

less comprehensible slang.¹ If there is anyone qualified to criticise with discernment, the language of Jean Baptiste, it is he whose maternal tongue is French, and not certain graduates of high schools who have only a superficial knowledge of the French language and, most of the time, do not even understand it. Well, what do the French of France, who have visited Canada and have come in contact with our people, say of the French Canadian patois? May I be excused if, in multiplying quotations, I seem to abuse the privilege? But, is there a more efficient way of forcing silence upon our adversaries than to make them face a number of undeniable testimonies coming only from those really qualified to appreciate the value of our language?

Xavier Marmier, of the French Academy, wrote in 1866, "They keep in the practice of our language in Canada, that elegance, that sort of atticism of the Great Century. The people themselves speak it quite correctly, and have no patois".² Rameau de Saint-Père, the historian of "la France aux Colonies" wrote for his part, "On the banks of the St-Lawrence our language has no more degenerated than our character".³ Ampère, the great French savant, also wrote, "To find living again in the language, the traditions of the Great Century, one must go to Canada".⁴ H. de Lamotte, the novel-writer who enchanted our childhood, wrote in 1879, "One soon hears the sweet speech of France, enhanced and not depreciated, by a peculiar accent. . . One understands that an isolation of one hundred years has preserved the integrity of the language and its expressions in use during the first half of the eighteenth century".⁵ Mr. Christophe

¹ An English periodical, *The Saturday Review* stated, on March the 15th 1919, in an article entitled *The Decline of English* "The language is horribly stuffed with unintelligible slang from America and the Colonies. A dramatically familiar form of address is adopted in writing, and everything is contracted. . . The deterioration of the English language. . . is even more noticeable in the United States and the Colonies."

² *Lettres sur l'Amérique*, vol. I p. 95.

³ *La France aux colonies*, vol. II, p. 208.

⁴ *Promenades en Amérique*, vol. I, p. 109.

⁵ *Cinq mois chez les Français d'Amérique*, p. 29.