

were bare to the elbow, and she was carrying a tray filled with pans of freshly risen bread. Behind her followed a French girl similarly laden, while a string of humble admirers brought up the rear, or rather scampered about around her. I joined them, eager to see the little ceremony.

First the ashes were scraped out by the old grand-père, a picturesque figure in grey homespun and a habitant hat, standing there in the sunshine, testing the heat of the oven with his bare arm and carefully placing each tin on a flat stick with a long handle and running it into the oven, till all were placed. Then, quietly closing the little iron doors, he admonished us on no account to open them till he returned.

For those who have never seen these earth-ovens, which seem peculiarly "indigenous" to the soil of the Province of Quebec, I ought perhaps to explain that they are made of earth and sand plastered together into an oval shape, mounted on a foundation of rough stones. The centre, being hollowed out, is sometimes lined with bricks, leaving an aperture large enough to accommodate eighteen or twenty loaves. They are always protected from rain and winter storms by a slanting roof of wood or an outer wall of stone roughly plastered together, giving the effect of a miniature Stonehenge.