

legend was a man who, strangely enough, deeply loved French-Canadians, Drummond, the author of "The Habitant". Many of us are all too prone to accept anglicisms, and nothing is easier than to take off the language of those who do not speak correctly. That is exactly what Drummond did.

I do admit that the language we speak is not faultless nor free from archaisms and the same applies to the language spoken in England by Englishmen and in France by Frenchmen.

Hon. Mr. Dupuis: Especially in Paris!

Hon. Mr. David: But to hear someone tell us here that because we do not speak Parisian French we speak a poor French, this is beyond me! Mr. Speaker, the *Comédie Française*, in Paris, is the place where French is most correctly pronounced and most clearly spoken and recited, and I challenge anyone to find in the pronunciation of the artists the least so-called "Parisian" accent. I do not want to be taxed with conceit or boasting, but I say that those masters of diction and elocution speak the most beautiful French in the world—the French spoken in Touraine. One may say that I am exaggerating, nevertheless, I say that the French spoken throughout Canada compares not unfavourably with that of Tours.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. David: Please bear with me as I still have a few words to add. If I have resented so much the remarks of the honourable senator, it is because, Mr. Speaker, the French I speak, which may not be found perfect, I have learned it on my Acadian mother's knees. Further during the seven or eight trips I have made to France—I am not speaking out of vanity but out of legitimate pride—I have had the opportunity to speak alongside French speakers who, I admit in all humility, in no way made me feel inferior to them. What I am saying for myself, I could say with greater reason for ten, fifteen, twenty or a hundred of my compatriots who have given lectures at the Sorbonne or throughout France. I dare not name any, lest I forget some.

Let me tell you a story. Quite a long time ago, when I was Secretary of the Province of Quebec, a professor of the University of Oxford, a very smart and erudite Englishman who spoke, I believe, a better French than the honourable senator from Calgary, came to see me in Quebec city. After we had discussed many questions—education, language—I took the liberty of asking him what he thought

of the English spoken in Canada. Mr. Speaker, I ask your permission not to repeat his answer.

If my honourable friend from Calgary wishes to hear patois, I will tell him where to go. It is not difficult. Let him go to France, to certain parts of Brittany, Provence and Auvergne, to Marseilles, to the country of the Basques or to Alsace, and he will surely not understand some of the French that is spoken there.

I say, convinced that my statement cannot be contradicted, that a Frenchman who travels across Canada, from east to west and from north to south, will make himself understood and will understand the French spoken by French-Canadians or Acadians.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. David: I do not wish to prolong this statement of facts unnecessarily. I wish to point out, however, that if our French is so poor a protest will have to be made to the government of the province of Ontario which has for some years entrusted to French Canadians the teaching of French in its high schools. I do not understand how the province of Ontario would tolerate the teaching of a patois in its schools.

Hon. Mr. Lacasse: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. David: I am about to conclude, but another incident deserves to be mentioned. It was on the occasion of a lecture given by Mr. Labori, an attorney in the Dreyfus case which had divided France. I was talking with Mr. Labori after his lecture when an old lady told him in a language which was neither French nor English: "You know, sir, we understand all that you say, but the French Canadians, here, I do not understand them; for I learned French in Paris". Turning his head towards me, Mr. Labori asked: "What is she saying?"

There is in this house at least one English-speaking senator who speaks French both correctly and fluently, and since he understands it well, I am sure he did not miss a single word of the remarks made in French by the senator from Gloucester (Hon. M. Veniot). I am speaking of the honourable senator from Inkerman (Hon. Mr. Hugessen).

That is the difference between the one who knows a language and is able to speak it and the one who does not know it and dares to mention it. And, as my final word, I say that every English-speaking person who does not understand French should at least refrain from making such unfair and uncalled for remarks.