

The Carnival in the Old and the New World

MARDI GRAS had its origin in the festivals of antiquity. Under Charles VI, the Court brought masked balls into fashion, and it was in one of these frolics that the King, disguised as a bear, was almost killed. Henry III went through the streets with his favorites in costumes.

To-day, carnival fetes, such as Mardi-Gras, are not celebrated in Paris: the "Bouf-Gras" procession did not outlive the Second Empire. Nico still retains its Flower and Confetti feasts. The Carnival of Rome is still celebrated, but none was more famous or conducted on a larger scale than the Carnival of Venice, to which people flocked from all parts of Europe, and which was discontinued after the Austrians took possession.

No doubt the religious authorities had to intervene at a certain time, to condemn certain abuses, noisy sports and disorder, but they never disapproved of the celebrations. On the contrary, they endeavored to assist, by establishing public holidays, or by taking in hand the regulation of the amusements.

If these merry demonstrations have to-day fallen into disuse in the Old World, they still exist in the New World. The Mardi-Gras celebration of New Orleans, in the United States, surpasses anything that was ever seen in the olden days. It is the occasion for an extraordinary display of incomparable beauty and splendor. At this season of the year in the capital of Louisiana, the flowers are in full bloom, and the allegorical cars, representing the various arts, are decorated with natural flowers and leaves. Fabulous sums are spent to organize these celebrations, which are controlled by a very powerful Company. People come from all points in America.

Quebec, the oldest city in North America;

Quebec, the cradle of civilization in the New World;

Quebec, the historic city par excellence;

Quebec, the most French city in America, where the traditions, usages and customs of the Old World have been retained in their purest form;

Quebec owed it to itself to revive here, the Mardi-Gras Carnival.

From time immemorial, the custom of celebrating Mardi-Gras, by small groups in the various parts of the city had been going on; but there was no organization, nor proper control.

Last year, at the request of the public, the Chief of Police, Captain Emile Trudel, a few days before Mardi-Gras, announced in the newspapers, that it was his intention to establish some order in the celebration by organizing a procession, and that all those who desired to take part: clubs, allegorical cars or individuals in costume and masked, should go to the Drill Hall at an appointed hour, the object being to establish a classification which would be maintained during the progress through the streets of the city.

This first effort succeeded wonderfully; to such an extent that at the request of the prominent citizens of Quebec, last Summer a body of young, active and enterprising men joined the Chief of Police and began the organization of the fetes which take place this year.

It is useless to mention here the attractions which are to be seen: the programme speaks for itself. Moreover the numerous cuts inserted in the Souvenir-Programme give an excellent idea of our winter sports. No city in the world can offer better winter sports than Quebec. It is not necessary for our wealthy neighbors to go to Switzerland, Sweden, Norway or Russia to become acquainted with snow and ice sports, as the old city of Champlain, by its site and its mild winter temperature is destined to become the rendez-vous of tourists both in winter and summer.

It is quite true that Quebec has snow in winter, but it is the purest and whitest of snow, which filters the atmosphere and supplies the lungs with life-giving oxygen, and, moreover, brings to the cheeks of the luscious Quebec girls that crimson tint resembling the world-famous apple "Fameuse", so sweet to the taste