

Another craft common throughout the Maritimes and Quebec is the making of patchwork quilts. This work is not of Canadian origin as it is carried out in numerous parts of the world and was known to the Egyptians as early as 900 B.C. In Canada it no doubt sprung from the necessity of the early settlers to keep and utilize every scrap of cloth. Odds and ends were cut into shapes, the colour and texture considered in regard to a pattern and the whole sewn together to form a quilt. To-day these are made with new cloths and fine examples have come from Eastern Canada. The character of the work admits of a wide variety of patterns and pleasing colour effects.

Apart from the hooked rugs the "catalogue rug" is another type of work typically French Canadian. It is made similar to double face weaving with the warp and weft made of thread and different coloured rags sewn together to form additional weft or cross strands. These rugs often made in long runners are a tribute to the French Canadian sense of colour harmony. The colours are usually blended in cross strips but sometimes there is a check running through the colours. This type of work makes ideal bath mats or hall carpets for summer cottages.

Wood carving is an industry long established in Québec. In 1669 Mgr. de Laval founded a school of architecture and sculpture at Cap Tourmente. From this school came the great carvers and architects of French Canada. To-day this school is on the verge of disappearing but there are still survivors in Eastern Canada whose talent and craft is the direct outcome of its foundation. The art of this school was confined almost exclusively to ecclesiastical subjects such as statues, altars and church decorations. It has been judged to be the equal of any other such work from anywhere else in the world.

To-day there is little carving carried out in Quebec, though several well known foreign artists have come there and it is hoped that their art will be adapted to Canada and will help to stimulate the flagging interest. There seems to be a fairly good market for small wooden statues in Canada, but a number of these are imported while some are the work of foreign and British workers resident in the Dominion.

In conclusion it seems that much greater use could be made of Canadian aboriginal Indian art as a basis of study to produce commercial designs which are distinctively Canadian, particularly in view of the fact that it does not seem likely that any revival of the art is possible among the Indian tribes. On the other hand the homespun industry is already established and it remains to be protected from contamination and mechanization. The products are becoming recognized as Canadian and for this reason they have an added appeal to the tourist.