowded with ladies and gentlemen in the costume of the seventeenth century. A ball seemed in progress and the merriment was at its height when the brig vanished into the mists. On another occasion a skipper tells of a black ship, with a single square sail spread, that followed alongside his barque all night, and vanished with the dawn.

The legends that linger about Percé are sometimes those of old France, sometime those which had their origin in New France, and again those

whose beginning goes far back to the time when the Micmacs worshipped the sun from the top of the pierced rock. Of the latter, the "Prisoner of the Rock" is an interesting example as recited by M. Claude Melançon:

Once upon a time, many moons ago, there was a little Indian girl called Mejiga. Her father and mother had been killed on some unfortunate expedition of the Micmacs. No one paid any attention to her except to put upon her the hardest labour; and although she was of marriageable age, no warrior had asked her to sit by his campfire. Her only friend was a young Huron chief who had been taken prisoner by the Micmacs. She would often go to see him in the hut in which he was bound, but instead of taking part in the cruel jests of her companions, who pulled his hair, stuck sharp fish-bones into his thighs, and poured water upon his head, she would carry to him the best morsels of meat that were given her and slip them into his mouth when his guardians were not looking.

This generosity at last conquered the stoicism of the young Huron, who one day thanked her by a look. This was the first time that a warrior had looked at her without mocking her or turning away, and in exchange for this sign of thankfulness Mejiga gave her love to Tiotiake, the Huron. She decided to set him free and to escape with him—if he would let her. But

before she could carry out this plan, the chief of the Micmacs caused the prisoner to appear before him.

The time of the equinox was approaching. This was the period consecrated to the worship of the sun, and the Indian laws forbade prisoners to be tied to the torture post during these sacred days. Negum, the old chief, thought that the honor of converting a Huron to his religion would be better than to make him die by torture. He offered to set Tiotiake free if he would worship the sun, the god of the Micmacs.

“The Great Spirit is my God,” the young Huron replied disdainfully. Negum, furious at this, ordered him to be exposed ‘before the god to whom he had refused homage,’ and to be left without water or food.

The place chosen for this sacrifice was the Percé Rock, accessible only by means of a long ladder constructed by the Indians, who in springtime gathered the gull’s eggs from the cliffs. Braving the perilous ascent, Mejiga went to Tiotiake on the second evening of his torture. All was ready for the escape: a canoe with food was lying at the foot of the ladder.

What took place that night upon the great rock no one knows. The next morning the young Huron was found dead on the beach with a knife in his back. Mejiga had disappeared.

350 **The Spell of French Canada**

The voice of Mejiga is still to be heard echoing about the rock as she wails for her lover.

Many other legends linger about Percé, showing a strange intermingling of history, paganism, and primitive christianity.

“Percé is probably,” says M. Melançon, “one of those dream countries which may be compared to the castle of the Sleeping Beauty. A whole picturesque and poetic world has been lying here for centuries, awaiting only the magic wand which would make it live again in the imagination. From time to time a legend comes forth from the enchanted circle, a fairy tale awakes in the memory of some fisherman, a curious anecdote wanders on its way; but if one hastens to gather these they disappear into oblivion like the white mists that hover for an instant about Percé Rock and then vanish from sight.”

CHAPTER XX

ALONG THE KING'S HIGHWAY

AMONG the many quaint expressions which still cling to the speech of French Canada, like the subtle perfume that pervades ancient things, there is one that has a magic of its own, and a power to recall the part that few others possess.

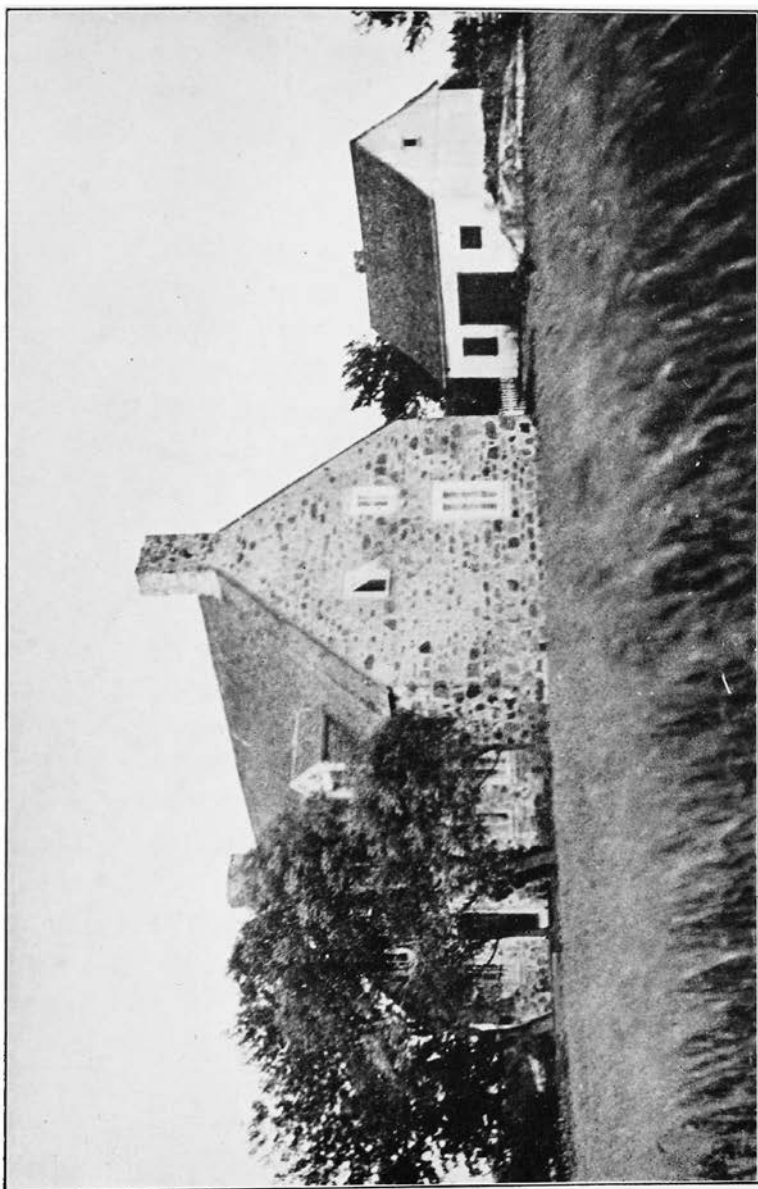
Le Chemin du Roi suggests those far-off days when travellers went out upon the King's Highway, and there met with varied adventures which, in the old tales at least, were always invested with a glamour of romance. The expression has remained; many roads in French Canada are still called the *Chemin du Roi*; and if, in going out upon the Highways of Quebec, one does not always meet with strange adventures, one finds lingering along the roadside something of the spirit of the past; for there is an air of quaintness about the villages, the farms, and the people themselves that to the Anglo-Saxon recall the days when Canada was New France.

The Quebec village has possessed a charm for me since the days when I attended school in one

of them, under the shadow of the ever-present church spire, and amid the ringing of the ever-clanging church bells. For in all Quebec villages the large stone or brick church is invariably seen standing upon a prominent site, and beside it the well-kept *presbytère*, with often a black-robed curé pacing up and down its gallery or garden walk. Then there is generally the convent school, and often an imposing college as well. This is the heart of the place.

The houses have sloping roofs and dormer windows, especially in the older towns and villages, and are arranged in neat rows along the main street, from which branch short side streets that are soon lost in green fields.

If the reader will travel with me along the King's Highway, I will try to point out a few of the many quaint and interesting things that may be seen as one journeys along the straight roads between level fields bordered by long lines of gray rail fences. These fences in the older parts of French Canada run for miles along the roadside and form a boundary for every field. They are seldom the zig-zag or snake fence that one finds occasionally in English country districts, for this kind of fence occupies too much ground for the thrifty habitant and also requires more rails; but they are straight and upright, the supports being held together by twisted wires. In former days, when wire was



A HABITANT HOME

less plentiful, these supports were held together by wooden pins, and often small sections of old barriers made in this way may still be seen, fashioned by hands that ceased from toiling many years ago.

The houses of French Canada are different from those in any other part of America, although hideous box-like structures are to some extent taking the places of the old gabled-roofed country houses. But the French Canadian generally still clings to the old houses that served his fore-fathers, and often builds new ones on the ancient models. These are of two distinct types, with certain variations. One is built of native stone, generally of good size and somewhat pretentious at times; the other is smaller and built of wood, and nearly always covered with a coat of shining whitewash. The roofs are gabled, although the gambrel roof is sometimes used for barns and for an occasional new house. Most of the older houses have a flare in the roof at the eaves, giving a very distinctive outline. Dormer windows in the roof, French windows in the walls, stone chimneys, and solid wooden shutters often painted some bright color, give a most picturesque appearance to these farmhouses. The surroundings are neat and carefully kept; and the habitant loves to plant before his front door a field of buckwheat, or native tobacco. One peculiar

feature of a habitant home is a small building detached from the house and containing two rooms. One room is used as a dairy; the other serves as a summer-kitchen and dining-room, and is the theatre of family life in summer, thus enabling the large house to be kept cool for sleeping in, and free from flies and mosquitoes.

The barns, especially the older ones, are long and low, generally with whitewashed walls and red doors. In some sections, especially along the St. Lawrence, thatched roofs are frequently seen. The thrifty farmer on the south shore of the St. Lawrence often has a rude kind of windmill attached to his barn, and he employs the northern winds from the sea and the Laurentians to do his threshing.

In the older settled districts like the Richelieu valley, the habitant has trees growing near his house, and many of the whitewashed cottages stand beneath the shade of magnificent elms that must have been planted generations ago. In the more newly-settled regions, like those about Lake St. Jean, where the fight with the forest is still being waged, the settler seems to have an instinctive dread of trees, and seldom will have them near his dwelling. He has generally fought the greater part of his life to wrest the land from their grasp, and it is not strange that he still fears the encroaching forest.

Perhaps the most characteristic tree of the older parts of the Province is the Lombardy poplar. These stately trees, which give an old-world touch to the landscape, are most often seen beside the dwellings, or scattered along the highways and beside the wayside crosses. Elms and willow are also favorites, the former growing to a great size in the river valleys.

Another striking feature, particularly of the St. Lawrence and Richelieu valleys, is the well-sweep. This has now often been relegated to farmyards and pastures, but in some parts of the Province the houses are still served by the well-sweep, and the drawing of the water for the daily needs of the household forms no small part of the housewife's labor.

The out-door oven is much more widely distributed than the well-sweep. I have seen them in use within a few miles of the cities of Montreal and Quebec, in the Richelieu valley, and particularly in the Laurentians north of the Lower St. Lawrence. The ovens are constructed of stone or brick, and covered over with clay, lime, or cement. Sometimes they are made by forming an arch with willow branches which are covered over with a thick coating of clay. When a fire is built inside, the twigs are burned and the clay hardened. Iron doors and door-frame complete the oven, and a shed is generally erected over it.

The gardens that one sees along the roadsides are always well kept and often have bright patches of flowers. One may marvel at first at the neatness of the habitants garden, but when one sees the mother of the family and five or six children at work in it, there is no longer any secret as to how it is kept. Madame considers the garden her especial care, and she does not hesitate to press all the small sons and daughters into service.

Perhaps the secret of much of the contentment that is so evident in French Canada is due to the fact that labour and pleasure alike are shared by the whole family. And the family is generally large enough to assign certain work to certain groups, and then have some left over for the odd jobs. On summer evenings the whole family often gathers at the croquet grounds, and a game is played by four of the members, while the others watch from the benches on the side-lines. Almost all of the prosperous farms in the older parts have their croquet-grounds, but they are often seen as well at the edge of stump-dotted fields beside northern forests.

Not the least delightful adventure that one meets when on the King's Highway is that of making new acquaintances. It is not enough to admire the picturesque cottages, ovens, and wayside shrines of the habitant; one must enter

into his home and become *de la famille*, if one wishes to understand the simplicity and generosity of his character. If one can speak French this is easy indeed. Even without the ability to converse one is sure of a welcome, but with that ability the bond of good-fellowship is quickly and strongly formed.

I recently was passing a habitant home near Cap St. Ignace, on the southern shore of the St. Lawrence, when my travelling companion espied two women spinning by the open door of the summer kitchen. We immediately stopped and asked permission to take some photographs to add to our collection. There was a great buzz of excitement, even louder than the humming wheels, but our new friends were very glad to pose for us. Madame, a portly lady, was winding the yarn from spindle to the reel, and *la grand' mère* was turning her wheel so rapidly that we could hardly see the spokes. As soon as several poses were taken, including the father and six children (we were assured that there were six others in different parts of the province), we were invited to enter the house. This was carefully closed to keep out the summer heat. It was spotlessly clean and very homelike, the spruce floors being covered over with home-made carpets.

The walls of the house were of unpainted wood, mellowed to a golden brown by age. I

was assured by the owner that he was the fourth generation of his family who had dwelt there. Madame, seeing that we were interested in her handicrafts, opened a large clothes press in the parlour, and exhibited with pride rolls of homespun, and blankets and bed-coverings enough for a family even larger than her own. We were then taken upstairs, where the floors were covered with *catalogne* like those below, and shown many hand-made rugs, some of them of beautiful and tasteful patterns. These, Madame told us, were for the daughters when they married. We were brought back to the *grand' chambre*, which was carpeted with bright-colored *catalogne* and braided and hooked rugs. In the centre of the room stood a large round table bearing the prayer books and family photographs. The shining hair-cloth sofa was embellished by bright cushions, and crayon portraits of departed members of the family looked solemnly down from their gilded frames.

A bottle of beer was now produced, and the glasses having been filled to the brim, my friend was about to put his to his lips, when there was a slight pause, and I remembered what was expected of me. "*Salut! A votre santé, monsieur et madame—et vous, la grand' mère,*" I added for good measure, and saved the situation; for I fear our host would have been disappointed if we accepted his hospitality

without due ceremony. We were pressed to remain for supper, but after shaking hands all round, a ceremony which took some time, and a promise to return, we departed. Such a genuine welcome to a couple of chance wanderers may have flattered our self-conceit, but I am certain that any other traveler would receive a like welcome, and I cite this visit only as a proof that simplicity and good-fellowship are still abundant in French Canada.

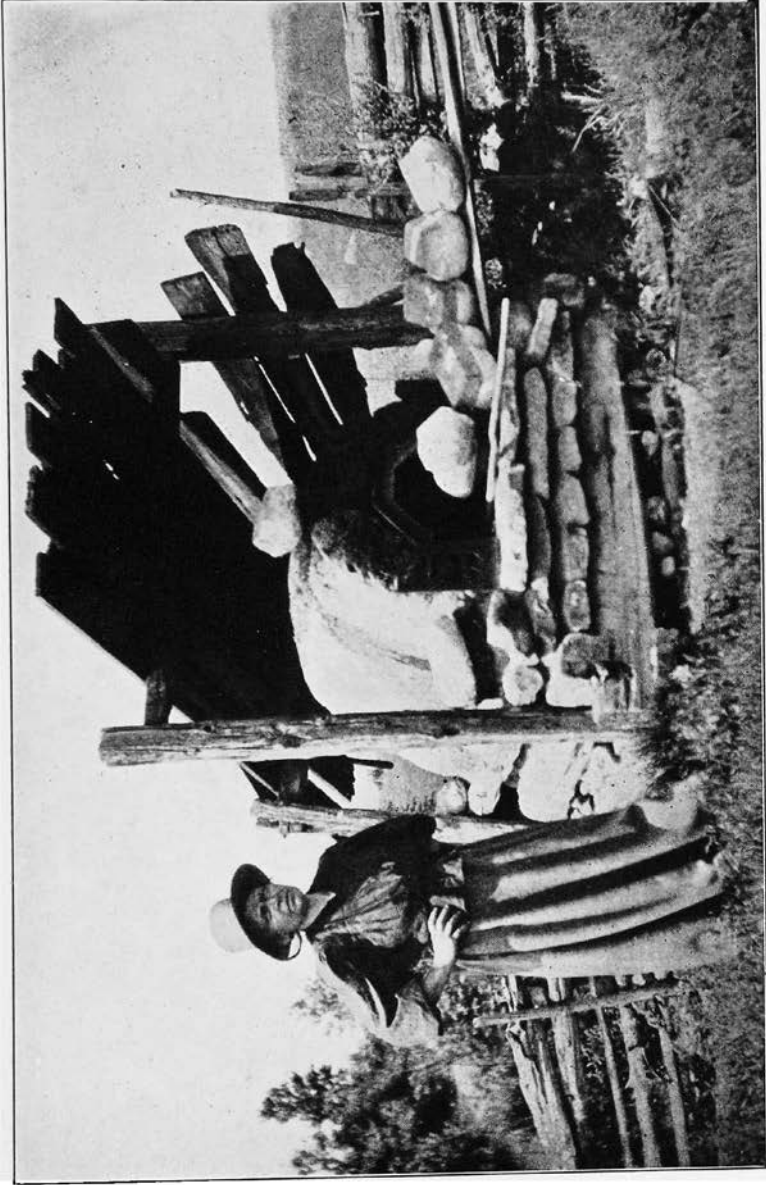
At Port au Saumon I found an old man sawing wood with a primitive saw, and spent a pleasant quarter of an hour in conversation with him. There was beside him a bench on which wool had been spread to dry in the sun; and the old man told me that many of the people thereabouts still spun their own wool, wove their homespun, and knitted their socks and mittens as in the days of his childhood.

Further along we stopped at a small house, on hearing the click-click of a loom. Two old women were working here; one of them winding on to the reel the yarn that she had just spun, and the other engaged in weaving the *catalogne* so dear to the heart of the French Canadian housewife.

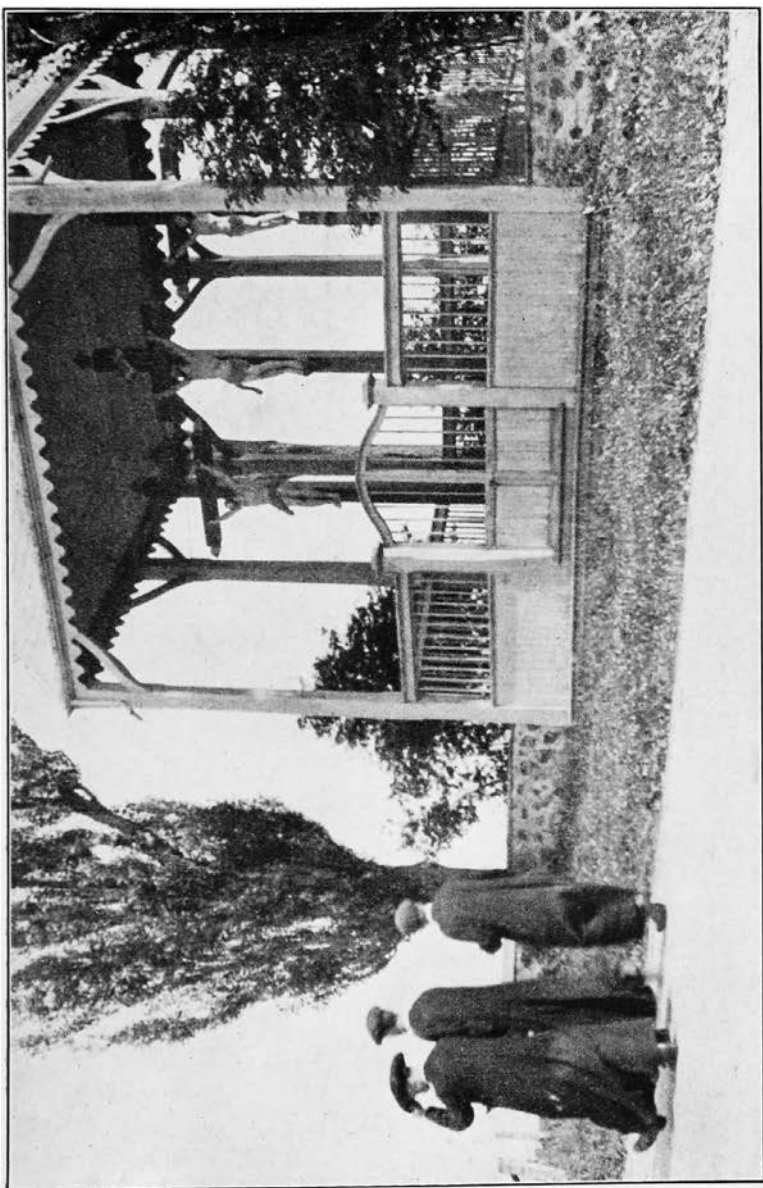
Not far away we came upon two girls engaged in the same labour. They were working in an empty barn, and the large doors were wide open, letting the sunlight fall upon the blue

homespun of a delightful hue. The girl who was weaving explained the process to me, and seemed proud of her handiwork. She told me that she sold her cloth in Quebec city, and that by working hard she could make a considerable sum of money.

One cannot travel on the *Chemin du Roi* without being struck by the various wayside shrines which stand as witnesses of the simple faith of French Canadians and their devotion to their religion. These shrines may seem strange to the traveller, who sees them for the first time, but French Canada would not be French Canada, nor the highway the *Chemin du Roi*, without these striking and picturesque objects. The road that does not possess one is indeed rare; and they are as much a characteristic part of the landscape as the chicory and sweetclover that grow beneath their shadow, or the Lombardy poplars that shelter them. The form of these wayside shrines varies considerably from the simple cross of wood to the elaborate Calvary with life-size figures of Christ and the two thieves hanging from gigantic crosses. One of the most beautiful shrines that I have come across stands beside the St. Lawrence, where it has broadened out until it has become a part of the sea. It is a simple white cross standing among some old Lombardy poplars; and when I saw it last, a tangle



A HABITANT OUT-OF-DOOR OVEN



THE WAYSIDE CALVARY AT VARENNES

of yellow roses grew at its foot. In contrast with this symbol of simple piety is the large and elaborate Calvary near Varennes. The three figures on the crosses are most realistic; tall poplars that must be many years old grow close beside; and in photographing this Calvary I was fortunate enough to have three friars from the neighboring monastery walk into the picture. The decorations of the different crosses vary in many cases. Upon many there stands the cock rudely carved in wood; some are decorated by a crown of thorns or a sacred heart. Fastened near the foot of the cross there is often a tiny house, with glass front, in which are to be seen little figures representing Mary, Joseph, and the Child Jesus. The inscriptions are sometimes long and elaborate, and recount events that the shrines commemorate; others bear only a simple legend; and the person who erected a cross near St. Pacôme was satisfied with merely writing D. V. upon it in large letters and leaving it at that.

Besides the wayside crosses, there is another thing that invariably haunts the traveler in French Canada. It is the sound of bells. Except in remote country districts he can never be far away from their voices, for churches are plentiful and they are all provided with far-pealing bells that never remain silent for long.

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The Angelus rings three times every day; and masses, vespers, weddings, baptisms, and funerals, all add to the occasions when bells are rung. Some of these bells are very beautiful to hear, often three of them chiming together. But whether harsh or musical, the native of Quebec loves their ringing, for it is the voice of French Canada that comes floating over broad rivers, green fields, or white expanse of snow, where one may, at any time, slip back into the past, or seek new adventures and new friends along the King's Highway.

THE END

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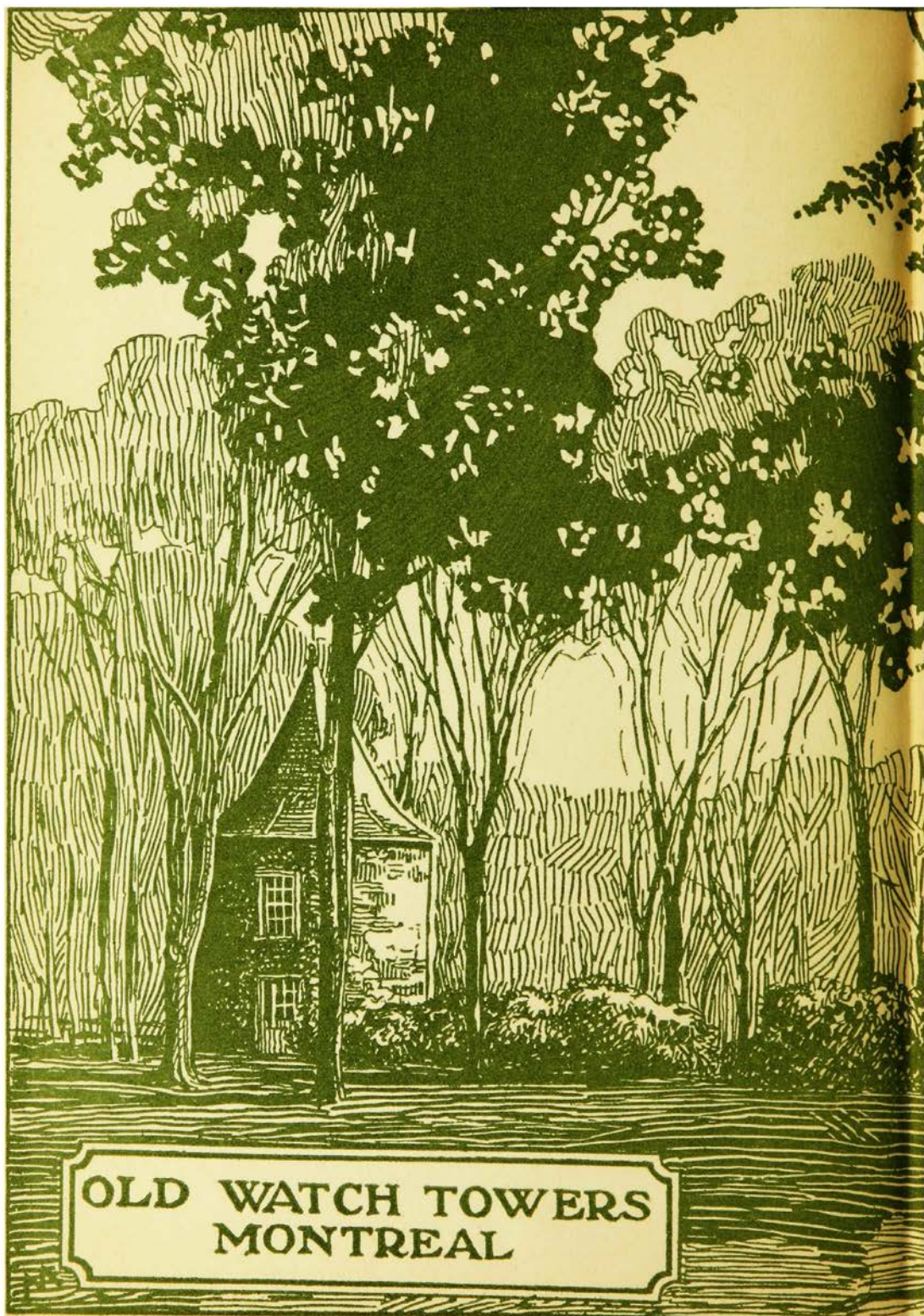
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