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Europe, and the desire of the United States to increase its trade as well as to hold what it now has with South America. (At the close of the project a false and true test was given. Class average 83%. The average was lowered because one child had 40%.)

Associated Information and Results. A knowledge of simple facts regarding stock companies; knowledge of the Pan American Union, its location, purpose, members; practice in the writing of business and friendly letters and the use of the library; an interest in commercial topics in current newspapers and magazines; an increase in the interest in books in geography and in a desire to possess them for their library.

FARMS AND FARMING IN THE LOWER ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY

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THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

Tho the Lower St. Lawrence Valley is essentially a forest region, the immediate shores, and especially the South Shore, form areas of significant agricultural production. The farm houses lining the river road on the South Shore form a continuous village from Quebec to Cap Chat. One has but to ride on a train along this shore to appreciate that it is one of significant agricultural production. True, not all districts are prosperous. Some have the meager appearance of land recently reclaimed from the wilderness. Others have an unfortunate amount of swamp land. But the neat farm houses and the modern types of barns to be seen in other regions tell the story of prosperity and enterprise. It is noticeable that less machinery is used than in Ontario, tho many of the farms are equipped with the best machinery and production is carried on in a manner comparable to methods common in the province to the west.

From an agricultural point of view, the North Shore is much less interesting than the South. The Côte de Beaupré, which is but a gun shot from the Ile d'Orléans, which, in turn, is not much farther from the South Shore, is essentially like the South. All three places are intensively farmed for dairy products, vegetables, and small fruits for the city market. But the remainder of the North Shore is farmed only in a few favored spots, more especially Baie St. Paul. From Baie St. Paul to St. Simeon the margin of the plateau is tilled and in one place, behind Les Eboulements, there are farms for a number of miles inland.

There is some arable land about the mouth of the Saguenay, but the settlements beyond give decreasing attention to crops. For example, at Les Escoumains there are farms where grains, vegetables and dairy products are produced, but almost wholly for local consumption. The hay crop is in evidence no matter how far north along the coast one may go. Thru the extent of the shore the farms are generally quaint and in a notable number of places the methods of tillage are unusually primitive. This last character is due to the isolation which this area has suffered and therefore is of historical importance.

EARLY AGRICULTURE

The permanency of the colonization in early days of settlement was threatened by the difficulties attending agriculture. Methods of farming are easily inherited and hard to cast off, and new methods are even today more liable to come from the scientist than from the farmer. The peasants of France who essayed this wilderness were abruptly transplanted to their new surroundings, and for a long time had great difficulty in adjusting themselves to the strangest of the new elements, the climate. The climate was such as not to be easily understood by the seventeenth century farmer, or overcome by his simple methods.¹ Plant selection was a practice scarcely known. In the critical years when a good crop was a thing of vital importance the farmer was still experimenting with the climate, failing as often as succeeding. The short growing season was one of his greatest hardships, and even today the government is investigating means to cope with it. The soil was an easier matter with which to acquaint one's self.

Some of the forces militating against agricultural success were not inherent. For example, the fur trade offered too great an attraction to the adventure-loving colonists. It was the easiest means to wealth, and its hardships were seldom dull and always picturesque. Why, indeed, should one farm when meat and fish were so much more easily obtained than the grain, for could not one fish at the foot of the farm and shoot in the woods at the back of the house? It has even been said that because of the Norse blood in the Norman settler a roving spirit ran thru the veins of the French Canadian, but the idea is far fetched.

The short growing season is complemented by a long winter during which time either, thru turning to the pursuits of hunting or trapping, or thru the enforced indolence of the hibernation, the habitant's mind was naturally turned from husbandry for a considerable period. Hoc-

quart in 1737 reported to the King that the long winters were endangering the industrial nature of the peasants.²

Of course, one great difficulty in pioneer agriculture was the density of the forest stand. Man literally fought, not only the Indian, but the wilderness as well. It is said that a man could clear an arpent and a half of timbered land in a year, if he devoted all of his time to it.* This was not a trifling task especially for a people unused for generations to pioneering.³ Settlers soon learned the practice of felling trees in the fall, burning them in the spring, perhaps piling the remains for a second burning and then sowing broadcast the wheat, oats, or white turnip seed. Usually two such crops were sowed and then for four years wild forage crops were reaped. Perhaps after two years of pasturing on the land the stumps were sufficiently rotted to be pulled.

Tho the Frenchman had terrible geographical difficulties to overcome, and temperamental peculiarities to meet, there were certain spirits in the history of the early colony that persisted in the idea that agriculture was necessary to the life of the settlements. The earliest leader of the colony, Champlain, was an ardent believer in the prime utility of agricultural development. Thru his inducement the first farmer of Quebec settled upon the land that now holds the cathedral and seminary of Quebec, and there made his living from his farm.³ In 1626 agricultural colonization was begun seriously. The method of introducing it into the country was, naturally enough, the feudal or seigniorial system. This served the purpose of organizing communities, and providing them with administration, a grist-mill, and roads. By the year 1700 forty-seven new parishes had been instituted in New France. Since the first readjustments agriculture had flourished in the Lower St. Lawrence Valley except for the period between 1760 and 1850. These were the ninety years following the cession of Canada to the English. Left without their financial backers, and put under new conditions of trade and commerce, the art of farming stagnated among French Canadians. They emerged in 1850 with the same methods of tillage that they had had in 1760. There was no fertilization of the land worthy of the name. Not only did lands become poorer but the farms were subdivided. Governmental and community road-building were at a minimum and hence no new lands were opened up.³ That careful observer and recorder of early American life, Kalm, in 1772 noted that the country about Quebec, tho apparently of great fertility, was so poorly utilized as to yield only the bare necessities of

* A linear arpent is 191 feet. A square arpent is .871 English acres.

life.⁴ Bouchette, who wrote an excellent "Topographical Description of Canada" in 1832, says that the method of tilling was far behind that of Europe and lays it to the economic isolation and lack of need for intensification.⁵ However, he notes a significant production in wheat, oats, barley, peas, rye, buckwheat, corn, maple-sugar, potatoes, hay, flax, butter, and wool. Before 1820 little manure was used on the fields and the crops were seldom rotated. Early fertilization consisted of burning the stubble, as few animals were kept and there was a scarcity of manure. Semple tells us that until 1837 it was the practice among some farmers to cart the manure out on to the ice to be carried away in the spring.⁶

It was during this period that the first important emigration to the United States took place and in the five years from 1845 to 1849, 20,000 French emigrated from Canada to the United States. However, the priests, for the good of the country and the spiritual welfare of their flocks, made every effort to keep the populace together. The aid and encouragement which the Church gave at this time is one of the factors in the strong allegiance which the French Canadian pays to that institution. The Church took the place of the temporal leadership and this accounts in part for the tendency to substitute the church for nationality.

SIZE, SHAPE AND TENURE OF FARMS

The size of the farms, is, as might be expected, smaller in the counties near to the City of Quebec than elsewhere. Montmorency, L'Islet, and Bellechase, for example, have many holdings of less than an acre. Montmagny has few of the smaller holdings, but this fact is less significant when its small acreage is taken into consideration. In the County Charlevoix many of the farms extend from the relatively small cleared portions into the forests, which may explain why its holdings are larger than those in Montmorency, tho the latter is nearer to Quebec. Also much of the country has been settled in times which are recent as compared to the settlement of the Côte de Beaupré, which constitutes the settled portion of Montmorency. The older the settlement the smaller the farms, because of the patrimonial grants. This sort of division and redivision assumes great proportions when we find such records of continuous occupancy of the land within one family as these:

Robert Caron married at Quebec, Oct. 25, 1637 to Marie de Crevet, born in Normandy. He was one of the first inhabitants of Ste. Anne and St. Joachim. His descendants still occupy the land which was ceded to him.

"Honorable Homme" Jean Cochon of St. Martin de Dieppe married Marguerite Coin-tal of the same city. In 1634 they established themselves at Chateau-Richer where their descendants still exist.

There are examples also of the families that have migrated and it is interesting to continue:

The descendants of Paul de Rainville and Pauline Poete of the Côte de Beupré had children who have carried their seed to "divers points of Canada." 1640⁷

The shape of the farms, a matter which attracts the attention of every traveller has a social significance. Thru all of the region where there is any great stretch of flat land the farms take on a characteristic form. They are long and narrow, with the smaller dimension as a frontage on the river. A similar peculiarity is to be seen in the Spanish and French grants along the lower Mississippi. On both of these rivers the farms inherit their forms from the days when the river was the sole means of transportation and therefore access to the waterway was sought by all. The original grants on the St. Lawrence varied in different portions of the valley, but from three to thirty or forty arpents¹ seems to have been a common proportion. This not only gave to all riparian rights and the privilege of fishing, but also it divided the valuable marshlands of the river so that each farmer might cut hay thereon. These farms have been further subdivided so as to give each of the new owners a portion of all the rights enjoyed by the original farmer. The consequence is, that no farmer is isolated from his neighbors, as the houses of a single range of farms are directly on the one road of that range and the farms being very narrow the houses are necessarily close together. On the other hand, there is a notable lack of grouping and community interests. The South Shore is one continuous village thruout its entire length. The result is that altho the French Canadian has developed the social instinct and has had his neighbor forced on his consciousness, he has not felt the stimulus of the life of the village as it is generally thought of. This continuous neighborhood has lacked all of the rivalries of which civic interest is born. Advantages and disadvantages of this fashion of living are much discussed. The neighborly distribution of houses along a single road, each on its long, narrow rectangle, is certainly a significant factor in the extreme social instinct of the habitant. On the other hand, I am of the opinion that it works against as well as for the furthering of this characteristic. For the organization which is the strongest in the lower valley is not the community spirit, but the parish spirit. This is constantly furthered and fostered, not by geographic conditions, but by the priest. In much of the country there is little that

resembles a town. Many of the smaller communities are merely a few additional houses set in between the farm houses, representing some retired farmers, a small mill and its workers—who usually have their farms as well—the church and a commissary. This is more especially true of the South Shore.

The tenure of the farms takes on in places a feudal aspect. The feudal status of the countryside was abandoned by an act of legislature in 1854. This Seigniorial System, as it was called, had, however, little of the social and military characteristics of the French feudalism from which it sprang. Nevertheless the title of the land and the rights to certain monopolies, as well as the responsibilities of developing the district were actually vested in the *seigneur*. In 1854 the habitant was released from all obligations except a certain small rent which was a return on the land as well as a compensation, in part, for some of the privileges of which the landed class was deprived. Also the farmer was allowed to buy his land outright, thereby sealing the doom of the system. The habitant has been surprisingly reluctant to purchase his land and hence the tenure of much of the land today forms a survival of an institution strangely un-American.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF BELGIUM AND HOLLAND

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These two small nations both have a population, a commerce, an international prominence and an historical significance far greater than their small size would suggest. Together they make up only one hundred-fifty-fourth of the area of Europe or one twenty-three hundredth of that of the lands of the globe. Yet they have one thirtieth of Europe's people, and nearly a hundredth of the world's population. In respect to commerce, they have about one twelfth of Europe's total