

stock purposes. Every such animal, under three years of age, whether trained to work or not, is a steer. In Prince Edward Island the term "ox" is generally used to designate all male animals of this species other than stock animals, and calves a year old. Here the "ox" is produced wholly for beef purposes and seldom if ever is permitted to live beyond the steer stage. It is not uncommon to notice in the local papers advertisements relating to strayed "oxen," the age of which is given as eighteen months or two years. Let it be observed, however, that none of these petty distinctions affect the price of beef, except to increase it, for everywhere, commercially speaking, the cow and all her kin, both ox and steer, "jump over the moon."

In the various provinces there are, also, certain words where the vowel sounds vary in length or roundness from common usage. Some of these are such words as spoon, roof, room, road, and school, which are often pronounced almost exactly as if spelled spun, ruff, rum, rudd, and schull. These examples are quite evidently New England in origin, and were no doubt brought over with the immigration which followed the expulsion of the Acadians. There is also noticeable a tendency in some sections where oysters are abundant to refer to this delicious bivalve as the "eyester." Consequently there are "eyester" beds, "eyester" boats, and "eyester" tongs, which merely indicates a provincial habit, rather than any strain of Hibernian blood.

Further differences of expression are noticeable on the solemn occasion of funeral obsequies. In this respect New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island refer to those who are placed in charge of the remains as "pall-bearers," while in large sections of Nova Scotia the word "under-bearer" is in common use. The former

term is doubtless derived from the ancient custom of covering the coffin with a black drapery called a "pall," while the latter, probably, originated from the old English practice of supporting the coffin upon the shoulders of the bearers.

There are many expressions confined to more restricted areas among people whose mother-tongue is other than English. These can hardly be called provincialisms, though they are peculiar to considerable groups of people. Many of these expressions are extremely quaint, and only illustrate the difficulty in overcoming a native idiom and accent. Among these most peculiar are those which are heard among people of French, Gaelic, or German origin. Space will not permit the reproduction of many of these peculiarities, but one may be introduced to indicate a common tendency among the Germans of Nova Scotia. A venerable father, speaking at a religious meeting, in quoting the well-known passage relating to "vowing unto the Lord," said: "Better not to wow a wov unto the Lord than wov and not pay." This is a characteristic difficulty among the older people.

Before bringing this article to a close, reference must be made to a few somewhat peculiar expressions found on the western border of New Brunswick, where it adjoins the State of Maine. Here the shafts of a carriage or sleigh are generally spoken of as the "thills" and sometimes "fills." Both of these expressions are probably corruptions of "felloes." In this region also the word "shoat" is commonly made use of in referring to young pigs, but nowhere else in the Eastern Provinces. Both of these expressions are decidedly American, and like many other things good, bad and indifferent have been borrowed from across the border.

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*In the June number Mr. Wightman will tell about peculiarities of Maritime place names.*