

Canada East

The rural farmer is the backbone of Canada East. Only 20% of the population lives in cities. The French-Canadian farmers, known as **habitants**, live on long strip farms that hug the shores of the St. Lawrence and other rivers. They pride themselves on their French language and customs. They build their own stone houses and make most of their furniture from the abundant wood supply. Their clothes are also home-made. Most of the food they eat is produced on their farms. The most important farm products are potatoes, rye, buckwheat, maple sugar, and livestock.

Montréal in Canada East is the largest city in all of the British North American colonies. It is developing as the economic capital and transportation centre. Canals along the St. Lawrence link Montréal to Lake Ontario. New railways are also spreading out from the city. Some of the wealthiest people in Canada live in Montréal in elegant mansions. Many of the wealthy are Scots who have made great fortunes in iron and steel works, flour mills, steamship lines, and timber.

Montréal is also a city of striking contrasts. There are thousands of French who cannot speak English, and thousands of English who cannot speak French. It is easy to trace the two main divisions of the population in Montréal. Taking St. Lawrence Street as a dividing line, all that is east of it is French-speaking and all that is west of it is English-speaking.



Special Problems

1. Political deadlock is making it impossible to get anything done in the government of Canada East and Canada West. Both English-speaking and French-speaking people are accusing the other group of always wanting its own way.
2. The loss of the preferred markets in Britain means that the colony must look elsewhere to sell its industrial and farm products.
3. In any union of colonies, the French-speaking people of Canada East feel they will be swamped by an English-speaking majority.