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PICTURES FROM CANADA.



THE CITADEL, QUEBEC, FROM DURHAM TERRACE.

HAVE you ever in your holiday ramblings made one of the fashionable American tours, from the Falls of Niagara to the sea? Join me where "Utawa's tide," of which Moore sings in the "Canadian boat song," meets and marries the blue St. Lawrence; flounder down rapids, glide on calm waters, until anchor is cast at Kakouna, the Canadian Saratoga, or Gaspé, the land's-end where Jacques Cartier first planted the *fleur-de-lis* of France, over three hundred years ago. Sail down the majestic Saguenay, whose bosom receives in its course the waters of thirty rivers, and whose bottom has never been touched by plummet. Wander through villages and towns lying on both sides of the St. Lawrence; visit the ancient capital Quebec, with its towering citadel and twisted streets; stroll through the handsome metropolis Montreal, into the shops, hotels, and courts; read the signs as you pass, and the sainted and foreign names of streets and squares, and you are impressed with the uniqueness of this Province of Quebec, the

striking contrast to the Province of Ontario or to the United States, and the strong foreign flavor in manners and customs, in architecture, language, and law.

Lower Canada, as it was called before the Confederation of the Provinces of British North America, is neither English nor French, but both blended in one, and yet without coherence. It combines in itself the prominent characteristics of London and Paris, with a dash of Rome, Dublin, and Edinburgh. It is distinctively neither ancient nor modern, but a curious jumble of both. Quebec city resembles Boulogne in the mixed French and English character and

speech of its inhabitants. A traveler may imagine himself at once in Europe and in America: French vivacity cheek by jowl with English phlegm; manners and customs which revive recollections of La Vendée as well as of Devon. The Anglo-Saxon tongue is heard with the French; and do not be astonished, *mon ami*, if in conversation you do not quite comprehend the latter, though you were educated in Paris, or taught French in the orthodox number of lessons by an imported Monsieur or Madame. If you speak English only, you will find yourself as much misunderstood in many country districts, and even in the suburbs of the cities, as if you spoke Russian. All the surroundings are opposed to your idea of an English colony. The tricolor is nearly as prevalent as the Union Jack.

Quebec city is no more like New York than the Province of Quebec, or Lower Canada, is like the Province of Ontario, or Upper Canada. There is much less of the antique and anomalous in the Upper Province,



SIR GEORGE CARTIER.

and there is more of progress, and an utter absence of the foreign and religious landmarks which characterize the Province of the French Canadian. Fashions are preserved in Lower Canada ten years after they have become obsolete in Upper Canada; and while in architecture and public improvements the city of Montreal is unrivaled in the whole Dominion, yet, outside of the metropolis, one feels that he has fallen among a people who, in many notable respects, are behind the times, and too strongly wedded to foreign associations and a religious autocracy to appreciate or take part in the growth and development of the country. The impress made by the early French settlers has not been effaced, even in the aspect of the cities and towns. Quebec city is equal to a Chinese puzzle, in the ramifications and distortions of the streets and buildings; and even the expropriating policy of the last ten years, and the necessities of the last thirty, have not been able entirely to rid Montreal of the narrow streets and close houses which represented the mind of the early French inhabitants.

Most of the early French emigrants to Canada originally came from Normandy and Brittany, and so many resemblances still exist that travelers who have visited these ancient prov-

inces of France and also Lower Canada, have been forcibly struck with the many identical characteristics, and the resemblances in the agriculture of the two peoples. At the time of the conquest of Canada, in 1759, there were 80,000 French in the colony, the majority of whom were soldiers; and in a little over one hundred years this number has increased to over 1,000,000, and that without any emigration from France. The fecundity of the French Canadian beside the St. Lawrence has long ago passed into a proverb, as the fecundity of the Egyptian beside the Nile. The proportion of women in the above early census was very small, and the French government, about that time, instigated several female emigrations, and allowed the troops to marry. Intermarriages of red and white skins also occurred, some of the soldiers preferring the native to the imported wife, and to this day there are old families in the province who easily trace their Indian descent. The intermarriage of the French and Indian was facilitated by the fact that long before the Conquest the red-skins spoke a French *patois*, and professed the Roman Catholic faith—a community of interest which exists to this day—exerting a similar matrimonial influence in and near the Indian settlements of Caughnawaga, St. Regis, the Lake of Two Mountains, and Loretto, among Iroquois, Algonquins, and Hurons.

Here and there we find families who claim descent from the brilliant emigrations sent out by Louis the Fourteenth. Sir George Cartier, Minister of Militia for the Dominion, asserts himself to be a lineal descendant of one of Jacques Cartier's nephews; and other leading French Canadian politicians claim to have family alliance with the old nobility of France, who were attracted to Canada, or New France as it was first called, when the *fleur-de-lis* waved triumphant from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. Affecting to be Parisian was the fashion among young French Canadians about ten years ago, but Parisians ridiculed the poor imitation, and it went out of vogue.

It may here be interesting to advert to the consanguineous sympathy thought to exist between the French of France and Canada. It is altogether confined to the latter. The con-

quest separated every political and social tie, and drew a line of demarkation as distinct as that made by the American Revolution between England and the seceding States. A Frenchman of France is as much a foreigner in Canada as a Turk. Personal intercourse has been rare; intermarriages are almost unknown; and any leading commercial relationship is mostly monopolized by English merchants and resident Parisians. French historians and politicians as well as French sovereigns have, as a rule, treated the French in Canada contemptuously. Chateaubriand did them the great injustice of saying that they were a doomed race, destined to dwindle away like the aborigines, with whom they mingled and sympathized; and other leading writers, at the time of the conquest and after, prejudiced the French nation against the Canadian people.

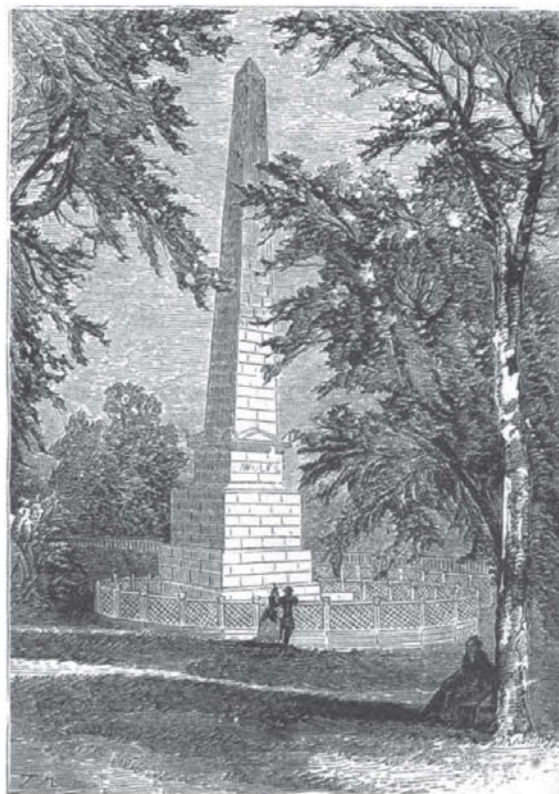
The French Canadians, as we find them to-day, are a very different people from what they were fifty years ago. With respect to the state of education, commercial enterprise, and agriculture among them half a century ago, the less said the better. We will take them as any traveler will find them to-day.

They are of the average height; stouter and stronger than the people of France, though lacking the gracefulness of carriage and *tout ensemble* of the Frenchman. The prevailing type of face is distinct from that of the English Canadian. It is dark and stern, while a gloom hangs over the countenance, which, however, is often relieved by a pleasant versatility of expression peculiar to the French character. The hair is remarkable for its luxuriance, darkness, and tendency to curl.

The French Canadians manifest a hereditary pride in dress. The upper class dress without fault; but the middling and lower classes verge upon the vulgar. A French servant-girl will appear on Sundays and church holidays in all the colors of the rainbow,—enormous chignon, crinoline, *et cetera*, in the most extravagant extreme. Butcher-boys and cabmen strut around in conspicuous suits of the brightest yellow, brown, and velvet, with black beaver hat, and a lavish display of pure oroidé. The poorer classes strive and strain to keep

up appearances beyond their means, and periodically the French clergy censure their extravagance from the pulpit. The days of beef-moccasins and home-spun cloth have vanished, even among the laborers. The interesting "Jean Baptiste" of twenty or thirty years ago, clad in the primitive gray or blue flannel coat and breeches, and the peculiar worsted cap called a "tuque," variegated colored sash, has become traditionary in the cities. It has even disappeared from the cabstands and wharves of Quebec city, and those who wish to see it must look at its representation on the copper coins of the "Banque du Peuple," in the masquerades in the skating rinks, or in the water-colors of Kreighoff and Jacobi. Within the last twenty years, English and French Canadians have become so blended in many social respects that old distinctions of dress have been almost entirely obliterated, and there is not the same effort made to retain unsuitable fashions simply because they happen to be French.

The French of the cities do not, as many suppose, speak pure French. I have heard Parisians affirm that at first they had some difficulty in understanding perfectly the most of what educated French Canadians would



WOLFE AND MONTCALM MONUMENT, QUEBEC.

say, owing to the introduction of a peculiar idiom and the intermixture of English, producing a *patois* different from anything heard in France. They speak faster than the old French; their preachers and lawyers plead in a high vehement tone and with an excessive display of emphasis, which to the quieter Anglo-Saxon seems extravagant and somewhat absurd. They gesticulate in Quebec precisely as they do in Paris, and use many expletives in ordinary conversation. In the politest assemblies "Mon Dieu" is a common expression of astonishment, dread, and sorrow. They learn the English language much easier than the English seem to learn French, and for every English Canadian who speaks French there are twenty French who can converse fluently in English. As a traveler gravely remarked, "even the little French children speak French." There is a liveliness in their conversation which we do not hear in the English.

They are excessively fond of fêtes and holidays, shows and processions. Business is willingly suspended at the call of the Church to commemorate the birthday or death of a saint, the morning being spent in church, and the

rest of the day wherever and however they please. They have an Athenian *penchant* for the theatre. They enjoy their holidays to perfection, and are the most easily amused people on earth. They are passionately fond of vocal and instrumental music and dancing, and have an especial capacity for these "gay arts." They are born musicians. The piano and violin are their favorite instruments. Doubtless this taste for music is greatly cultivated by the early and regular training of the ear by the magnificent music of their church choirs.

The courtesy of all the French Canadian citizens, rich and poor, is proverbial. The very beggars constrain you by their civility to give them alms, and the cabmen cajole you by their politeness to increase their fare. They are a very sociable people, delighting in company at home and abroad, in clubs and associations. Nothing makes Lower Canadian society more agreeable, especially in the fashionable assemblies of winter, than the intermingling of the two races, with their divergent characteristics and different shades of manner. Looking at the sociable record of the past fifty years as it has existed, with few interruptions, between French and English Canadians, one almost forgets the history of Wolfe and Montcalm; and when young French Canada is seen retrieving the laurels his sires lost on battle-fields by conquering the affections of English maidens, and British officers preferring and winning "la belle Canadienne," one is forcibly struck with the social changes wrought by time and necessity, and the discomfiture of Lord Durham's predictions of an endless "contest of races" in Canada.

The French Canadians have a strong predilection for the professions, and even the sons of many humble farmers forsake the farm and attend the cheap Catholic colleges which abound in the province, with a view to becoming lawyers, physicians, or priests. To the mind of young French Canada there is a mysterious dignity in the professions, and a public notoriety peculiarly attractive. The bench and bar, the pulpit and college have French Canadian representatives of no mean order; but a large class, especially of lawyers, consists of mere adventurers, who earn a precarious



FRENCH CANADIAN COLLEGE-BOY AND GENTLEMAN, 1803.

living, and whose one aim is to secure a comfortable berth under the pay of Government; or, like Sancho Panza, feeling themselves strong enough to rule kingdoms, they have no hesitation in contesting a constituency with the oldest politician in the country. Law students are as thick as berries, who with inordinate "cheek" announce themselves ready to devote their talents to the service of the country, and some of the Lower Canadian constituencies are represented by several of these long-haired, ambitious upstarts, who mistake fluency for eloquence, and excessive confidence for wisdom. The history of Lower Canada agitations is the history of individual cliques, instigated by just such beardless boys, and not the general *vox populi*. Politics is the attractive goal for the French Canadians. They are divided into two principal parties—the *Rouge* and the *Bleu*. The former, which is naturally in the minority in a Roman Catholic province, has also been called the annexation, reform, republican, and liberal party, and was represented during the struggle with Britain by Louis Joseph Papineau, the leader of the French Canadian Rebellion of 1837. It has always been opposed to priest power, and therefore has not flourished. The Bleus have been also called the priest, conservative, and confederation party,—composed of the Roman Catholic clergy and the large majority of French Canadians. The favor shown to the Confederation of the British American Provinces by the priests can now easily be understood. The class of men now returned to Parliament—even the briefless barristers before referred to—must have more education than was required by French Canadian constituencies fifty years ago, when many of their representatives could neither read nor write.

The spirit of commercial and social progress has recently taken hold of the French Canadians. Enterprise among them was rare until within the last twenty years. Some of the old merchants made fortunes, but a great many failed for want of the cosmopolitan spirit of business which is so essential to mercantile success. Within the memory of young men in their teens, the French Canadian was a by-word of reproach; their legislators opposed



FRENCH CANADIAN LADY AND PRIEST, 1803.

movements designed for improving public roads, making turnpikes, and opening and colonizing the country. Tumble-down shops, narrow and unmacadamized streets, bad roads, and dull times were directly traceable to the "*laissez faire*" policy of the French race. Unprejudiced travelers have attributed the backward condition of the Province either to the French race, or to the powerful sway of the Roman Catholic clergy. Better days have, however, dawned. Magnificent shops and terraces and wide streets have replaced very much of the old style. Several of the most flourishing banks have been established by French Canadian enterprise; the only well-managed line of steamers between Montreal and Quebec is owned by a French Canadian company. They are now less afraid of investing money in public enterprises, and the natural consequences of such advancement are being reflected upon the character and happiness of the people.

Leaving the French Canadian citizen, let us journey into the country among the agricultural class, who best typify the French Canadian of early history. A very plain distinction



OLD-TIME HUCKSTERS.

exists between the English and French farmer of Lower Canada. The former are pretty much like English-speaking farmers elsewhere in Canada and the United States; the latter are *par excellence* the most interesting peasantry on this continent.

The personal appearance of *les habitants*, as they are called, has been well portrayed on canvas by artists. The aquiline nose, small black or gray lustrous eyes, thin compressed lips, high cheek-bones, prominent chin, caused often by the loss of teeth, face wrinkled beyond the reach of arithmetic, shaggy black or gray hair, is the *habitant* and no one else. They are below the average height, with a dash of the Indian in the contour of the face, but none in the general figure.

They are tough as iron, and endure the extremes of heat and cold without discomfort, it being quite a common sight to see them splitting wood in the depth of winter, with their hairy bosoms exposed, when the thermometer is perhaps twenty degrees below zero. Indeed, there is this peculiarity about the constitution of the *habitants*, that they stand extremes of temperature, wet feet and clothes,

with impunity, and survive accidents and illness which would kill nine out of every ten English farmers.

The *habitants* dress in *étouffe du pays* of blue or gray, the traditional *tuque* or cap, beef moccasins, and the characteristic sash around the waist. But the *tuque* is disappearing, we are sorry to say, and ordinary caps are taking its place. It alone served to mark the *habitant*. It is something like a long stocking, knit and closed at both ends, and one end being pushed into the other to double it, it is drawn over the head, down the back of the neck, and indeed over the whole face and shoulders if necessary. The beef moccasins answer for wet as well as dry weather. The sash keeps the body warm, and has been adopted as an ornamental and useful appendage by the citizens; and the snow-shoe clubs have adopted the *tuque*. Home-made clothing has given way considerably to the cheapness of mill manufacture; the growing taste for finery and colors tempts a more frequent visit to the village or city shops; and with

the growth and development of the country, the French Canadian peasant and family imbibe a love for better apparel than their own humble ingenuity and industry can produce. The wooden shoe, which is generally in use among the peasants of Normandy, is commonly used by the French Canadian women in sloppy weather, or when working in the fields, and is also used as an outer shoe by the market women. The women also wear a curious old-fashioned cloak, level with the heels, which is often seen in Brittany.

The habitation of the *habitant* bears a striking resemblance to the dwellings of the Normandy peasants. In France, the flooring is always of brick or flat stones; in Canada, invariably of wood; but with this single exception, almost every other arrangement is identical. The poorest peasants build of logs or planks, and the wealthier of stone. The houses are commodious as to elbow-room, but the ceilings are seldom eight feet high, and therefore most uncomfortably hot in summer as well as in winter. One story suffices for the modest demands of the peasant and his family. The houses are almost

invariably whitewashed; have a bit of a rude garden and fence in front. Straggling pigs and hens grunt and cackle; a woful-looking dog stands at the fence on the watch for something to bark at; and numerous children flatten their noses at the window-panes, or chase the pigs in the garden as you pass. Nearly all the houses have a simple bake-house detached, built of stone and mortar, with an oven in the center, and a space underneath to build a fire. This is used altogether in summer for baking bread. A well with an ancient hoister is seen in rear of the house.

Down about Quebec, and in other old districts, it is common to see large wooden crosses erected near the houses, with a superstitious reverence peculiar to the character of the Canadian peasant. These crosses sometimes bear full-sized wooden representations of the cock that crowed when Peter denied Christ; the nails that were driven through our Saviour's hands and feet; the hammer, sponge, spear, and crown of thorns.

The door of the *habitant's* house opens into the principal room. The floor is painted yellow, and, covered here and there with strips of home-made rag carpeting, always presents a neat appearance. Large beams run across the ceiling without the usual covering, and do not improve the appearance of the interior; but, after all, are they not preferable to rats? A gigantic double stove stands on one side of the room during winter, and is conspicuous by the brilliancy of its polish. The bed-rooms are separated from this large room—which, by the way, is kitchen, dining and sitting room combined,—by thin wooden partitions, and are kept beautifully clean, the linen bedding and curtains being spotless as snow. The furniture is plain and simple, often home-made. A large pine table, and numerous rush-bottomed chairs stand in the front room, with a clock that would serve for a coffin if the works were taken out,—which works, by the way, are often of wood. There are one or two large cupboards; a plain assortment of brightly polished kitchen utensils; a gun and powder-flask above the cupboard; the inevitable draught-board in one corner; a few pictures of loved virgins,

and some plaster images, and a crucifix on the wall, and several boxes of beautiful flowers at the windows, having all the advantages of a conservatory, as the house is kept hot. The culinary utensils, plates, spoons, bowls, and cups are of tin, crockery, or wooden ware.

A few special domestic virtues of the *habitants'* better-halves commend them to good Christians, especially their absolute cleanliness and industrious ingenuity. They are generally models of toil and economy, and are never seen idle or moping around their homes. They sew and patch and plan, and in many a way utilize every spare ribbon and bit of cloth which many cast away. Warm quilts and rag carpets are made out of rags; nothing is wasted. The industrious will exhaust every resource to send their little children, from nine years of age, to what is called their "première communion"—a religious festival—dressed in immaculate white from head to toe; and in many a flounce and ribbon and bow one can see the tidy finger-work of the *habitant's* good wife. The beautiful neatness and cleanliness of the interior of their houses have often been remarked by travelers, and the clean and tidy exteriors of their



OLD-TIME CANADIEN.



THE OLD FRENCH CANADIAN TRAPPER. (FROM A PORTRAIT STATUETTE.)

cottages are among the prettiest sights on either shore as one sails down the St. Lawrence, or rides along the country roads. Frequently I have seen the women on their knees scrubbing the very sidewalks in front of their humble homes; while the repeated scrubbing makes the stone steps leading up to their doors shine like polished pine.

The food of the *habitant* in summer consists chiefly of the productions of his farm: fresh and salt meat, fish, and oatmeal porridge. Though they do not stint, they deny themselves many of the best farm productions, in order to

realize money for them in the markets. In winter their supplies are more limited. Formerly, when roads were bad and markets distant, they only raised enough farm produce for their own consumption, but the English farmers introduced a spirit of traffic among them, and better communication has stimulated them to increase, though not to improve, their products. The *habitants* are miserable agriculturists, and with few exceptions resist all attempts to raise them from the mire of conservative ignorance. Although wooden ploughs and rotten barns no longer characterize the majority of farms, the *habitants* are a standing reproach to Lower Canadian agriculture, and the hereditary division and subdivision of land, which has cut up the original farms of one hundred years ago into lots for each member of the family, each member wanting a frontage on the road or river, has had its worst results on the French Canadian peasants. They are suspicious of any reform, and seldom being able to read or write, and generally only acquainted with their own language, have a very limited sphere of operation, and do not try to learn

improvement,—“do not seem to know,” said a traveler, “that any improvement has been made in agriculture since Noah planted his vineyard.” The women and children do a great deal of hard work in the potato-fields, with a hoe called a *pioche*. They prefer a small piece of cleared land to treble its size of standing timber-land. Within the last twenty years some change has been slowly effected among the most intelligent farmers, and there are certainly model farms and worthy exceptions; but, taking the mass of *les habitants*, one cannot but regret that they did not follow the old *noblesse*,

who returned to France after Quebec was ceded to Britain, though France would not have had any cause to feel grateful for their allegiance. Scarcely a French Canadian peasant could be persuaded, not many years ago, to invest in labor-saving implements of any kind. Change was distasteful, and the same trait is the greatest drawback to the progress of Lower Canadian agriculture to-day. Along the banks of the St. Lawrence, the traveler on the steamer may see the housewife sitting opposite her cottage door, using the old spinning-wheel. Content with old methods and means is the bane of the *habitant*. He is impatient of severe farming toil, and yet dislikes to purchase the very means to save him labor.

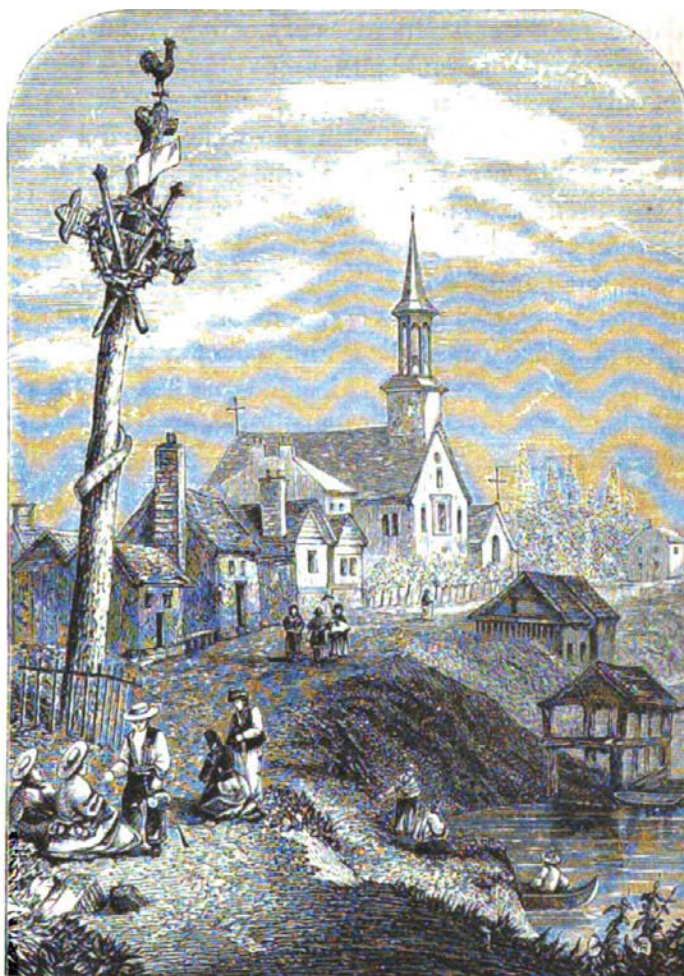
It may seem a strange antithesis to say that the peasants toil hard and yet are indolent; but it is so. Their hard toil *on the farm* is simply necessary to existence; their indolence is shown in a neglect to extend, improve, and develop their resources. They let tares grow; they half do whatever they undertake, and have little or no idea of improving their living stock. A traveler observes, that if they happen to have a stony field they seldom think of building a fence with the stones, but they heap them in an immense pile and draw wooden rails from even two miles' distance. Agricultural societies and exhibitions are aiding greatly to teach the *habitants* how to improve, but the great improvement is to arrive when the present generation are gathered to their fathers, with their antiquated ideas and superstitious ignorance.

The families of the *habitant* are co-workers in the house and on the farm. They make linen from their own flax, and wool from their own sheep; they make their own hats from straw and fur; moccasins, socks, and gloves; soap and sugar from the maple; and tan hides for their own use. They are very anxious to make money, but have a miserable system of doing it. They bring small loads to market in a one-horse cart or sleigh, and hardly

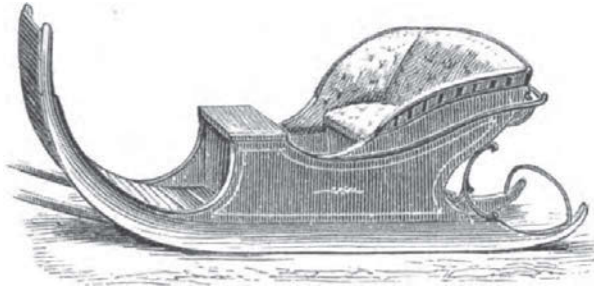
ever are there seen among the French Canadians the large double teams and loads used by the English-speaking farmers of Upper and Lower Canada. They are beginning to learn more about finance, but many do not know a one-dollar bill of the "Bank of Montreal" from a "ten" of the "Bank of Love."

They have a traditional consolation in their old clay pipes. As a rule, the French Canadian people are inveterate smokers, many of the old market-women indulging to excess. Their domestic simplicity is remarkable, and in delightful contrast to the show and sham of the town. What Sir Hugh Bonycastle said of them in 1845 still holds true, that "they are the most contented, most innocent, and most happy yeomanry and peasantry of the whole civilized world."

They are the most gentlemanly peasantry to be found when they like, but they can be the reverse. If they meet you on the country roads, they touch or lift their caps and say,



A FRENCH CANADIAN VILLAGE.



FRENCH CANADIAN CARIOLE.

“Bon jour, monsieur.” They always extend their hand to greet you, and never receive the slightest favor without “Je vous remercie;” and if they should happen to trouble you in any way, instantly they touch their caps and say, “Pardon, monsieur.” Visit their homes and you will receive the best seat at their humble board; praise their children and you will make them the firmest friends. But if you wish to see how much the *habitants* can dislike you, sneer at their superstitious veneration for their priest, and talk of the French Canadians as a “degenerate race.”

In all seasons of the year the violin and dance may be heard in every village, and merry parties assemble to enjoy themselves as only French Canadians can. Pleasure is with them a serious business, while their amusements are simple, natural, and peculiarly French. They have a curious game of draughts, in which they use double the ordinary number of pieces, which is a favorite among all classes and conditions of the people. Games of cards have an especial attraction for them, and indeed all games of chance. Winter is their chief time for enjoyment; and when the snow has put an end to agricultural labors, the *habitants* settle down seriously to enjoy themselves. The light cariole carries pleasant parties from house to house, and every house is hospitable. After Lent comes “*jour de gras*,” or day of feasting, when daily, for weeks, a perfect carnival of pleasure is proclaimed. They are very fond of a homely kind of dancing, in which old and young participate, amid loud exclamations and a revel of laughter. Just before Lent the engaged couples marry in haste, and the whole neighborhood is aroused to celebrate the event. Feasts and dances follow, and are often kept up for several nights, as among the Indians of Canada, whose marriages are

not considered an accomplished fact until the end of the third day. Baptisms and deaths draw out the sympathies and sociable character of the people; the former uniting them in festivity, the latter in mourning.

The French Canadians have an inherited taste for fishing, and many earn their living with net, or rod and line. Spearing fish at night is very interesting, and well worth trying to see, and if possible to share in. Any fine summer night you may see dozens of bright flaming specks at the head of canoes out on the rivers and lakes, and, if near enough, the sudden stroke of the spearsman, and the captured fish lifted into the canoe. In winter they catch the *petite moreau*, or tommy cod, a sweetish little fish, which, if not bruised after caught, will revive in cold water after having been frozen stiff for three days. In the vicinity of Quebec and Three Rivers it is common to see temporary huts built over holes cut in the ice, where, with a stove to keep them warm, and a strong light burning at the edge of the hole to attract the fish, the *habitants* put down their lines or nets, and bring large quantities of the fish to the surface.

In a country like Canada, where the crop of snow is brought to such perfection, sleighing is naturally a general necessity, and likewise a general amusement. But the French Canadians are greater lovers of the horse as a racing animal than the English, and during the cold snaps are in their glory. Their favorite sleigh is the cariole,—low, small and comfortable, painted red, and often decorated with representations of plants which neither Linnæus nor his disciples could classify. Often when the rivers are beginning to “take” or freeze, the *habitants* will venture out on the frail ice in these sleighs, to meet at some friendly house on the other side. Nothing



A CANADIAN CALÈCHE.



THE "HABITANT" ON SNOW-SHOES.

daunted by moving cakes of ice, they pick out a road as best they can, trusting to good luck and the instinct of their ponies for a safe landing. Frequently horse and sleigh break through the ice, when, with the most perfect *sang froid*, the *habitants* drag them out if they can, and proceed on their journey!

The *calèche*, which is used in summer only, and which was once fashionable among the cabmen, has disappeared from Montreal and vicinity, though still used in and about Quebec. It is the shape of a large spoon without the handle, supported on two strong leather straps for springs. These straps, which are secured by two iron rollers, can be loosened and tightened from behind, so as to give the driver every variety of jolt, from a gentle dandling to an upset. Wings extend from both sides over the wheels, to prevent the mud splashing upon the occupant. A *calèche* holds two and the driver.

As a rule the French Canadians have little taste for purely physical recreations, and although a score of snow-shoe clubs exist in Canada composed of English members, there is only one small body professing to be a French Canadian club. They are not cricketers, lacrosse, or base-ball players; though they readily take to gymnastics. Young English Canada is perhaps a little too much disposed to extremes in physical exercise; is

fond of athletics of all kinds, and the best classes are proficient in the use of their "bunches of fives." Young French Canada is more of a Frenchman; more fastidious and not so fond of hard work in his amusements.

I have said that the French Canadians are a musical people; a trait by which they came legitimately. Some of the village songs translated into English have not one particle of wit or humor in them, but they are popular among the *habitants*, and do not die out like the comic and sentimental songs of the cities. Many of their old airs may still be heard in Normandy. What some of them call their "National" air is the most generally popular among all classes. It runs as follows:—

LA CANADIENNE.

Vive la Canadienne,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Vive la Canadienne,
Et ses jolis yeux doux!
Et ses jolis yeux doux,
Tout doux,
Et ses jolis yeux doux!

Nous la menons aux noces,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Nous la menons aux noces,
Dans tous ses beaux atours,
Dans tous, etc.

Là, nous jasons sans gêne,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Là, nous jasons sans gêne,
Nous nous amusons tous,
Nous nous, etc.

Nous faisons bonne chère,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
Nous faisons bonne chère,
Et nous avons bon goût
Et nous, etc.

On passe la bouteille,
Vole, mon cœur, vole,
On passe la bouteille,
Nous chantons nos amours,
Nous chantons, etc.

This song has an endless number of verses, and has a peculiarly jaunty air, not unlike that of "Yankee Doodle."

There are two remaining subjects which may appropriately be considered in connection with the French Canadians as a people,—one is their language, the other their religion. If there are two points upon which they are sensitive and jealous, it is the preservation of "notre langage, notre religion;" but it is very easy to show how extreme worship of both has retarded their progress, and must continue to be an obstacle to the development of

the people. Lord Sydenham thought that the union of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada would effect a fusion of the two races; but it had not the slightest visible effect. Back as far as 1799, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec said, "This total ignorance of the English language on the part of the Canadians draws a distinct line of demarkation between them and their English neighbors," and his Lordship proposed a systematic method of instructing the French children. At that time there were only one or two English members of the House of Assembly who spoke their own tongue, knowing they would not be understood. At present many members speak only their own language, and important measures are debated "in the clouds." The greatest drawback to the French Canadian farmers, mechanics, and laborers has been their ignorance of the language of the American continent. Instances might be multiplied to show how trade and commerce, and every art and science, is seriously affected by the want of unity of speech, and how the expenses of municipalities and legislatures are exactly doubled by the necessity of printing every scrap of paper and public document in two languages. Unprincipled men have put themselves into prominence among the *habitants*, and misinterpret the views and feelings of an English opponent. They make the question of language and religion *derniers ressorts* when everything else seems to fail.

When the United States Government purchased Louisiana, the French language was abolished in the courts of law and public offices, and to-day the Louisiana French enjoy the benefits of competing on an equality with their English-speaking neighbors. If we look at this question dispassionately, we see as great an impediment existing to French Canadian progress, as was the exclusive use of the Gaelic in Scotland and the Welsh in Wales. I do not attempt here to exhaust the arguments in favor of the French Canadians using the English language in the courts of justice, and the legislatures, and of all public documents being printed in that language only. The proposition is of momentous interest to the present and future generations of French

Canadians. The continent is English; the English language is in reality the ruling tongue of commerce, of civilization. The French Canadians cannot afford to do without it; and many of the most intelligent use it alone, believing that it is for the best interests of their race to understand it thoroughly.

The religious question has been much discussed among the French Canadians, and a great change is evidently working. A large number have been converted to Protestantism; a French Protestant church exists in Montreal which would have been demolished twenty years ago; missions are established in different parts for spiritual and secular education; and among those who still profess the Roman Catholic faith an anti-priest party has been formed, composed of intelligent French Canadians, under the name of the "Institut Canadienne." "Straws show which way the winds blow." Despite wholesale excommunication this institute flourishes, possesses a fine reading-room and library—both containing many interdicted newspapers and books. The members profess to be Roman Catholics, but not bigots, and hold the doctrine that the clergy have no right to interfere with the temporalities of their flock, or to dictate what books they shall read, or how they will manage their private and public secular institutions.

Take the French Canadian agricultural classes for all in all, they are a most devoted people, and reverence their church and clergy with a feeling bordering on the superstitious. They are taught from childhood to pay the utmost homage to their religion. They hold sacred the very walls of the church, and devotedly prostrate themselves on their knees in any corner of the building, and even on the steps and ground outside, on great occasions when the churches are filled and the people crowd around the doors. They always raise their hats when passing a Roman Catholic church. They may be seen, rich and poor, wending their way to early vespers at four or five o'clock in the morning. Their religion is sincere according to their light. Some below Quebec have social family worship, night and morning. Along the country roads there may still be seen a stray wooden cross here and there, originally erected by the clergy, where

the people would stop to say their prayers. On the summit of Belœil mountain, thirty miles distant from Montreal, an immense tinned cross was placed many years ago, which the *habitants* in the vicinity adored from their huts. This absolute subservience of the *habitants* to the will of their clergy is not generally the case in the cities and large towns, and we may expect to see a still mightier revolution for liberty of mind and estate within the next few years.

The unanimity with which the French Canadians enjoy their religious and national holidays is remarkable. They observe with an equal amount of respect the holidays prescribed by the church and the Sabbath appointed by the Lord, and consume more time in the discharge of their religious duties than is required by Scripture, or consistent with their temporal prosperity. The loss to the industry of the country by these holidays is immense in the aggregate, because in many establishments where French Canadians predominate other workmen have to cease from labor. Every holiday replenishes the coffers of the church. These many demands upon the time and purse constitute one reason why so many of the poorer classes emigrate to the

United States—a marked change, by the way, as the French race are not partial to emigration.

No doubt the clergy exact too much from the people, and interfere too much with freedom, just as they did during the French *régime*. They endeavor to monopolize and bring secular matters under their "patronage," which is equivalent to bringing them under their rule. A year or so ago the Attorney-General of Lower Canada—a French Canadian—was brought to account by the press for first consulting the Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec with reference to the propriety of submitting a certain measure to the local legislature, in which important interests of Protestants were concerned. Other matters have come to light to prove that the Roman Catholic clergy of Canada take more interest in its politics than is consistent with their position. They own newspapers, avowedly for the purpose of circulating their opinions on politics; they speculate in buying and selling of lands granted to them for church purposes, leasing many of the finest shops and terraces in Montreal and Quebec.

This church question is destined to be *the* great question of the day in Lower Canada.