

create and which science claims".¹ Mr. Faguet concluded thus in the *Gaulois*,² an article he dedicated, not long ago, to French speaking people : "Ist. — The language they speak, like all excentric languages, that is to say, far from the centre, has every chance in the world of being excellent because it is composed of archaisms. Such is the French of Geneva, of Lausanne, and such is the French of Canada. Let them not distrust their provincialisms too much. . . 2nd. Let them be persuaded that everything from the 17th century, even if it has fallen into desuetude, is excellent, is French of good stock, of good standard and irreprehensible. 3rd. Whatever comes from the 18th century is always dubious. 4th. Whatever comes from the 19th century is no authority by itself and must be verified by looking to the 17th century for reference. 5th. Finally, the worst language of France is the one spoken in Paris."

Those whose delicate ears are offended by our archaic language and who chide us on this subject, would do well not to forget that our fathers left France two or three centuries ago, that we have been separated from them for one hundred and fifty years and that, down to the middle of the last century, we had not the slightest contact with our ancient mother country. We were left to our own strength and resources. The importation of French books to Canada was even severely prohibited during three fourths of the century following the Cession.³ If, in spite of all these obstacles, Jean Baptiste had not lovingly and jealously conserved his tongue, the writers of France would not find, as they do with naive astonishment the survival of their language on the banks of the St-Lawrence, and would not celebrate what one of them has justly called "the Canadian miracle". It is possible, after all, that the French Canadians do not speak a patois as one sometimes hears, but it is certain they have not the French accent. Mr. François Veillot did justice to the

¹ N. Legendre, op. cited p. 40.

² Quoted in *Le Bulletin du Parler français*, vol. 1, p. 86. The *Gaulois*, a leading daily paper, Paris.

³ Abbé Camille Roy : *Nos origines littéraires*, p. 23.