

Canadian Jargon

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After spending two summer vacations in the Lake of the Woods area of Canada, I am beginning to understand the Canadian dialect. Only those who have never been there would say that I am exaggerating.

The Canadian dialect is a combination of English, French, and other European elements—each retaining its own pronunciation. Since all reading matter in the Dominion is printed in either French

or English, there are many things I do not understand. My only disastrous experience with the French language came about when I tried to translate the directions on a box of pudding mixture. Needless to say, we did not eat the pudding.

This did not bother me nearly as much as the British pronunciation and synonyms for American words. Even in the wilderness, crackers were soda biscuits, prunes were plums, jelly was jam, and gasoline was petrol. Tea was the most popular beverage and was served at any time, anywhere.

In addition to the English and French languages, the Canadians have their own words which cause confusion among American tourists. For example, some people who were staying in a camp near ours journeyed to town one evening with their two young children. The next morning, I was told by one of the children that they had had some "nips" in a restaurant before returning to camp. Naturally, I thought that the Canadian liquor laws were very lax. Two days later, I discovered that "nips" were hamburger sandwiches.

While citing instances of Canadian jargon, I should also explain that I was constantly made fun of because of my Hoosier accent. I did not realize until then the marked differences in the pronunciation of the English language. I am very glad that I am beginning to understand and speak the Canadian "language," because through it I am beginning to understand the Canadian people.

