

A Drive in Rural Quebec. (By N. M.)

When one wishes to see a really quaint household, and housework done in the fashion of our grandmothers, one must visit a home in some country district in the Province of Quebec. A few summers ago, while spending a delightful fortnight in Tadousac, my friend and I took a drive to see some of the farms from which we were told the chickens, butter, and eggs, were sent up to our hotel.

Before setting out, however, let me say something of the village itself. When at public school, I had learned that Tadousac was one of the chief towns of Quebec, at the junction of the Saguenay with the St. Lawrence. Imagine my surprise, then, to find it merely a hamlet of, in winter, not more than one hundred people. The mail in winter is carried overland from the City of Quebec three times a week, a distance of perhaps one hundred and fifty miles.

Of course, it boasts a fine, large Roman Catholic Church, whose bell sends its solemn tones three times a day out over the hills and far up the rivers. There is also a splendid large summer hotel, from whose balconies one can look out across the St. Lawrence to Cacouna on the opposite shore, some twenty miles away.

The busiest time of day in this hamlet is the hour at which the boat arrives, sometimes early, sometimes late, for you must remember its time of coming depends on the hour of high tide. When it does make its appearance, the drivers of the carriages who have for the last hour been gossiping or sleeping in the seat of their respective vehicles, are seen to rouse themselves and look around for business.

The boat stops for too short a time, however, to do more than get a glimpse of the village, and to visit a most interesting little church, some two hundred and fifty years old, which stands in the shadow of its pretentious successor. For a dime, one can enter this church and ring its old cracked bell. The pews are of the narrow-seated, straight-backed variety; its altar and confessional are handmade, and attest the skill of the earliest religious teachers in Canada.

Our driver gave us bargain rates if we would go early in the morning. As this time was more pleasing to us, we started about eight o'clock, so that our thrifty French driver could be home to meet the boat, which came that day in the early afternoon.

One cannot but feel pity for the horses in this place; they have to carry such loads of people over such rocky, and in some places, sandy hills. An old lady in our party complained much in English of the slowness of our progress as we ascended the first long, sandy hill. But, of course, the driver "comprenez no Anglais," so we continued to go slowly. At the top of this hill, overlooking the river, and nearly buried in the sand, the ruin of an old mill was shown us. This, no doubt, had been the scene of a live industry in the palmy, early days of the history of Tadousac.

The next item of interest was a visit to a farmhouse. It was a very modest frame structure, but the inside was scrupulously clean. The boards of the unpainted floor seemed to shine, so hard had they been scrubbed. A homemade carpet covered part of the floor, and no doubt marked off the parlor from the common room. Quaint little pictures in quaint little wooden frames, adorned the walls at long intervals. In one corner—the kitchen corner—stood that huge article of household use that one finds in nearly every French-Canadian home—the

loom, and on this one the mother of the family was busy weaving a web of blue homespun. In the parlor corner was to be seen a fine, up-to-date, drop-frame Singer sewing-machine, whose polished table seemed strangely out of place in its quaint surrounding.

A daughter, who appeared to know our driver very well indeed, seemed quite pleased to show us the outside bake-oven, a huge affair, standing about four feet high by five or six feet long. It was built of stone, and some kind of cement, with flat bricks in the bottom of the fire-place. In this square fire-place shown in the picture, a wood fire

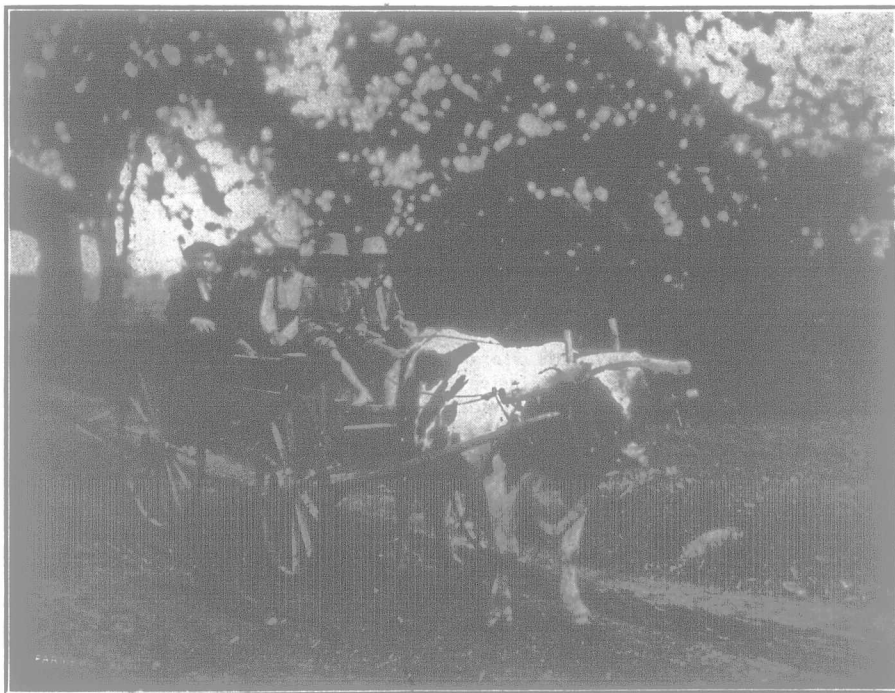
After some time we emerged from the narrow road, wooded closely with small trees and bushes, onto a broad, sandy plateau overlooking the village. What a splendid view presented itself! The village nestled snugly at our feet, with its single, long street, running away up past the golf grounds, and losing itself in a pretty wood opposite us, the gray-stone church with its tall spire, the large, white hotel, in the midst of green lawns, the snug little bay, with a few white sails flapping idly, and beyond, the grand, broad St. Lawrence, all made up a scene one does not soon forget. A high rock, with fishermen's shanties

ply of English words. The best of our drive was now over, and we arrived at our hotel just as the solemn church bell reminded the good people of the village that the middle of the day had come, and that they should say their midday prayers.

Something More about the Aberdeen Association

In our issue of 9th November last, I was privileged to tell our readers "Something About the Aberdeen Association," how it sprang into active existence some twenty-one years ago, and how it has continued its good work ever since as a beautiful channel with many streams of practical good-fellowship flowing from the sympathetic hearts of those in the "center of things," to their brothers and sisters in the farther-off sections of the Dominion who are as yet out of reach of the many privileges which come to brighten the lives of those living in older communities. As a kind of sleeping partner (for the younger members undertake the more active work of the London, Ont., Branch), I was invited to be present at its annual meeting, and to hear the most interesting report of its faithful Secretary, Miss Mary McMillan, from which I am permitted to quote. After telling that on the list of those receiving the parcels of literature were 88 names, with more to be added to it, she speaks of a splendid contribution of books, out of city circulation, mostly fiction by standard authors, from the London Public Library, and other donors; of 100 calendars in time for the January parcels; of seeds from the Horticultural Society, with interesting accounts from those who had reported results in "mammoth cabbages" and "sweet posies of mignonette" from their gardens last year, and after testifying to the help faithfully rendered of the members of the Sorting and Packing Committee, she gave the following tender little episode, which I am glad to be able to pass on to you:

"In the pioneer's family, the day's work is done, and the long winter evening is before them. Let us hope there is a blazing fire on the hearth, for the cold is intense outside. Someone has been at the post office, perhaps ten miles away, and has just come in. 'Mother, here is a letter for you from London.' She opens it and reads it aloud to the listening family, for letters are not an everyday occurrence in that home—and when she goes back to her always overflowing mending basket, there is a light on her face, caused by the kindly interest expressed by a stranger in her work and welfare, and life's burden has been lifted for a little. Then the carefully-selected Aberdeen parcel is opened. One of the circle who has been wondering for a month what happened next to somebody, has seized the magazine with the continued story, and is soon absorbed in the tale. Another, with bright, inquiring mind, has found the interesting article or pages of information about things done in the outside world, of which they see or hear so little. Another, with a vein of humor in his make-up, is deep in the funny column, and is convulsed with laughter, which doeth good like medicine. The younger children have not been forgotten, and are busy pinning bright pictures on the rough wall. And, perchance, one with a soul yearning for the highest things has found in book or church paper or leaflet a message which will make known and better understood the loving heart of the one Father of us all, who has cast their lot in the lonely homestead, and ours surrounded by so many privileges, and made it possible for us to share with them. And as they separate for the night they will realize something of



Out for a Morning Jaunt, Quebec.

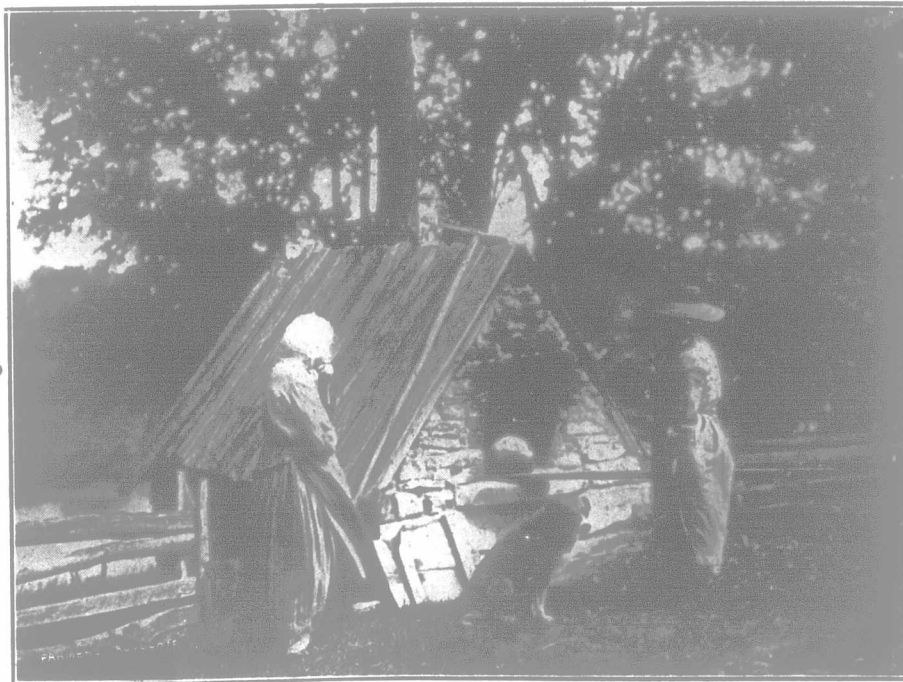
is built. When the bread or other food is ready to be baked, the coals are pulled out, and the hot bricks are ready to receive what is to be baked. You can see how impossible it is to burn the bread in such an oven, but I can't say I recommend it as being very convenient.

After leaving the farm, we proceeded over the roughest road it has ever been my lot to travel. We preferred to walk up and down hills, lest we be thrown out, as one wheel would sometimes be a foot above its mate. We enjoyed the walk, as well as the raspberries we found along the road.

clinging thereto, shuts out the view of the mouth of the Saguenay, but above this rock can be seen the west bank, which even here gives promise of the scenery one enjoys in a sail up this narrow, but grandly picturesque river.

It took us some time to get enough of this grand view, and though our old lady asked why we were staying here so long, as there was nothing she had not seen in two minutes, we took good care not to translate her wishes to the driver.

The French drivers are very pleasant and accommodating, giving all the information they can in their limited sup-



Out-door Bake-oven, Quebec.