

# *Meeting the French-Canadian Half-Way*

## **A TALK**

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by

**C. E. A. HOLMES, B. A.,**  
*Editor of "Publicity"*

*"There are two and a quarter  
million French-Canadians -----  
what are YOU doing to get  
their trade?"*

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**C. E. A. HOLMES, B. A.**

*Editor of*

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# Meeting the French-Canadian Half - Way

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Sentiment enters very little into the make-up of an ad-man. He is and must be above all an accomplished and persistent opportunist. He must be alert-minded, liberal, open-hearted and companionable. The more an advertising man knows, the better advertising man he is.

There is no branch of knowledge, no detail of culture, that is not profitable for him to possess. He must keep in touch with the affairs of the world, the affairs of the country and of the locality where he lives.

Now the topic of today's address is precisely one on which the average English-speaking ad-man's knowledge is superficial, though the "subject matter" is quite close to us, since the two great races, English and French, have lived together on Canadian soil for nearly two centuries. Yet, there exists a misunderstanding between the English and French of Canada and it is that misunderstanding which I will endeavor to dispel.

I am fully aware that the race question is one that is very difficult to handle at the present time and if I were not addressing ad-men, men who are real, genuine, big, broad and keen—men who are above petty prejudices—men whose ambition is to increase their usefulness to the community in which they live, I would not dare speak upon this burning question.

But here are gathered men whose motto is "Truth"; whose aim is to develop business in Canada.— a double reason why I have no hesitancy in plunging right into my subject without any further preamble.

## Our Unjustified Animosity Against French-Speaking Canadians

One of the essentials of salesmanship, whether it be in person or on paper, is to know your prospect — to know how to approach him.

Now, in our public of a little over eight million individuals, there are 2,225,000 French-Canadians whose tastes, likes and dislikes are not the same as those of scions of the English race, whose education is based upon systems applicable to their needs and in keeping with their ideal, whose legal and moral standards are measured according to a different conception of right and wrong, whose religious beliefs are those of their forefathers, whose literary tastes have been formed through their intellectual intercourse with France. They think less of money than we do, they have more regard for the amenities of life than we have. Taught by experience they are slow to give confidence, but once given it is complete.

They know us, while we do not know them and — it is useless to “pussy-foot” about saying it — *we do not like them*. We will not readily admit our animosity against the French-Canadians, yet, deep down in our hearts we know it exists.

It is an unreasoning animosity, an animosity which lacks common sense, an animosity which is difficult of analysis and explanation. Ask, as I have frequently done, to the many Francophobes why this sentiment exists, and you will get no conclusive answer.

There are elements in this animosity, nevertheless, which can be perceived on analysis. They are elements both grave and gay and may be itemized thus :

Passionate adoration of England, which has as its concomitant a belief that the French-Canadian is everything that the Englishman is not, and therefore to be disliked ;

A belief that the French-Canadian is densely ignorant and uncultured ;

A belief that French-Canadian politicians are uncouth and crooked ;

A belief that the French-Canadian is not as good as an Englishman — this being close kin to the old feeling in England that no frog-eater from France could possibly be as good as an Englishman.

Even the attitude, of the better class English-Canadian is that the French-Canadian is to be disdained and... tolerated.

With the members of the working class who have the French-Canadian aversion, the standard designation is “d—— Frenchman !”

Of course there are exceptions and some Englishmen, notably Dr. Drummond and Sir Gilbert Parker, have learned to understand and love those polite, hospitable, generous and improvident French-Canadians.

You must bear in mind that my remarks have not been said with a view of casting reflections on English-Canadians. It is a broad generalization of the characteristic attitude of the English-Canadian towards his French co-citizen — it is a hasty picture drawn simply to point out that this attitude is due to a misunderstanding of the French-Canadian mentality.

The French-Canadians, I will admit, are a funny lot of people to those who do not understand them. The French explorers have left behind them a legend unrivall-

ed in the world's annals for audacity and perseverance. They are their descendants; if they have inherited some of their defects, and big ones, they have also the noble qualities that make the French people the most chivalrous of Europe, with a history filled with great examples of patriotism and heroic achievements. They are as they are, and they like to be rubbed the right way. They are quick in giving, they are very kind, they are willing to meet more than half way. They will go forward to meet their man—but then they crave for a smile, for a kind word. We, of the English race, must prove ourselves their friends upon terms of equality and honor.

But in order to do so, we must get rid of our self-sufficiency and our imagination that we have nothing to learn. To establish successful business relations with a people, we must know something of their history and life, of their language, manners and customs. When these cardinal principles are fairly understood, the desired end is much more easily attained. Incidentally, this desire to know the French-Canadian, will grow and ripen into a better reciprocal understanding and feeling of friendliness, and it is only when we fully understand the French-Canadians that a real "Bonne Entente" can exist between the two great races that people the Dominion.

## Facts and Figures Relative to the French-Canadian Element of Population.

Modern business is based on FACTS. Rule of thumb and guess work are discredited today. More and more knowledge, intimate knowledge of the field to be covered is essential to success, yet, how very few manufacturers outside of our province realize the importance of the French-Canadian element in the population of Canada and the United-States.

Most of them are aware of the fact that a certain percentage of the people of Canada and New England are French, but that percentage varies according to vague reports of salesmen or the impression obtained after a few days' sojourn in Montreal or old Quebec, where after having seen the French-Canadian in his natural habitat, they conclude that his trade is worth little going after. They classify him as a "foreigner", giving to the word the accepted meaning of a mental inferior, along with the Ruthenians, the Doukhobors, the Poles or the Finns.

So, let us study briefly the numerical importance of the French-Canadians on this continent. Statistics are tiresome to listen to, yet figures are convincing, and I feel sure that if you will have the patience to listen to this brief enumeration of facts and statistics, you will be startled when you realize how little you really knew about the French-Canadian and his place in America.

First, let us take Canada :

How many of you realize that English is the native

language of only *about half* of Canada's population of eight millions?

Well, it is a fact: Almost *a third* of the total population is composed of French-speaking people — the remainder, almost *a million and a half*, are foreigners, including every race from Arab to Turk.

Canada's largest province is that of Quebec. More than 80% of the total population of Quebec province (or 1,605,339) is composed of French-Canadians.

There are 19,825 French-Canadians in Alberta, 8,967 in British Columbia, 98,611 in New Brunswick, 51,746 in Nova Scotia, 202,442 in Ontario, 13,117 in Prince Edward Island, 23,251 in Saskatchewan, 482 in Yukon and 226 in the Western Territories.

70% of Montreal's population of 760,000 (or 532,000) are French-Canadians. In fact Montreal is the fourth French city in the world being surpassed only by Paris, Marseilles and Lyons.

More than 90% of Quebec city's population is French — to be exact there are 90,650 French-Canadians out of 103,246 inhabitants in Quebec city.

The figures I have read off to you may be startling — but here are some that may seem more extraordinary, for very few Anglo-Saxons in Canada or even in the United States have thought that the French-Canadians numerically amounted to much in the American republic

Yet, there are *one million seven hundred and fifty thousand* French-Canadians in the neighboring republic. This number exceeds the population of each of 28 of the 49 states and territories in the Union. Most of these French-Canadians are located in New England, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and the North-West.

Do you know that in New England the French-Canadians are the predominating element of population in Fall River and New-Bedford, Mass.; in Biddeford, Lewiston and Watertown, Me., in Woonsocket, R. I.?

Do you know that they constitute more than one-half of the population of Fitchburg, Mass., Manchester and Nashua, N. H.; More than a third of the total population of Haverhill, Holyoke and Marlboro, Mass.; Pawtucket and Central Falls, R. I.?

These figures amaze you. I fully realize the large proportion of New England's population in whose veins flows still unmixed and pure the blood of France (for race integrity is one of the strongest characteristics of the French-Canadians) must surprise one who has not had special occasion to study the question.

There is another still more startling fact about the French-Canadians — they have not been "assimilated", they have kept their identity and language.

In Canada, the use of French is a constitutional right, not a privilege. As a matter of *right* French is an official language in the whole of Canada on a par with the English language — and, constitutionally, the French-Canadians could demand acknowledgement of the French language on postage stamps and money, if they cared to.

With such acquired rights it cannot be surprising that, in Canada, they have kept their language.

But in the United States, where they have no such rights, the startling fact remains that whilst the sturdy Norwegians, Swedes and Germans, as well as all other races, have been easily assimilated in the "American melting pot", the French-Canadians have kept their identity and especially, as the chief means to that end, their language. They have today in the United-States, schools and educational institutions of their own and a press which includes no less than 14 daily papers, 126 weeklies, having an aggregate circulation of 209,784 copies per issue.

When one is aware that Louisiana was a French colony until 1803, that French was recognized as an official language there until 1898 and that the French influence in that state has been constantly waning until it has almost disappeared, save in New Orleans, where it still manages to make a showing; it seems that the inevitable will happen to the French-Canadians — that their race will disappear — specially so when we know that in St. Domingo, Haiti and others parts of the West Indies, until comparatively recent date French possessions, the language spoken by the natives has degenerated into "creole French", a mere jargon.

Yet the fact remains that no other French colony has so endured and remained French as that of Canada, and this in spite of English rule and surroundings.

Surely these French-Canadians are worth studying to discover the secret of the strange vitality of their race. But, in order to do so with an open mind, we must at once discard the idea that they are uncultured, uneducated, and cease to apply to them the epithet of "aliens" — the word in itself may not be truly humiliating, yet any one to whom it is applied is justified in feeling and resenting the spirit in which it is generally uttered.

When we speak of the French-Canadians we must remember that they are the direct descendants of the old pioneers of New France, people whose enterprise, industry, intelligence and patriotism have been among the most important factors of the development of the new world. They belong to that race of energetic men who were the first settlers of the American Western States, at a time when colonizing in those wild prairies meant something more than breaking the ground and raising a crop for shipment to Eastern points; they are the kindred of those courageous pioneers who have either christened or given their own names to the most important cities of the glorious West.

Mr. Frank Shallow, an Irish-Canadian who publishes a French paper in Montreal, recently developed a new phase in the study of the French-Canadian race: "Strange as it may seem", writes Mr. Shallow, "the French-Canadian can be truly said to be almost an Englishman! The English call themselves Saxons, but their poets sing of their Norman blood and call it their bluest strain. If we study the first pages of Canadian history, we find that most of the French colonists who came to Canada originated from the seaport towns of

Normandy and this ethnological relation to the Englishman has been rendered more intimate by a long association with Anglo-Saxons in Canada as well as the United States."

The individual French-Canadian hardly realizes this affinity, but when he travels, while he loves Paris, as in fact we all do, he is more at home in London, or even New York.

The French-Canadian is not mentally inferior to those amongst whom he lives. His blood is clean and cool and his nerves good—as a consequence he is good-tempered and enthusiastic.

He is broad-minded and appreciative. He has been forced to study and admire people who neither studied nor admired him.

In the United States he has acquired English, without abandoning his own native language—the very fact that necessity forced him to learn two languages implies some mental superiority.

## The French-Canadian's Struggle to Obtain Official Recognition for his Language.

The French-Canadian race has its own peculiar ideals and these ideals are not sordid, as a brief study of their history will show.

In 1760 the French settlement in America extended from the extreme North of Canada to the mouth of the Mississippi.

Louis XV, a careless monarch, dallying with Madame de Pompadour, had little thought of Canada, unless it be as "only a few acres of snow" (in accordance with Voltaire's contemptuous phrase) that were not worth saving. He had exhausted the finances and prostrated the industry of France so that when the subsidies necessary to maintain a small army in Canada were required, they were not forthcoming, and as a result the few delapidated French regiments under Montcalm were defeated by the well-disciplined English troops under Wolfe. This defeat determined the ascendancy of the Anglo-Saxon race in the New World. Then, the French-Canadians, who discovered and settled the country they lived in, embroiled in a struggle not of their seeking and over which they had no control, were finally sacrificed to the sensual proclivities of a king who had more love for the gown of a courtesan than for the flag of France.

After the signature of the treaty of Paris (Feb. 10, 1763) they were shamefully abandoned by the better class of Frenchmen: the nobility and the "bureaucratie"—in fact all who had sufficient funds to do so left Canada to return to France.

63,000 people of the poorer classes, soldiers of fortune and laborers, remained in Canada and it is they who formed the nucleus of the French-Canadian race.

Thus the poor French-Canadian was sent off with a kick instead of a blessing. Under French rule his conditions were made for him and he had to submit. A change



of allegiance came to which he had again to submit. He was abandoned by all his fellow-settlers who could afford to leave for the mother-country and was left alone, to his own resources, under a strange government. The one privilege that was granted him was the "assurance" that his language would be recognized in official or business transactions. This privilege he has never waived — through prosperity and adversity he has demanded that this constitutional right be respected. In 1837 he fought to keep it and would be contemptible if he abandoned his mother-tongue which has given him a tinge of old world idealism.

From 1764 to 1773, the succeeding governors, regardless of all promises, endeavored to deprive the French-Canadians of the use of their language, but when, in 1774, took place that gigantic uprising which gave to the United States their liberty, England saw that her interests in America were seriously menaced and remembered that the French-Canadians, that great race of fighters, might be used to advantage; so the Government proclaimed a charter which guaranteed the maintenance of the old French civil laws and granted to all French-Canadians full privileges as citizens.

The text-books used in the schools of both Canada and the United-States to teach history, do not do justice to the important part played by French-Canadians in the succession of wars that culminated in the campaign of 1812; they should be changed to teach the rising generation what was the true state of affairs in connection with the early troubles between the American colonies and England, for it is an undeniable fact (though it is not to be found in popular histories) that if, in 1775, Great Britain was able to maintain her dominion in Canada, it was thanks to the devotion of French-Canadians.

As soon as the English felt that they had nothing more to fear from the Americans, they renewed their persecutions against the French-Canadians, depriving them anew of the use of their language. It was only the fear of a new invasion that induced them, in 1791, to divide Canada into two provinces and to again assure the French-Canadians that their language and laws would be respected.

No sooner had this new danger passed away than the oppressive tactics were resumed by the English governors, who went so far as to prohibit the importation into Canada of books printed in the French language and, to prevent all possible intercourse between the French people of France and those of Canada, refused to old-country Frenchmen the privilege of visiting Lower Canada; thus, in 1795, M. de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt, the well-known French writer and traveller was refused permission of entering the lower province.

In 1806 "Le Canadien," the first newspaper printed in the French language in Canada, appeared and four years later its proprietors were sentenced to jail for protesting against the tyranny to which French-Canadians were subjected.

In 1813 the United States began a serious attack on Lower Canada, and the English fully realizing that their

salvation was in the hands of the French-Canadians, renewed their fallacious promises. As a result 350 French-Canadian sharpshooters, under Colonel de Salaberry, met and defeated at Chateauguay the American troops, 3500 strong, under General Wilkinson.

The English Governor Prevost tried to rob de Salaberry of his laurels by claiming that he, and not Salaberry, had commanded the British troops in this circumstance, but the French-Canadian commander was generally recognized as the hero who saved Lower Canada and he received a commemorative gold medal, was given the Order of Bath and the official thanks of the Parliament.

No sooner had peace been restored than the English governors renewed their oppressions and a new era of persecutions began which culminated in the insurrection of 1837, Louis Joseph Papineau being the leader in Lower Canada.

The insurrectionists were defeated and scattered at Ste-Eustache and those who were not hanged or deported escaped to the United States.

Though the insurrection was not a military success, it nevertheless accomplished the noble and laudable object it had in view, since it brought about the present constitution and liberties which English and French alike enjoy in Canada.

## The French-Canadian Today.

The 63,000 French-Canadians of 1763 have become a race 3,975,000 strong — 2,225,000 of which have remained in Canada and 1,750,000 have gone to the United States. Can you still speak disdainfully of this wonderful race which, notwithstanding the fact that for nearly a century and a half it has been the victim of a train of circumstances begotten of misgovernment, national prejudices and revenge has wonderfully developed and progressed and has kept intact the heritage of its forefathers — its language.

Let us now study the French-Canadian as he is today.

If happiness is taken as a standard of success, the French-Canadian is unquestionably successful. Yet, some maintain that the indices of success are the leading men, the accumulation of wealth, the contribution to the science of men. How does the French-Canadian stand when studied from those points of view?

In politics the French-Canadian is a born leader. In Canada his place in public life is well recognized: Papineau, Lafontaine, Cartier, Morin, Mercier, Chappéau and Laurier have contributed to the present status of the Dominion. Aram Pothier, former governor of Rhode-Island, Sansouci, the present lieutenant-governor of the same State; Hon. Hugo Dubuque and Pelletier of Massachusetts, are fair examples of what French-Canadians can do in American politics. In fact there are no less than fifty state senators and representatives that are of French-Canadian origin and the mayors of a half-dozen New England cities are French-Canadians by birth or parentage.

What is the French-Canadian's place in business? The French-Canadian has inherited the business qualities of his Norman ancestors and he is only handicapped by lack of opportunity and capital to take in the circles of business the same notable place he has taken in public life. In those lines of business enterprise in which he has managed to get a foothold, he has rapidly gone to the front: The four largest wholesale grocery establishments in Canada are owned by French-Canadians; the largest corset manufacturing business in the world belongs to a French-Canadian; the largest boot and shoe factory in the United States, is owned by a French-Canadian.

What is the French-Canadian's place in art? The French-Canadian has not yet had time to turn his attention to art — he has been too busy, fighting for the necessities of life — yet, in Music, there is Albani, the world-renowned prima-donna of the last decade, who in private life was Emma Lajeunesse of Chambly; there is Francis Archambault, the famous baritone of Covent Garden; there is Sophie Charlebois, the lyric soprano of La Scala, Milano; there is the great diva Edvina (née Juliette Martin); there is Olga Pawloska (née Irène Lévi); there is Beatrice Lapalme of the Paris Opéra Comique; there is Paul Dufault, who accompanied Lillian Nordica in world-wide concert tours; there is Paul Plamondon, Joseph Saucier, Dupuis and a score of others who have won international fame and whose names I cannot instantly call to mind.

In plastic art, there is Philippe Hébert, whose statues not only adorn many squares of Montreal and Quebec but also several "places publiques" of continental Europe; there is Laliberté whose work has been praised by the greatest art connoisseurs.

In painting there is Philippe Boileau, whom Americans know as the painter "par excellence" of the typical American woman. He is always spoken of as the great American painter, notwithstanding the fact that he was born in the little city of Levis, opposite Quebec.

Possibly the most important and most sought for commission to be given in the United States is the painting of the official portrait of a president of the United States for the White House gallery. Théodore Dubé, a French-Canadian, born in a little village of the North shore of the St-Lawrence, was given the commission of painting the official picture of President Woodrow Wilson for the executive mansion. In the same field of art there are Huot, Côté, Gagnon and many others who have been praised by the leading French art critiques.

Among the leading virtuosi of French-Canadian birth there is Guillaume Couture of whom Saint-Saens said he was one of the best exponents of musical culture; there is Emiliano Renaud, a pianist of remarkable technique who toured America with Emma Calvé; there is Alfred Laliberté, a pupil of Scriabine, who, for a time was leader of the orchestra of the St-Petersburg Grand Opera; there is Rosario Bourdon, a 'cellist of no mean merit, there is Ernest Gagnon a truly remarkable organist, there is Victoria Cartier, etc., etc.

As may be judged, notwithstanding the lack of encouragement, the limited number of connoisseurs in Canada, the French-Canadian race has produced some "artistes" really worthy of the name.

## Does the French-Canadian Speak REAL French?

What is the French-Canadian's place in literature?

Before I answer this query, I wish to explode that deep-rooted opinion which prevails both in Canada and the United States that French-Canadians do not speak French.

It is affirmed by no less an authority than Mr. Zidler, official representative of "L'Alliance Française" at the French Language Congress, held at Quebec in 1912, that French-Canadians speak excellent French. This statement was also confirmed by Mr. Gabriel Hano-taux, one of France's "forty immortals", who visited America as a guest of the United States during the Cham-plain tercentennial celebration.

Though I have lived many years in French Canada and several years in France and might consider myself fairly qualified to express an opinion on the language spoken by French-Canadians, I will cite the views of men whose competence cannot possibly be questioned.

First let us read an extract from Edgar Dupuis' book on Eastern Canada. Dupuis, it must be remembered, is a Frenchman who has written many books for the American public. In "Eastern Canada", page 87, he says :

"We are taught to believe in the States that the French spoken in Quebec is a patois, a corrupt vernacular, a compound of French, English, Indian and what not. I was led into the same belief by newspaper correspondents who don't know French from Arabic, and by a book of poems by Dr. Drummond, entitled "The Habitant". I carried that book with me during my pilgrimage through Quebec, and never found a single Canadian who used the dialect the talented English-Canadian poet so cleverly evolved out of his own brain."

In an interview given to "Je Sais Tout", the great Parisian magazine, Maitre Labori, the celebrated French jurist who visited Montreal in 1913, expressed his opinion on the oft-debated point as to whether the French spoken by Canadians differs from that spoken in France. Maitre Labori is quoted as saying :

"The contempt which many Americans and Englishmen express for the French spoken by our Canadian brothers is very amusing. Canadian-French has a markedly rural accent which is neither that of Normandy, Picardy, the Champenois country nor Poitou, but which belongs a little to each of these. Yet nothing is more authentically French than the rich language religiously preserved by the sons of the earliest colonists."

"No doubt a few modern expressions such as "*char* for tramway and *fournaise* for furnace and some peculiarities of pronunciation deprive their speech of something of its charm, but the general effect is delightful and seductive, especially for a Frenchman. In one sense Canadian French, with its archaisms, its rural touch and the fact that it is spoken today as it was spoken in the past by those who carried it from the French provinces to Quebec is more truly French than the language of the Parisian boulevards.

"But many English-speaking persons who are apt to be deceived by appearances and from whom the charm of this tongue, so appealing to us, is hidden, treat it as a joke. One such said to me on the boat in a barbarous French which he thought extremely elegant: 'You will see, they speak a very poor French in Canada. When I go to Quebec, I am always taken for a Parisian.' The speaker was no fool either, yet he had no conception how funny his remarks sounded to me. The full absurdity of this observation only dawned upon me, when, upon disembarking at Quebec and talking to the port employees, the hack drivers and the customs officers, I could have fancied myself in the heart of France, in Rouen, Poitiers, Tours or Besancon."

I have heard it said that the best English is spoken in Boston — yet Boston is not in England. How is it then that the English-speaking Americans cannot conceive that good French can be spoken outside of France?

As a matter of fact there are ten or fifteen different patois or dialects spoken in certain provinces of France almost to the exclusion of French. In addition to the French language proper, there are two full-fledged languages with distinct grammar and literature — the Provençal or *Langued'Oc* and the Celtic of Brittany. Further, there is a marked difference in accentuation in speaking authentic French in the different sections of France; thus, the pronunciation of a Meridional is such that a Northern Frenchman will have difficulty in understanding his Southern interlocutor until his ear becomes attuned to the peculiar accentuation.

The best French is spoken in Orleans — not Paris, as some think. There is no such thing as "Parisian French", unless it be the "apache's" *argot* or slang. Those snobs who think they display superiority by claiming to speak "Parisian French" are making a statement as asinine as that of a French *poseur* who would claim to speak "Bowery English!"

Well-travelled men will quite naturally assent to the statement that good English is spoken outside of England — in Dublin, Edinboro or Boston, for instance; they will also admit that French is well spoken in Switzerland and Belgium. Since it is possible for them to conceive that a language may be excellently spoken outside of the country in which it originated, why won't they admit that the same thing could have happened in French Canada?

As a matter of fact, there is less difference between the best French spoken in France and that spoken by

the French-Canadian FARMER (mind you, I am not taking the cultured, educated French-Canadian as a comparison, but the plain farmer) than there is between the English language as spoken by a Vermont farmer and the average Bostonian. And, further, French-Canadians speak a more uniform French than do old country Frenchmen. A French-Canadian from Rimouski can converse with a French-Canadian from Montreal or Fall River and no difference in accentuation will be noticeable, whilst if you listen to a Bordelais, an Orleanais and an Auvergnat, speaking to each other in authentic French, you will not guess that they are speaking the one and same language, the accentuation of each being so markedly different from that of the other two.

Strange as it may seem the man who is to a great extent responsible for the prevailing opinion that French-Canadians speak a "patois", is one who greatly loved the French-Canadian race, Dr. Henry Drummond, who little dreamt that his "Habitant" poems would be taken to be written in French-Canadian dialect.

When Drummond came to Canada as a boy, from his native county of Leitrim, Ireland, he studied telegraphy and was given work as an operator at l'Abord-à-Plouffe, a little village near Montreal. It was there he came in contact with the amiable French-Canadian lumberjacks, whose native language he could not speak. The affability of the French-Canadian is proverbial. Seeing that young Drummond could not converse with them in French, they endeavored to make themselves understood by him by speaking a gibberish of French and English.

Young Drummond was greatly impressed by the picturesque way in which these people he was living with told their quaint tales of backwoods life and it is the way they spoke *to him* (and by no means the way they spoke among themselves) which he endeavored to weave into his writings.

Drummond's first tale, "The Wreck of the Julie Plante", had to sooner been published than it was widely reproduced and made its way throughout the length and breadth of the American continent. The old law of supply and demand governed — Drummond had found a new style which had taken the readers' fancy; publishers demanded more and so the author continued to produce poems in the same vein, taking his themes wherever he found them and rendering them in the Anglo-French gibberish that the public wanted. It may be a shock to some to learn that Pierre Leblanc, one of Drummond's heroes was, in real life, not a French-Canadian, but an out-and-out American, the Honorable Peter White of Marquette, Michigan — yet, in his poems, Dr. Drummond makes him talk in what is popularly and falsely known as "French-Canadian dialect."

Let us now revert to the topic of literature. A very limited number of French-Canadians have devoted their talents to writing, not that literary talent is lacking but because thoughtful and thoughtless readers alike seek intellectual food in books from France which are sold on the Canadian market at much lower prices than it is possible to produce French-Canadian books for, owing to the limitations of the French-Canadian field.

The few books by French-Canadian authors that have been published in France, such as those of Garneau, de Nevers, Morin, Charbonneau and a few others, were received there on the same footing as those by French authors.

Octave Cremazie, Louis Frechette and Pamphile Lemay, the poets, are read and translated abroad. Such authors as Sulte, de Boucherville, Tremblay, Desaulniers, de Montigny, etc., are also a credit to their country and the French language. Hundreds of French-Canadians are *officiers d'Academie*.

## The French-Canadian Mentality.

All business men knowing the foregoing facts will readily admit that the French language is an element of Canadian business — in the Province of Quebec it is as much the native language as English, more so in fact, since 80% of the total population is French-speaking.

Some of you who have come in contact with French-Canadian business men may be under the impression that a large percentage of French-Canadians understand and speak English and that consequently, they will see and be influenced by your English advertising.

This is not at all the case. Official statistics show that only 10% of the French-Canadians can speak or read English. 70% of the French-Canadians, it must be remembered, live in the villages and rural districts.

It is true, however, that practically all the French-Canadian business men in the large cities, such as Montreal and Quebec, have acquired the English language, but even they are little affected by advertising matter printed in English, because the language of the HOME (a name very dear to the French-Canadian) is French. Even if through force of circumstances they have passed the working hours of the day with their English brethren, once they reach home they are glad to lapse back to their mother-tongue.

In the French homes the plans of the family are discussed in French, the news of the day and the advertising columns of their French paper are read and the purchases of the morrow decided upon by the wife — among the French it is the woman who buys — if therefore she is to be interested in any particular product or commodity she must be appealed to in her home and in the home language—French.

Canada has been growing so rapidly that the Dominion's prosperity and boundless expansion caused Canadian business men to be somewhat careless as to how they advertised. They devoted a certain appropriation to advertising — the investment, as a whole, paid and they were satisfied.

We are, today, going through the processes of re-adjustment, logical arrangement and the elimination of waste. The business man of the hour must formulate order out of chaos — he must keep in exact touch with the situation throughout the country so as to get maximum results.

He must no longer deal in generalities — he must study his field in detail. So the question will naturally arise in his mind : " Is the French Canadian trade worth going after ? "

An analysis of the occupations of French-Canadians, as shown by the last census, will prove that, as a people, they are well worth cultivating :

36% are engaged in agricultural industries — and agriculture is the backbone of Canada's prosperity ;

24% are engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries — the highest paid class of trade in America at present ;

15% are in domestic and personal service ;

14% are engaged in trade and transportation ;

6% are engaged in professional pursuits ;

The remaining 5% belong to the fishing, lumbering, mining and miscellaneous industries, including the non-productive classes.

The mere enumeration of their occupations ought to prove that the French-Canadians are hard-working, intelligent and well-to-do. As a matter of fact they are quite as prosperous as their English-speaking compatriots and spend rather more freely. One big outstanding fact that proves the absolute necessity of reaching these people with your advertising is that, in the province of Quebec, there are four French potential buyers to one of Britannic or other origin.

Their wants are the same as those of their English-speaking co-citizens and they are quick to recognize a good article and ready to buy it, providing the manufacturer will go to the trouble and slight expense of telling them a few reason why they should buy.

## TRANSLATIONS and TRANSLATORS

### The Gentle Art of Wasting Money.

Some manufacturers are aware of the value of the French-Canadian market and have made it pay them a handsome profit — yet only a comparatively few brands of goods have been long and persistently advertised in French Canada. The field is practically unbroken for many lines of manufactured goods and if worked out as thoroughly as Ontario and others parts of Canada it would prove an El Dorado for those wise enough to take advantage of the opportunities it offers.

Some advertisers have, however, tried out the field and, not finding that it yielded satisfactory results, have abandoned it in despair. To these I will ask but one question : Have you given the same care and attention to the preparation of your French advertising as you have to your English copy ?

In looking over the French papers every day, I am more and more convinced that many campaigns eat up more money than they should in proportion to the results they bring. The cause is simple and applies to all advertising, whether it be in French, English or Scandinavian : Good space and poor copy are practically valueless.





The great majority of our English-Canadian and American manufacturers send out their English copy to the French newspapers with instructions to "translate them into French". Most of the large French papers maintain a special department for the translating of all advertisements for their columns. This service is, of course, free and as all business men know, nothing is so costly as so-called free services.

When we take into consideration the fact that the rates of French papers are lower, in proportion, than those of the English papers; that the cost of production of French papers is higher than the cost of English papers, since every line that goes into a French paper has to be set, whilst the English papers print page upon page of "boiler plate" or syndicate matter; that all press dispatches which, in the English papers, can be turned over to the linotype operator with little editing, must be translated in the French paper, it is easy to understand that the cost of the extra burden of translation must, per force, be reduced to a minimum. This at once eliminates the possibility of employing high-priced men in the non-productive translating department.

Let us admit, however, that a highly competent man is employed — a batch of copy is placed before him which he must translate in the shortest possible time (the value of a translator is estimated by the quantity of copy he can turn out in the shortest space of time).

Here are the problems this translator must face: 1st. He must make his copy fit the space, notwithstanding the fact that it takes at least 10% more space to express an English phrase in French; 2nd. He must translate word for word, as advertisers demand that their text be absolutely adhered to.

I have in my possession a letter from one of the largest advertising agencies in the United States, instructing a French newspaper to translate an ad that they were enclosing "in its entirety, without in any way abridging, transposing or in any other way changing the copy."

How could these instructions be followed? The translator must simply do the best he can and, without any willingness on his part, the effectiveness of the advertisement is lost in this transfusion from one language into another.

Some advertisers realizing that they have no means of knowing whether the body matter of their ads, as translated by the newspapers, was correct, have, of recent years had their own translating done and supplied the newspapers with what purports to be French plates.

95% of these plates are worse than any translating done by the newspapers. The copy produced by the newspaper may lack ginger but at least it is grammatical, whilst the supremely ridiculous mistakes made in the majority of plates supplied to the French papers have caused more hilarity than sold goods.

I have here a bunch of clippings from the French papers criticizing advertisements, booklets and circulars printed in what the manufacturers who paid for them thought was French. Such advertising matter discredits both firms and products because the French-Canadian very bitterly resents any slight that is paid his language.

This harmful result is caused by a firm trying to save ten or twenty dollars by having their English copy translated by some irresponsible ne'er do well, with little education in his own language and none at all in English, who uses the first equivalent that the lexicon gives for any English word he does not understand, or possibly having their translating done by some English-speaking school ma'am who has acquired a smattering of the French language by a few months in night school.

Just to cite an example : A well-known manufacturer of safety razors stated in one of his English ads, that "the blade of the Blank razor is as thin as a wafer". After the ad had gone through the translating process in some Toronto translating bureau, it appeared as follows in the French papers : "*Le lame du rasoir "X" est mince comme une hostie*". Now "hostie" is given in the lexicon as one of the equivalents of "wafer" — but the word "hostie" at once conveyed to the French-Canadian Catholic's mind the host in the sacrament of Eucharist.

Are any comments necessary ?

A translator with a superficial knowledge of the French language may, with the best of intentions, ruin not only the selling qualities of the ad, but provoke laughter and sneers. A huge volume could be filled with the barbarous translations that have come to my notice within a year.

Way back in the XVII century, John Dryden, the translator of Virgil, Horace, Ovid and other classics, said that "a translator that would write with any of the force of spirit of an original must never dwell on the words of his author. He ought to possess himself entirely and perfectly comprehend the genius and sense of his author, the nature of the subject and the terms of the art or subject treated of, and then he will express himself as justly and with as much life as if he wrote an original ; whereas he who copies word for word loses all the spirit in the tedious transfusion."

John Dryden's remarks are as true today as they were in 1680.

There is always danger that the average word for word translator will not comprehend the English original — and besides we must remember that more often than not many of our customary and technical expressions have no equivalent in French. A capable translator would in such cases paraphrase such expressions in a manner that will be intelligible to the French reader.

How can you expect to find a translator that will answer to Dryden's canon if you are only willing to pay 50 cents or less per 100 words for your translations ?

Good translators are few and far apart. It stands to reason that men able to produce good sales-getting French copy are naturally more disposed to use their talents to express their own views in their own way than those of others.

However, admitting that you have found the *rara avis*, you should give him considerable leeway in rendering the English original into appropriate idiomatic French — the French that is heard on the streets and in the homes, not the "high brow" French of the college professor.

If you want your French copy to be effective, your translator must be a French-Canadian or one who knows the traits and characteristics of these people so that he can produce copy that will read like one French-Canadian talking to another — and no French-Canadian expresses himself by translating words. The point I want to make is that your ad must not be an English advertisement expressed in French words, it must breathe out that atmosphere that is peculiar to the race it comes before.

I have read in the promotion matter sent out by a French paper that advertisements that are strong and effective in English are equally strong and effective when well translated into French.

This is not the truism it appears to be. The psychology of the French-Canadian is a quantity to be reckoned with. Lately there has been so much said about the human element in advertising that practically all ad-men agree that an ad without it is almost worthless. Now, it is foolish to attempt to impose our ways of thinking. You can't make an Englishman out of a French-Canadian no more than you can make a Yankee out of a Hottentot.

French-Canadians are not accustomed to the rather brusque tone of our English copy. The "revolver-at-your-head" style of advertising does not go with them — it arouses natural suspiciousness and so creates a barrier which is hard to break down.

Go after French-Canadian business with a determination to amalgamate 60% Anglo-Canadianism with 40% of local prejudice and you will win almost every time.

Any suggestion of bombast will be fatal from the point of view of effectiveness. It is not sufficient for an advertiser to state that his goods possess certain qualities, the French-Canadian readers ask for reasons. Take them into your confidence. Tell them why. If you cannot tell them everything about your product in your ad, get them to write for a booklet which should be well illustrated and written in plain language.

While translated ads are effective in a way, original ads by one who understands the character of these people and knows the style of argument that appeals to them will bring better returns pro rata, than any other advertising you ever tried. This has been tested by such advertisers as the Franco-American Chemical Co., J. A. E. Gauvin, Boivin-Wilson and others, who have found that their specially prepared French ads repaid them many folds by the advertising which their goods have received not only from the direct reader of the ad and his friends, but his friends' friends in an ever widening circle.

French-Canadians are plain, sensible people with a matter of fact way of looking at things — and in the rural districts they have large families and talk a lot. The Dubucs are related to the Dugals who in turn are connected with the Duponts and other families. They meet and compare notes — crooked dealing soon becomes known and, on the other hand, every satisfactory article sold is a seed from which will spring a large and profitable trade.

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My theme is by no means exhausted and an able lecturer would doubtless hold your attention much longer and tell you much more about the French-Canadian, his temperament, his habits and customs. However, what I have said should convince you that there are special, specific conditions governing this class of clientele and that only an expert in the field can be expected to write and prepare advertising for French-Canadians that will be 100% efficient. So, I will conclude with a bow, a most respectful bow to *Baptiste*, who, notwithstanding the threats, humiliations and other devices he was subjected to has kept his identity and language and to whom Englishmen as well as Americans owe a debt of gratitude instead of contempt and ridicule.

C. E. A. HOLMES, B. A.

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# French Advertising

## Facts and Figures

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According to the Fifth Census of Canada, English is the native language of only **about half** of Canada's total population ;

Almost a **third** of the total population is composed of French-speaking people and official statistics prove that **not more than 10%** of the **2,225,000 French people** in Canada can speak or read the English language ;

The remaining 1,254,768 are foreigners, including every race, from Arab to Turk.

Canada's largest Province is that of Quebec. More than **80%** of the total population of Quebec Province, or **1,605,339** people are French-speaking ;

There are 19,825 French-Canadians in Alberta, 8,907 in British-Columbia, 98,611 in New Brunswick, 51,746 in Nova Scotia, 202,442 in Ontario, 13,117 in Prince Edward Island, 23,251 in Saskatchewan, 482 in Yukon and 226 in the Northwest Territories.

Canada's metropolis is Montreal — **70%** of Montreal's total population, or 532,000 people are French. In fact Montreal is the **fourth French city in the world**, being surpassed only by Paris, Marseilles and Lyons.

**90%** of Quebec City's population, or **90,650** people, are French.

## French People's Place In Canadian Business

French people occupy a notable position in the business of the Dominion. In those lines in which they have taken active interest they have become leaders :

The largest, second largest, third largest and fourth largest wholesale groceries in Canada are owned by French firms. In many other industries, such as boot and shoe manufacturing, corset manufacturing, etc. French-Canadian firms are top-notchers.

In the province of Quebec the great majority of retail merchants are French-speaking :

	<b>Total</b>	<b>French</b>
Boots and Shoes.....	929	876
Clothes & Gents' Fur'gs.....	476	317
Druggists.....	424	356
Dry Goods.....	871	755
Furniture.....	301	247
General Stores.....	5,345	4,619
Groceries.....	5,000	4,614
Hardware.....	436	335
Jewellers.....	799	566

75% of the automobile owners in the Province of Quebec are French-speaking.

## French-Speaking Population of the United-States

The total French-speaking population of the United-States is conservatively estimated at 1,750,000. It exceeds the total population of 28 of the 49 states and territories in the Union.

The majority of Franco-Americans are located in the Eastern States : Massachusetts (500,000), Rhode-Island (90,000), New-Hampshire (70,000). Yet the Western States also have a large French population : Minnesota (70,000), California (20,000). In the North East, Maine has 100,000.

New-York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and Connecticut also have large settlements of French-speaking people.

### MASSACHUSETTS

French-speaking population.....		<b>500,000</b>
	<b>Total Pop.</b>	<b>French Pop.</b>
Boston.....	670,000	12,318
Fall River.....	119,295	45,209
Fitchburg.....	37,826	12,101
Haverhill.....	40,000	12,000
Holyoke.....	59,730	20,000
Lawrence.....	71,545	18,000
Lowell.....	106,000	26,578
Lynn.....	89,336	6,000
New Bedford.....	98,000	28,000
Salem.....	43,697	10,000
Worcester.....	145,986	25,560

## NEW-HAMPSHIRE

	Total Pop.	French Pop.
French-speaking population.....		<b>70,000</b>
Manchester.....	70,063	28,000
Nashua.....	26,005	13,000

## RHODE-ISLAND

French-speaking population.....		<b>90,000</b>
Pawtucket.....	52,000	14,000
Woonsocket .....	40,000	26,000

## MAINE

French-speaking population.....		<b>100,000</b>
Biddeford.....	17,600	11,500
Brunswick.....	6,800	4,000
Lewiston.....	26,247	14,000
Waterville.....	10,900	7,600

## LOUISIANA

French-speaking population.....		<b>366,500</b>
New Orleans.....	339,075	100,000

## CALIFORNIA

French-speaking population.....		<b>20,000</b>
San Francisco.....	416,912	8,000

## ILLINOIS

French-speaking population.....		<b>75,000</b>
Chicago.....	2,200,000	15,000
Kankakee.....	16,940	15,000

## MICHIGAN

French-speaking population.....		<b>45,000</b>
Detroit.....	465,766	14,000

## NEW-YORK

French-speaking population.....		<b>250,000</b>
New York City.....	4,776,833	120,000