

A PEEP INTO THE HEART OF OLD CANADA

BY

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Those who wish nowadays to get a quick peep into the heart of a country must supplement the railway Pullman by the nimble automobile. The Province of Quebec, equal in area to about one fourth of the United States, thus especially attracts the sightseers' car, for it has 2,000 miles of improved roads under Municipal or Governmental control, constructed at a cost of \$20,000,000.00, and connected with those of the United States being equal to any on this Continent.

There are three main Governmental Roads. The longest starting from the South boundary line at Rouse's Point, proceeds northwards to Montreal (with a detour before crossing the St. Lawrence from St. Lambert via Longueuil to Chambly) and from Montreal again northwards through Three Rivers to Quebec; the second, in the centre, runs from Derby on the boundary to Sherbrooke; and the third from Line House on the Eastern Boundary northwards to Pointe Levis, opposite Quebec Citadel.

The Montreal-Three Rivers-Quebec Highway linking the three most ancient cities in the Dominion has naturally the most potent lure for the historically minded as well as for the general student of Canadian life—social, political, industrial and commercial—and merits special description.

This route through the Province will reveal the soul of Old Quebec: It passes, with the exception of the forenamed cities, through a vast and sparsely populated agricultural territory. The Parish Churches, with their glistening and tapering spires, dot and dominate the landscape and are surrounded by quaint villages, with their prosperous homesteads and manoirs, which, clustering around, recall by their dates of foundation the original settlements formed by some of the earliest colonizing Seigneurs of New France under the Old World Feudal System, which translated hither in a modified form reared up a dignified and responsible noblesse and gentry, as well as a happy and contented peasant yeomanry.

Along the route there can be descried near or afar Colleges and Houses of Education, and abodes of philanthropy, old and new. As the traveller passes through the long ribbonlike stream of straggling villages, with their old-world thatched barns attached to the typically habitant farmsteads of the *Cultivateur* and his young and numerous family, there will be seen a succession of wayside crosses, and beyond Three Rivers especially, picturesque shrines every few miles,— emblems of the simple faith and idealism of a reverent and Christian population. A recent writer, Mr. J. A. McNeil, says: "Some of these shrines are of the most elaborate description, with colored life sized, or even heroic figures of the Christ, the Sorrowing Mother, the Beloved Disciple and the other participants in the World's greatest tragedy. These are glass enclosed and have roofs supported on arched pillars. Others are plain