

Quebec From Two Angles

Glimpse of French and English in Quebec by an Observant Visitor.

Truth About Canadians

Perry Robinson says our troops are not singled out for special headline eminence.

QUEBEC is never stale as a subject for the descriptive writer. One of the best efforts along this line recently is that of a writer on the editorial page of the Christian Science Monitor, who, in two issues, gives two distinct pictures of life in that Province. In his first he describes French Quebec; in the second the English section in Quebec City.

New France! The change from the Maritime Provinces or Ontario comes suddenly. In a moment, as it were, one is surrounded by French Canada, by French faces, French farms, French songs and language. In all America, there is no more picturesque and old-world region of the white man than this Habitant Country beloved of the poet, Drummond, and occupied by peasants who form the only important offshoot of the French people to be found. The section has an isolated, quaint, almost medieval civilization, in which gay French chansons echoing from peasant cottages, home-fashioned hay carts and furniture, lofty wayside "calvaries," tumble-down little Norman houses with sloping roofs and dormer windows, like those of France 300 years ago, scarlet sashes and bright, knitted hoods, high, two-wheeled carts or caleches, and low-running sleighs or burleaux, speak eloquently of a day long past. So, too, speak the leisurely, old-world courtesy and the simple gaiety and contentment of light-hearted "Pierre and his people," amid whom hospitality reigns supreme and smiles are universal.

The villages are long and straggling. They often begin with one saint and end with another, as though the parishes, having caught up with each other, had decided to make common cause. Pass out of the long, winding funnel of the irregular main street, past the open-air clay ovens, where peasant women daily bake bread, with a crowd of children tugging at their skirts, pass the litter of lumber mills, and a high cliff or slope, crowned by a lordly monastic establishment, invariably comes to view. Noble and majestic in its aloofness, it casts its long shadow across some hut into which a habitant and his numerous family have burrowed. Enter this hut, and you will doubtless find that the main room is doing service as parlor, dining-room, and kitchen. In the corner, a clumsy staircase leads up to a loft that is a shakedown for members of the family and a storehouse for lumber. It is the old France, the France before the revolution.

All along the shores of the St. Lawrence, once the only highway, lies the true heart of the Habitant Country. Here are the historic farms, measuring their precious river frontage by feet and their depth by miles, their houses ranged, in colonial days, in rows that their occupants might the better fend off the attacks of the American Indian.

"Jean Courteau" clings with an almost desperate love to the picturesque riparian villages of the St. Lawrence, stretching all the way from the "gates" of the Habitant Country at Riviere du Loup, beyond the core of Drummond's adopted Habitant world at Trois Rivières to that outer western edge at



Bord a Plouffe, which hugs the banks of the beautiful Riviere des Prairies.

Quebec's life is English as well as French, but one would have to dwell for some time in the city before being fully conscious of this fact. For that life is segregated, secluded and almost as precarious as the hold of the attacking British under Wolfe, until that "one perfect volley" gave them a permanent footing. It is a curious circumstance that the "colony" has clung to the old battlefield ever since. The English quarter is almost wholly amid the gardenized villas of the upper plains.

The visitor with introductions to the leading "English" families soon finds himself whisked off to the Little England on the heights. Outside of the host's house will run a fence, probably guarded, in approved English fashion, by a quaint English lodge. A path, spread with imported brown English gravel, will wind amid the trees and flowers to the front door of an Elizabethan brick mansion, a gardener will be mowing trim lawns, or tending his precious charges in a conservatory, and an English servant maid, in unmistakable "cap," will probably open the door.

There is a sense of being thrown amid one great family in this West End of Quebec. Hospitality and entertainment are the key-notes to the lives of these people, whose family names are often met with in Canadian history. But it would be hard to find a drone among them, in spite of their leisurely habits. The masculine ranks include lawyers and lumbermen, tradesmen and military men. None of them so busy that they cannot, of an afternoon, stroll into

the picturesque little Garrison Club, hard by the gate that leads to the battlefield of Wolfe and Montcalm. In the club, with its trim bowling green that reminds one more of the Old Country than anything else in Quebec, one meets every one, who is "worth knowing," among the English-speaking inhabitants of the French city. Now it is the pensioned colonel, in golf breeches and florid of face, who has fought in every part of the Empire, then the retired bishop from some far-away western see with a quaint French-Indian name. Over there sits the breezy editor of a duodecimo Quebec newspaper supported by its limited English-speaking subscribers, while by the huge English billiard table bend a monocled "younger son," a garrison officer, and a trig solicitor in comfortable tweeds. The lounging room

has its habitués buried in capacious morris chairs and reading the Fortnightly or Punch, while an English servant serves them with the familiar "five-o'clock" on individual trays. Yes, this little unpretentious club is a corner of England that one cannot duplicate elsewhere on the whole American Continent.

But once a year winter comes to dispel the illusion.

The whole English quarter puts on a change for the worse. The fences of the estates are pulled up, that they may not be a trap for the inevitable snowdrifts, the great houses are closed, and the hostesses, if not the hosts, flit off by the earliest steamer to the comparative warmth and the exhilaration of shopping and festivities in the great British capital. Then Quebec comes to her own again. She is once more wholly French.

THE POTSDAM PIPER.



"What the Hindenburg will happen when I have to stop?"
—Capt. Bruce Bairnsfather, Bystander, London.

asking the same question, not about British troops, but about overseas troops. H. Perry Robinson, of the London Times, writing in the Nineteenth Century Review, explodes the notion that all correspondents are in conspiracy to glorify Canadians and Australians at the expense of the soldiers from the British Isles. Following an exposition of some of the restrictions placed upon the correspondents by the censor, in which he explains that the mentioning of units of British troops by names in dispatches might enable the enemy to locate a particular Division in the line, he says:

The Australians and Canadians always fight in units of a Corps, the former sometimes having two Corps in the line together. An attack may be delivered on a frontage of three Corps, of which, perhaps, the centre Corps is Australian and those on either side are composed of troops from the British Isles, each Corps having two Divisions in the line. The Australian two Divisions—comprising twenty-four battalions—are all Australian; while on each side of them are two Divisions made up of twenty-four battalions drawn from as many different regiments. Supposing six hundred men of each battalion in all Divisions to go into action, there will be engaged six hundred only of Devons, or Cheshires, or Black Watch, but there will be nearly fifteen thousand Australians.

It will be readily understood, in the first place, that the concealment of the presence of a Corps of Australians in the line is very difficult. The battalion of Devons, of Cheshires, of Black Watch, may easily be unknown to the German, or the identity of that particular Division. But he is never long in ignorance when an Australian or Canadian Corps has "taken over." These latter, then, can generally be spoken of with certainty of no harm being done. One cannot assume the same of the individual battalion of Home troops.

THE MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO.



Shopkeeper: "Here is a fine portfolio. It is guaranteed to last for years."
New Russian Minister: "Oh! But I only want one to last for a few days."
—From Novy Satirikon, Petrograd.