

do also in Scotland the Highlander and the Lowlander, and in Ireland the Ulster man and the man of Cork. The cosmopolitanism of the new world tends to the obliteration of the provincialisms of the old, and yet striking contrasts in speech are represented in the different states of the American Union, as well as in the different Canadian provinces. It has been asserted that an expert can readily tell to what particular state a man belongs by noting his speech in a brief conversation. Within certain limits this is undoubtedly true.

If, therefore, there are in the states of the American Republic and the counties of England speech peculiarities to distinguish one from another, it would not be surprising to find some of these among ourselves. Indeed, it would be strange if we should not, as we have a similar origin and have been touched by the same influences. These influencing factors are chiefly old-world environment, insularity in the new, and the mingling of peoples of different race origin. Be it remembered, however, that Canadians as a whole have the reputation of speaking the English language with as much purity and correctness as any part of the Empire or Anglo-Saxon world. In this comparatively high standard, the Maritime Provinces show to good advantage, and the few provincialisms about to be referred to do not as a rule appear in the form of corruptions; they are chiefly of interest as indicating the origin of the people and the process of their fusion. Generally speaking, such provincialisms as exist are found outside the centres of population, though not wholly so.

In the two island sections of the Maritime Provinces, for instance, we notice a peculiar use of the word "whatever." This is, of course, a perfectly proper word, used on proper occasions, but the use which is generally made of it in these sections is, to say the least, peculiar. It seems to be employed as a terminal

expression, for the purpose of lending emphasis to what has been said. It is in general use throughout the country districts and by most all classes of the population. It is also found in many combinations, of which the following may be given as a few examples:

"This is a fine day *whatever*."

"The boat is late to-night *whatever*."

"That's a fine horse *whatever*."

Thus these expressions go through the whole round of ordinary conversation.

A somewhat amusing illustration of its extreme use is here given: The clerk of a certain church was sometimes a little slow in giving the "Amen" responses as he followed the parson through the service, but what he lacked in promptness he sought to make up in emphasis, so with becoming solemnity he, in time, caught up to the parson by saying "Amen, *whatever*."

I do not remember ever having heard this word used in this peculiar way in any other part of the Maritime Provinces. It is clearly Highland Scottish in its origin, and was undoubtedly introduced by the large colonies of Highlanders who settled in Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton more than a century ago. But, while most of their peculiarly Highland customs and costumes are either dead or dying—even their beloved Gaelic—this expression seems more tenacious of life than the names of the people who brought it to the country. It is now grafted into the common speech of the Englishman, Lowlander, Irishman, and even the Frenchman has found a way to get his tongue around it.

There is also noticeable in the island province a somewhat peculiar and local use of the word "bush." A "bush" in the mainland provinces would, generally speaking, convey no other meaning than that of a small tree, whereas on the island it carries the idea of a more or less exten-