

recording this, as both the works alluded to are re-published in the New Year Volume, presented to subscribers, by the publishers of the "Foyer Canadien," and because such a circumstance does honor to the country. I take particular pleasure in noticing this honorable fact, because it also effectually bears on a stupid assertion not altogether uncommon, viz : That French Canadians speak nothing but *patois*—whereas, if the whole truth were known, it would appear that our peasantry talk* better French, than does one-half of the rural population of France ; in fact, it is not rare to find the French peasantry of one Department, scarcely able to understand the idiom of the corresponding class in another Department. Several causes might be adduced in explaining this singular feature ; the first settlers in Canada had left France about the time when literature was at its zenith, and when the language was singularly beautiful. Whatever efforts may have been made in literature by modern France, no writer since the great revolution, has surpassed Corneille, Racine, Boileau, Voltaire or Sevigné, in each of their several departments ; the language of the peasantry in New France has remained what it was two-hundred years ago ; it is not purer, but it is just as pure. If on one hand the French element in Canada has escaped the disorganizing influence of the revolutionary era of '89, on the other hand, it has received the infusion of no new blood ; the race is essentially conservative, too much so, perhaps, according to men of the 19th century ; still as the component part of a great nationality, who could complain of its being too cohesive ; who, on looking across the line, and viewing democracy in full rout, and possibly a renewal of the horrors of '89, in this land of the West, close at hand ; who would not prefer at least one million of staunch conservative people, who under proper treatment would understand loyalty to their Sovereign, as the Vendéens did, to a God-forsaken, atheistical, democratic rabble, worshipping no other deity than the Almighty dollar ?

But this is wandering away from the subject which heads this sketch ;
revenons a nos moutons.

There is, in this country, a spice of drollery about some transformations of names, worthy of notice. These queer changes do not necessarily imply abject ignorance in the class which adopts them. We

* In connection with this fact, it appears that the French Canadians have alone kept in their original purity the simple old Norman songs, which their ancestors brought into the country ; that the same popular ballads have become so altered in France by time, that a request has been sent out to Canada to have them collected in their original purity. An eloquent young Professor of the Laval University has turned his attention to the subject.