

with features and complexion corresponding to those of the foreign strain, of Saxon fairness, or freckled, with massive red beard, answering to English, Scotch, and Irish names, and yet unable to speak a word of English. Some of the farmers boast of descent from families of the old nobility of France, who, without means to leave Canada after the cession, were forced to settle down on farms among their former servants and dependents. Those nobly descended are easily distinguished by their courtly bearing and dignity of manners, apart from their aristocratic names.

The women (*créatures* as the men call them), while not generally pretty, are mostly pleasant-faced brunettes, whose dark hair and dark brown eyes form a considerable part of a beauty's endowment. They are usually strong, quiet in movement, inclining to be stout as they advance in years. Many of them attract by their agreeable, kindly expression, though of course some of them are impulsive enough. They are simple-minded, virtuous, and pious, with frankness of manner. They lead a primitive life, with sturdy labors through the day and early evening. When not engaged in the common home-duties of caring for the children, cooking, or attending to the cattle, or helping the men in the fields during harvest-time, they sew, spin, weave, and knit. Many of them clothe the whole family by their industry, requiring but little from the stores and cities. In their habits, cleanliness rules conspicuously, the fact impressing any stranger who may visit their houses. They are orderly as well. They crave but little mental stimulus; they read almost nothing but their Prayer-Books, which explains their similarity of ideas, as well as of sympathies, social, religious, and national. But the dwellers near the cities show a difference in those habits and feelings of late years, the interchange of opinion being here wider, more varied, and modern, strangers and travelers touching their long dormant thought with notable influence.

It has been stated somewhere, that "One of the best means of knowing the character of a people is a knowledge of their language." With this truism in mind I desire to correct certain erroneous impressions which exist concerning the language of the French Canadians. Among the British portion of the population in Canada and the people of the United States, the belief is wide-spread that they speak a mongrel dialect—a *patois*. It is true that the uneducated speak ungrammatically and inelegantly, use old words belonging to the dialects of Normandy, Picardy, and Brittany, and often employ words in their old relation instead of the new; but this does not constitute a *patois*, such as we hear in many of the provinces of France, where people of one district cannot understand the language of those living in an adjoining one.