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MARITIME PROVINCIALISMS AND CONTRASTS

WORDS, PHRASES AND EXPRESSIONS

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It is proposed to give a short series of articles under the above general heading, touching various phases of life and interest in the Maritime Provinces. These articles pertain to such subjects as words, phrases, and expressions; place names, political and civic practices, common customs, and flora and fauna. The chief purpose in each will be to show some of the sectional or provincial peculiarities.

The Maritime Provinces of Canada, though comparatively small in area and intimately united socially and otherwise, have, nevertheless, many striking contrasts historically, geographically and commercially, which give them each characteristics and individuality of their own. But now that communication is easier, there is a greater commingling of population, and many of the present distinctions are likely to disappear gradually. It is therefore of interest to note these various distinctive differences before they are swept away by the unifying process now at work. The fact, too, that Maritime Union periodically comes to the front as a subject for practical discussion gives additional interest to this subject. The open vote is still practised in Prince Edward Island. While the secret ballot is strongly advocated by many, there are those who as stoutly defend it as being the expression of British openness and independence. Thus each province illustrates in one way or another a conservatism in clinging to old forms: New Brunswick with its parishes, Nova Scotia with its second legislative chamber, and Prince Edward Island with its antiquated ballot. But, despite these peculiar contrasts found in all phases of the governmental machinery, each province seeks to outdo the other in loyalty to the Crown of Britain, and, let us hope, also in the art of economic and honest government.—The Author.

PROVINCIALISMS of speech exist to a greater or lesser extent in all languages, amounting in some cases to dialectic differences. We have ancient and even classical precedent for this: the variations of the Doric and Attic Greek forms as compared with the classic. Scripture also informs us that the Apostle Peter was detected, on the occasion of his denial, by the peculiarities of his Galilean speech. These facts

should be at least sufficient to clothe the subject with respectability and absolve it from the charge of vulgarity.

Provincialisms in England, though probably disappearing, are still very common. It is claimed that those intimately acquainted with old country conditions can tell the county to which any man belongs by his speech. The Cockney and the Devonshire man present strong linguistic contrasts, as