

## Laurentian Villages

**S**TRUNG upon the silver thread of the North River and its tributaries like a row of pearls, the pretty villages of the Laurentians are the locale for thousands of skiers from Montreal and the great cities of the Eastern United States.

Not so very long ago the Laurentians were a thickly forested unsettled territory stretching for hundreds of miles north of Montreal and virtually unknown to white men. There were at first white trappers who traded with the Indians for furs and later lumbermen invaded the country establishing camps in the forests. But for definite settlements the latter half of the 19th century saw their real beginnings.

Curiously enough, it was Shawbridge which first attracted settlers. In 1826 a party of Irish went there by canoe up the North River and two years later a few shacks marked the beginnings of St. Jerome. Then, in chronological order, came Ste. Adele, the territory around which was surveyed in 1847-48 by Hon. Augustin Norbert Morin. It was made a township in 1852. The settlement was named first Morinville after Mr. Morin and later given the name of his wife, Adele. These beginnings were, however, very tentative and it is not until "the Apostle of the North," Cure Labelle, began his activities, that settlement had its fulfillment.

Cure Labelle was over six feet tall, weighed 333 pounds, was a great talker, a great eater, a great smoker, gay and enthusiastic. He was himself the type of, and revived in his race, the adventurer-explorers of the 17th century who dreamed of reaching the Mississippi and saw their dreams come true. Cure Labelle dreamed, at a time when nothing seemed less likely, of a railway from Montreal to St. Jerome and thence to Mont Laurier. It was a dream that he did not live to see come true, but he saw the realization of most of his other aims.

He preached colonization all the time at Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa. He, more than any other man, colonized the Laurentians, had roads driven through the mountains and brought in the settlers. From his parish at St. Jerome he was the driving force of the settlement of the North.

Ste. Agathe was created a parish in 1861; St. Sauveur and Ste. Adele, 1854; St. Jovite, 1873; St. Faustin, 1874; Labelle, 1878; Nomingue, 1883; and in 1909 the Canadian Pacific Railway line reached Mont Laurier. Nineteen years later the C.P.R. ski trains started, in 1928. In that winter there were fifteen northbound trains a week and this winter, ten years later, there are thirty-one northbound trains weekly.

## Lac Beauport, Quebec

**Y**ES, it's winter again, and the scene shifts from a green to a white background. The golf course is forsaken. The last rose of summer has long since shed its petals. Very sad, this parting of summer. Cheer up, they tell us, if winter comes can spring be far behind? But who cares? Winter brings full compensation, and this goes double for members of the ski fraternity. Skis which have gathered dust during the summer months are being retrieved from attics and basements. The next thing to do is to get out that old ski map and begin plotting out week-end campaigns. The stage is set for Canada's favorite winter pastime.

The epidemic of "ski-mania" has affected practically every Canadian province. The human snowbird has already selected his favorite sanctuary. In the west it's Banff and Lake Louise, on the prairies of Manitoba it's La-Riviere, and in the east it's the rolling Laurentian hills. Quebec City, ever attractive to the summer vacationist, takes on added prestige in

the winter. It is the gateway to some of the finest ski country in Eastern North America. The sparkling Quebec snowscape is dotted with picturesque little villages whose surrounding terrain is lined with a network of ski-tracks. Quaint French-Canadian settlements which have slumbered unobtrusively through the years have sprung into sudden prominence since the advent of the ski legionnaires. Special Canadian Pacific ski trains carry capacity loads to the ski front throughout the winter season. Yes, strange as it seems, the winter sports world has been revolutionized by nothing more than two homely strips of wood.

Ski fans who make their headquarters at Quebec City are singularly lucky. To find snow conditions second to none, these fortunates have only to journey a few exhilarating miles to Quebec's latest ski "find"—Lac Beauport. Recent developments and improvements have made this Laurentian beauty spot one of Canada's favorite winter playgrounds. The