

THE DRY GOODS REVIEW

HOW THIS COUNTRY LOOKS TO OTHERS.

AN ENGLISHMAN'S FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CANADA.

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I had long been a desire of mine to visit Canada, and when this autumn an opportunity occurred I was only too glad to avail myself of it, and at the request of your editor I will endeavor to give you a few of my impressions of the country.

After an eventful voyage in the good old ship *Parisian*, in which we had a taste of everything (except fine weather), including gales, fog and icebergs, we reached Quebec, thoroughly glad once more to reach terra firma, and proud to be still under the Union Jack. The St. Lawrence is a truly magnificent river, and the sailing up to Quebec was thoroughly delightful, the pretty villages nestling in the valleys and among the trees, which were clothed in their gorgeous autumn tints, making a most picturesque and never-to-be-forgotten sight.

And right here, as the Americans say, let me mention how beautiful the autumn tints in Canada are. We have nothing like them in England, and I should think that nowhere in the world could one see more glorious colorings than the Canadian foliage has in the autumn.

My first experience of Quebec was a drive in that extraordinary vehicle a "calash," from the docks to the Chateau Frontenac. How I got up that hill with the jolting I received without being pitched out will always remain a mystery to me.

The "Frenchness" of the place soon strikes one. To an Englishman it seems so strange to be in a city over which the British flag flies, and yet which is so essentially French. The more one sees of Quebec the more French it appears, as they seem to cling to their old traditions, language, religion and customs most tenaciously, and yet appear perfectly contented and happy under British rule.

To an Englishman, Quebec is, and must be, intensely interesting, for every schoolboy knows about Wolfe and his equally brave opponent Montcalm, Champlain, Jacques Cartier, and countless other names enrolled on the scroll of fame. Commercially, Quebec seems to me to be on the down grade and from what I saw afterwards in Montreal and Toronto I was more than confirmed in my opinion. The drive through the village of Beauport to the Montmorency Falls I found most interesting, and was amused by the determination of everybody to have a front street view, the consequence being one of the longest and most straggling villages I have ever seen.

From Quebec to Montreal I had my first experience of a Canadian river boat, which, because of its novelty, I suppose, I thoroughly enjoyed.

In Montreal the first thing that I noticed were the extraordinary number of overhead wires, and the speed at which the electric cars travel; it is a wonder to me that there are not many serious accidents. Of course, I had to "do" the mountain. I suppose every stranger to Montreal has to do that, but in justice I must say one

is amply repaid, as the view of the city and the river is simply charming. I consider Montreal, architecturally, a most beautiful city, the enormous number of churches and the fine residential houses standing out prominently.

I have never seen more artistic houses anywhere than in Montreal, and since arriving in England I have told my architect friends it would pay them to make a visit to Canada, if only to see the private residences in Sherbrooke street, Dorchester street, etc. I don't wonder at Montrealers being proud of their city. The wooden footpaths look peculiar to one at first, and the absence of fences or railings between private gardens and the sidewalks is also a new feature to English eyes, and takes a considerable time to get thoroughly used to.

Commercially Montreal appears to be thriving, and, as far as I could judge, has a great future before it, its situation and means of communication, both by land and sea, being great points in its favor. The night journey by rail to Toronto was a new experience, and one is at once struck with a great number of differences between the Canadian and English systems of railroads.

The absence of a raised platform in the station, the bogiewheeled Pullman cars, the colored conductors, the through passage in the train, the engine with its enormous lamp and cow-catcher, the ringing of its bell, and the starting of the train without notice by whistling, all were new features.

The cars are, however, in my opinion, and this also applies to the States, a long way over-heated.

As in Montreal, one is at once struck in Toronto by the overhead wires and the speed of the cars, and to these I must add the extraordinary number of bicycles. I have never seen any city where so many cyclists are to be seen; in fact, it seemed to me that at least two-thirds of Toronto must move about on wheels.

The "Queen City of the West" appeared to me to be more Americanised than Montreal, and, while being undoubtedly a fine city, is not so picturesque as that city or Quebec.

During my visit I went to see a football match between Toronto and Hamilton, and it has been a source of wonder to me why Canadians, who are thorough sportsmen in every way, should play the game the way they do. The wing forwards, for instance, are a perfect nuisance; instead of playing the ball they are simply having a wrestling match all the time, sometimes yards away from where the game is proceeding. Now, I maintain football, played properly, should help a man to keep his temper and bring out his natural talents, say for kicking, running, dodging, skill in passing the ball, etc., and how the continual wrestling and pushing each other of the wings conduces to this end I cannot see. This wing forwardism evidently tends to brutal play, as in the game I saw the referee had to order several men off the field, and several were temporarily "damaged."

The loyalty of Canada to England, and the love the Canadians have for our Queen is very striking, and their firm attachment to the Union Jack must endear Canadians to every Englishman.

The Canadian hospitality is proverbial, and I shall never forget the great kindness I received on every hand; everyone seemed to try their hardest in every way to make my visit a pleasant one, and to give me a good impression of the country. What Canada seems to want is a largely increased population and more capital, and I think the more the British people grasp the fact that in Canada they have an enormous continent with immense potentialities the more they will send their money to develop and foster the colony of which they have every reason to feel proud.

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H. S. S.