

Missions, and can boast of a parish register running regularly back for some two hundred and fifty years. Perhaps the village is best known, in this Province at least, from association with the neighboring Trappist Abbey of "Our Lady of the Lake." Few indeed, whether Catholic or Protestant, can resist a feeling of interest in that remarkable order. Nor are the Trappists Oka's only Religious. The Sulpician Fathers—the "Gentlemen of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice," as their quaint French title runs—its earliest missionaries, and, later, Lords of the Seignior, have here established an Ecclesiastical Seminary, and are still, as they have always been, in charge of the Mission. Their church, by the way, well repays a visit, enriched, as it is, with numerous art treasures and interesting antiquities.

But it was none of these many and varied attractions, interesting though they may be, that led a party of some two or three hundreds pilgrims, of whom the writer was fortunate enough to be one, to embark at Montreal for Oka one bright September morning. For there is yet another feature there which, situate as the village is, in the heart of a most Catholic Province, attracts to it, yearly, thousands of pious pilgrims, and with which its name is most closely associated among the people of Quebec,—its "Stations of the Cross."

The devotion of the "Way of the Cross" is naturally, one of the oldest, as well as one of the most popular of the many beautiful devotional exercises encouraged among her children by our Holy Mother the Church. Pilgrimages to the scenes of Our Lord's Sacred Passion began with the dawn of Christianity, but as comparatively few could undertake the fatigue and cost of so great a journey, the practice soon arose of making the pilgrimage in a spiritual sense by the aid of local surroundings which should present to the eye and recall to the mind the incidents of that great Mystery. This practice was, later, fostered by the pious Franciscans, guardians of the holy places in Jerusalem, and Popes Innocent XI., in 1686 and Innocent XII., in 1694, granted to all Franciscans, and those affiliated with them, who should devoutly make the Way of the Cross, the same indulgences attached to the actual visiting of the holy places of Palestine themselves. These