

Leaving Their Sins at a Canadian Calvary

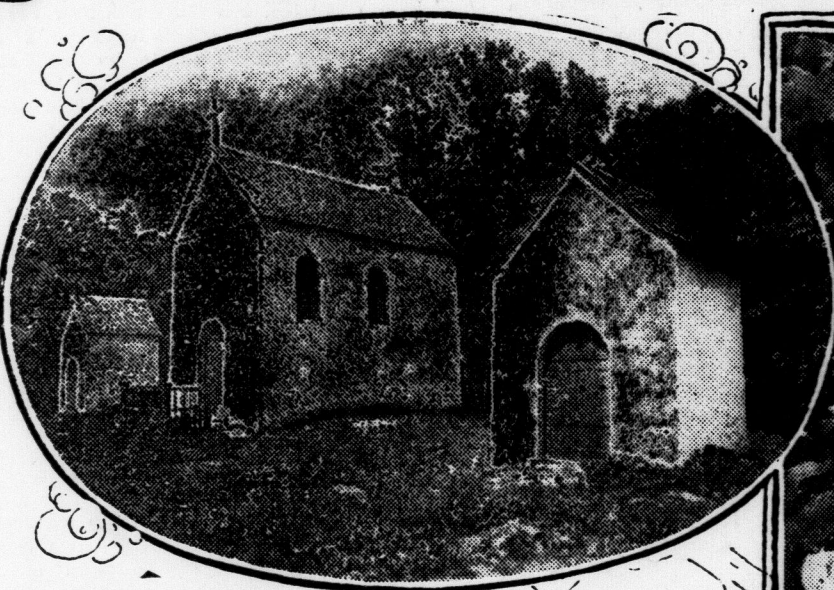
With Faces Illumined By Religious Rapture, Pilgrims, Chanting Prayers, Climb Mountain to Oka Shrine in Old Quebec—Descent Is Made With Gaiety and Happiness

By CONSTANCE JAKSON and
GEORGE PEACOCK

AS the scow-like ferry humped its way from Comoy across the Lake of Two Mountains, the crowd of pilgrims fell apart and there were cries of "Le Calvaire! Le Calvaire!" A few crossed themselves and a hush descended upon all.

Far ahead and above us, almost at the top of the table-shaped mountain, tore gleamed amid the dark pines a shining mass of white, too distant to be made out in detail, where we stood, but undoubtedly our goal the Oka Calvary. Beneath it on a noble slope the pine forest lay in long, even ranks that made a regular and beautiful pattern, the pointed tops of the trees giving the massed effect of mountain peaks reaching up; the whole side of the mountain presented a series of splendid avenues; years before the Sulpicians had planted forty thousand of these trees in perfect rows. Scattered amongst them were flashes of small bits of white, Way Stations of the Cross where we should rest and pray as we toiled up the mountain to the Calvaire at the top. There are many such Calvaires throughout Quebec but few so ideally situated.

Our fellow-passengers resumed their listless chatter and one could again observe their without restraint. There were whole families from the "back-country" parishes for whom this market boat pilgrims, they shouted rude remarks of good-natured derision; and tongues were thrust out; but those on the market boat pretended not to hear or see.



THE OKA CALVARY, BUILT 1752

wall of the Seminary of the Gentlemen of St. Sulpice.

At the main wharf the market boat, with another band of pilgrims similar to ourselves, was disembarking and a great race followed between them and us to see who should be first ashore. All was excitement. The sheep bleated and looked through the railing at us with timid, frightened eyes, the steamboat whistled, shrill, startling, the call to arms, arrogant beside our poor little bell, parents grabbed their children and newspaper parcels of lunch, boys elbowed their way determinedly to the front so as to be the first away; joyous, young, servant girls from the river towns, and even the more demure damsels from the farms screamed and laughed with their young men, all rushing about in seemingly aimless confusion. As soon as the chains were made fast and the rough wooden gang-plank pushed out, all rushed over the side helter-skelter, laughing at one another's mishaps with true French-Canadian good humor; and then as it was seen that we had beaten the market boat pilgrims, they shouted rude remarks of good-natured derision; and tongues were thrust out; but those on the market boat pretended not to hear or see.

Pilgrims From Far and Near

WE landed amid a scene which was as busy as a market from the wharf to the slope of the mountain. To the right lay the Seminary of the Gentlemen of St. Sulpice, and beyond it a broad garden filled with noble elms, and at the point a picturesque kiosk, a summer house built from the remains of one of the



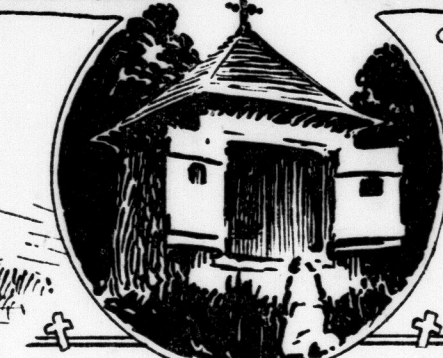
CHURCH OF THE GENTLEMEN OF ST. SULPICE OKA

remains of that Fort L'Annonciation which Oka once was.

Before us a scene of indescribable confusion, pilgrims from all the parishes in the world, afoot, by boats big and little, and in small cars, the latter parked under the big elms, boys toot-



OUR WAY NOW LED ALONG AN AVENUE OF SPLENDID PINES PLANTED MANY YEARS AGO BY THE SULPICIAN



ONE OF THE STATIONS

with a few priests among them to lend dignity and maintain order in the mixed crowd of all ages and every strata of society. Many were obviously poor, and some extremely poor, but there were many of the well-to-do and all bore an air of dignity in keeping with the occasion that bound people of widely different circumstances so firmly together for this day. Tall, strong fellows with bare bowed heads, their fingers fumbling awkwardly with their caps, alternated with stout widows in thick veils whose voluminous black garments billowed in small seas as they walked; and here and there an Algonquin or an Iroquois stood out in the throng; there were middle-aged men in antiquated frock coats, green with age at the seams; and old women in ancient silks and saffron, and young girls doing penance in polonaises, and young boys skipping like young goats, but they would not do that long, for the trail was steep; but however different the clothes or

the station in life, the rapt look on all faces was the same.

Thus through the village, past the old Hudson Bay post which was now a school for the French boys; then, with the village behind us, we began to climb a beautiful wooded slope and as we approached the first Way Station of the Cross at the foot of the mountain, the pilgrims began to chant. At first in a low tone, as others joined in, all gained in courage and decision and the prayer of the marching multitude rose and fell in a sweet cadence that was full of the spirit of religious devotion.

On the narrow trail that we were now ascending since we had left the village road the pilgrims broke up into little groups defined by neighborhood and into couples ruled by love; first one half of each group now raised its voice chanting in low reverential tones from the prayer books which they held in their hands; then they paused and almost before the break was noticeable the other half of the group chanted the response. Sometimes when it was a couple who sang themselves alone and when the girl's clear treble veiled up and was answered by the hoarse rumble of the man, it was as though out in this lonely spot they sang their love for one another.

Lovers Chanting Responses

AS one young couple passed us we heard the man murmuring his Latin prayer in a low key, more abashed than some of better voice or greater knowledge, then his young companion answered in a key a little higher, like the sweet notes of a wood-bird, softly. Now and then the priests gave their voices in the whole army of pilgrims raised the signal and a hymn. The words were Latin and the air, which was sweet, musical, and full of solemn pathos, mingled with the murmuring of the pines, and blown by the soft summer autumnal breeze, across in a wild, sad note to the smiling sky, to be echoed in soft low notes as the pilgrims resumed their chanted prayers.

No one heeded the vendors at the small stalls along the trail and near the stations, but as we approached the first of the latter, a small white chapel of stone, the leader of the queue turned aside and entered, and all who could followed, while the others overflowed on the doorstep and grass and knelt there, crossing themselves and murmuring prayers as they glanced hurriedly up at the large framed colored wood carving relating the suffering of Christ, one of which was in each station, and which in this first case depicted the Annunciation. The carvings, done by a wood carver who had more pious zeal than art, nevertheless fulfilled their purpose, for there was a surprising effect of life to the figures and relief to the whole. These had replaced the paintings depicting the Passion which had come from France at the time of the Revolution and had been placed here until it was found that the weather was injuring them, after which they were placed in the church at Oka, where they remain. Now the priest entered and made his genuflection at the shrine, and after kneeling with his flock led them in their adoration until, the low sound of chanting nearing us heralding the approach of another body of pilgrims, we began to make way for them and began to ascend the trail again.

Our way now led between two long rows of splendid pines, an avenue as true as though laid out with a rule, and as the trail grew steeper and the sun grew warmer one could not but reflect on the labor of those Christian Iroquois who had toiled up this same trail so often with their "tump-line" load of mortar and stone.

At intervals we came upon the other Stations, each one as we advanced carrying us further along in the life of Christ, each station a double one depicting two scenes, and at each the pilgrims knelt and prayed. Suddenly the chanting grew in fervor, tired limbs moved more easily, and drawn faces lighted up; the chant rang with exaltation and, as eyes strained ahead, broke out into an unconscious note of victory and attainment, for there before us, clustering together amid the dark pines, gleamed whitely the three Stations; we were near the top; we had climbed Calvary.

All Knelt Under Picture

BEFORE the very plain and old altar in the middle and largest shrine, all knelt under the picture of the Crucifixion and a mass was said; the officiating priest addressed the people on the seriousness of the occasion and its purpose in their lives, after which all prayed that their sins might be forgiven them; then he blessed them in the Father's name, after which the pilgrims crept humbly up and kissed the holy picture and beneath its spreading arms of shelter prayed for personal needs and forgiveness.

Then quickly the scene changed. With the happy facility of children the pilgrims became a different set of people. Gone was their mysticism, their devotion, their rapture. They were French-Canadians out for a lark!

How carelessly and with what light-hearted gaiety they dispersed now that it was at an end. Their penance had been rewarded, their sins were forgiven; absolution was theirs. They had nothing now left to do but eat and laugh with a clear conscience and an easy mind, an easy task for a people who of all Canadians have the true flair for happiness.

The pilgrims now began to wander down toward the village. They seemed scarcely the same beings who had toiled up the mountain slope in the morning. There were many young couples hand-in-hand as before, but all restraint gone, exuberantly happy and chatting merrily, the old women in their faded finery importantly contented, and the jolly, naughty children chasing each other with gleeful shouts down the mountain slope. Far out on the lake the sun was sinking, throwing a ruddy glow on the bright blue water and the tinted September woods; some loys in a tiny boat lay beneath were singing carelessly a happy French-Canadian chanson which rose like a lark, up and up and up.

The Flapper's Setting the Pace

Manys and Modes for Mothers, Grandmothers and Even Fathers Are Greatly Affected By the Efficient Individual With the Byle Bob and a Penchant for Frankness

By NOA PHILLIPS MUIR

ONE can't see it. The older generation have a good many fine points, but modesty isn't one of them. I mean intellectual modesty. They know everything there is to know, and more to that, they know it when we were kicking them out of our cradles. If there should be so little point about which they are in doubt, it is merely because it was never important enough for them to make a dint in their colossal amount of grey matter considering.

That other sort of modesty they hug to their bosoms like a mustard in a pneumonia crisis. Our mothers rolled their own. Not so. They were loath to trip their men folk on, bustles which wriggled when they walked. They did wear sleeveless gowns, they just permitted sleeves to do a double skid off the shoulder and clasp the upper arm.

That's the big difference we're not any worse, only we're more frank about it.

They criticize everything, do not constructively but destructively, head-shakings and sighings and cluck-cluck and tut-tut. They blench over these "modesties," forgetting that they have bragged their "pobin" for finding his way home on the dark night without a hand on the reins. Why, the ladies might have been real ritz affairs who steering wheel or Klaxon or gears to this or to distract one's attention.

Girls don't take snuff, though. They haven't been trained to go through formalities where one starts with a cocktail and we through the procession, and then toddles off the drawing room to sling scandal while the old folks stay behind, to become unsteady, jolly, ugly as their temperaments dictate.

Then, too, these shameless hussies, I don't know where they inherit these "modesties"—ride cross saddle, and if you'll believe it—breaks—panties!—like men's. Imagine that!



"... invites them to go jump in the lake if they don't approve."

Our mothers or grandmothers—those of them who rode at all—wouldn't have thought of attiring themselves so, or of riding like that. Certainly not. They rode side-saddle and suffered from vapors, fell over the length of their habits and scared the horse with their flapping skirts.

To-day's riding miss doesn't have to worry about such things. She grips the horse with her two sturdy legs and begs him to "step on the gas," and "scatter the dust," and she gallops home without the aid of a groom, hops her horse sans the same, and like as not gives him the rub down he needs before she hurries in to take her cold shower and run a comb through and her bobbed hair. Then she pulls a simple, straight little dress over her head, smooths her single bangle or bob again, powders her nose, touches her already red lips with a carmine stick, places a pink glow on her cheeks and descends to dinner, fifteen minutes from the time she entered the house, ready to talk house-keeping with her mother, scandal with her sister, sport with her big brother, or politics with her dad.

Clever, Those Cosmeticians

ROUGE? Lipstick? Eyebrow pencil? Sure! So did mamma, only the chances are she turned the lock in the bedroom door first, and made a bit of a mess of those eyebrows with a burned match, while her daughter, or maybe her granddaughter, coolly retouches any devastations in her facial make-up on the trolley or

in the parlor, kitchen, front row at the theatre, or maybe—but here she uses caution, in church. More than that, she uses the proper shade for her type, and makes no mistake about it, she knows what is, too, in these matters.

We aren't saying that the modern girl is perfection. We aren't even giving unqualified approval to everything she does, but we do maintain that she isn't entirely going to the bow-wows, and that perhaps her hardest knockers may not realize that one of the most shocking things about the girl of to-day is that she shocks in public.

She flaunts her independence in the face of an outraged world of elders and invites them to go jump in the lake if they don't approve. And yet the elders haven't realized that in that very brazenness lies safety.

Once we read in a book that "There's nothing lower than nature, and she goes as high as heaven," and we think it's true. We think, too, that human nature doesn't change a great deal, in its innermost depths. The chances are that to-day youth is not any worse than yesterday's, but because it is open in its pleasuring and its defiance, it's sidesteps are more noticeable.

Maybe the girl of 1925 is not as gentle, as ladylike and as sweet in her allure as her mother was. No doubt she has lost, and maybe forever, that dependence and clinging vine nature which some men have and do and will always find appealing. But she has gained an assurance and poise, a sureness of purpose, a clarity of vision. She has trained her body to endurance, her brain to efficiency and concen-

tration as the girls of a generation ago did not do—had not the need to do.

She may have crystallized a bit in the doing. Lips that should be just soft and smiling may have learned to harden and tighten. Fingers that used to linger over the ivory keys in such sweet melodies as "Do you remember sweet Alice Ben Bolt?" now hit, less lingeringly but more interestedly, on keys of another type, and the girl who twenty years ago was taught to "go to father" for everything she wanted depends to-day on her own neat pocket-book for her needs.

We wouldn't change our mothers. Not for anything in the world. They aren't lagging too far behind the procession at that. Once in a while we catch them backsliding a bit, and then we agree that they are a bit white to wear green and touch them up from our double compact and sneak out to have a little laugh, only we can't have it up our sleeves because we haven't any. Sometimes we can bully them into having the hem of the new dress made an inch deeper than they think is quite wise, and then we tip the dad off not to say anything but what is in praise of the dress, and dad says "Atta girl!" and mother likes the dress and feels good—and devilish—at the same time.

The Revolution is Spreading

WE have noticed these last few years that there aren't nearly as many middle-aged ladies wearing lisle-threads as there are wearing silk and that the same ladies have grown so used to French heels that they wear them without walking as though they were on stilts.

Grandmother is a bit harder proposition, but maybe if we stay with the game she'll come around, too. We do know that she always wants to see our new clothes as soon as we get them, and not so long ago she spoke almost disparagingly of "the old ladies who insisted on making themselves look like a cross between a bonneted baby and a bare-spot on a table that needed a dolly," by wearing caps all the time, so we've hopes of grandmother, too.

The younger generation is setting some pace. They don't deny it. The older generation are censuring the younger. They glory in it. But the older are lot on the scent of the younger all the same. We're leading the procession, but next time you're out take a look over your shoulder and see if the old folks aren't stepping out briskly—keeping the pace, and only a couple of laps behind us at that.

Simply a Matter of Location

"WHY do you allow young Gaybird to kiss you in the parlor last night?"

"Because I was afraid he'd catch cold in the hall."

And the Tramp Goes, Too

"DO you give that dog of ours any exercise, Mr. Jones?"

"Oh, yes, he goes for a 'tramp' every morning."