COMMENTED TRANSLATION

OF

"TIPITE VALLERAND"

A CONTE DE JOS VIOLON

BY

LOUIS FRECHETTE

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by

Basil D. Kingstone

under the direction of

Dr. Barbara Folkart

University of Ottawa

School of Translators and Interpreters

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Tipite Vallerand

LE narrateur de la présente signait Joseph Lemieux ; il était connu sous le nom de José Caron ; et tout le monde l'appelait Jos Violon.

Pourquoi ces trois appellations ? Pourquoi Violon ? Vous m'en demandez trop.

C'était un grand individu dégingandé, qui se balançait sur les hanches en marchant, hâbleur, gouailleur, ricaneur, mais assez bonne nature au fond pour se faire pardonner ses faiblesses.

Et au nombre de celles-ci – bien que le mot *faiblesse* ne soit peut-être pas parfaitement en situation – il fallait compter au premier rang une disposition, assez *forte* au contraire, à lever le coude un peu plus souvent qu'à son tour.

Il avait passé sa jeunesse dans les chantiers de l'Ottawa, de la Gatineau et du Saint-Maurice ; et si vous vouliez avoir une belle chanson de *cage* ou une bonne histoire de cambuse, vous pouviez lui verser deux doigts de jamaïque, sans crainte d'avoir à discuter sur la qualité de la marchandise qu'il vous donnait en échange.

Il me revient à la mémoire une de ses histoires, que je veux essayer de vous redire en conservant, autant que possible, la couleur caractéristique et pittoresque que Jos Violon savait donner à ses narrations.

Le conteur débutait généralement comme ceci :

Pete Vallerand

The narrator of this story signed his name Joseph Lemieux; he was known as José Caron; and everybody called him Fiddler Joe.

Why these three names? Why Fiddler? I cannot tell you.

He was a tall gangling man who rolled his hips when he walked, a mocking sneering braggart, but a kind enough fellow at heart to be forgiven his weaknesses.

And among those - although perhaps weakness is not quite the right word for it - the most prominent was a rather strong tendency to bend his elbow a little more often than he should have.

He had spent his youth in the logging camps of the Ottawa, Gatineau and Saint Maurice Rivers; and if you wanted a fine raft song or a good shanty story, you could treat him to two fingers of Jamaica rum with no fear of having to argue about the quality of the goods he gave you in exchange.

One of his stories comes to mind, and I will try and tell it to you, with as much as possible of the characteristic colourfulness that Fiddler Joe knew how to give to his narratives.

The storyteller usually began like this:

– Cric, crac, les enfants ! parli, parlo, parlons ! pour en savoir le court et le long, passez le crachoir à Jos Violon ! sacatabi sac-à-tabac, à la porte les ceuses qu'écouteront pas !

Cette fois-là, nous serrâmes les rangs, et Jos Violon entama son récit en ces termes :

– C'était donc pour vous dire, les enfants, que c't'année-là, j'étions allés faire du bois pour les Patton dans le haut du Saint-Maurice, – une rivière qui, soit dit en passant, a jamais eu une grosse réputation parmi les gens de chantiers qui veulent rester un peu craignant Dieu.

C'est pas des cantiques, mes amis, qu'on entend là tous les soirs !

Aussi les ceuses qui parmi vous autres auraient envie de faire connaissance avec le diable peuvent jamais faire un meilleur voyage que celui du Saint-Maurice, pour avoir une chance de rencontrer le jeune homme à quèque détour. C'est Jos Violon qui vous dit ça !

J'avions dans not' gang un nommé Tipite Vallerand, de Trois-Rivières ; un insécrable fini, un sacreur numéro un.

Trois-Rivières, je vous dis que c'est ça la ville pour les sacres ! Pour dire comme on dit, ça se bat point.

Tipite Vallerand lui, les inventait, les sacres.

Trois années de suite, il avait gagné la torquette du diable à Bytown contre tous les meilleurs sacreurs de Sorel.

Comme sacreur, il était plusse que dépareillé, c'était un homme hors du commun. Les cheveux en redressaient rien qu'à l'entendre.

Avec ça, toujours à moitié plein, ça va sans dire.

J'étions cinq canots en route pour la rivière aux Rats, oùs' qu'on devait faire chantier pour l'hiver.

"All right, kids, listen here! If you want to hear how the stories go, just pay attention to Fiddler Joe! So don't you chatter or fool about; them what won't listen, throw'em out!"

So we settled down around him, and Joe Fiddler started his story with these words:

"Well, kids, that year we'd gone logging for the Pattons on the upper Saint Maurice - a river which, I might add, never had a good reputation with any lumberjack who wanted to stay a bit God-fearing.

"What you hear up there in the evenings, my friends, ain't hymns!

"So if any of ~~you~~ wants to meet the devil, the best thing to do is take a trip up the Saint Maurice, and you'll get a chance to meet the young man around some bend, you can take Fiddler Joe's word for it!

"We had a guy in our crew called Pete Vallerand, from Trois-Rivières, and Jeez, did he use to curse. A real pain in the neck, he was.

"Trois-Rivières, I'm telling you, that's the town for cursing. There's nowhere else like it, and that's a fact.

"In fact Pete Vallerand used to invent curses.

"Three years running he'd won the devil's plug of tabacco in Bytown against all the best cursers from Sorel.

"As a curser he wasn't just better than anyone else, he was uncanny. It made your hair stand on end just to hear him.

"And he was always half looped, it goes without saying.

"We set off in five canoes for the Rat River, where we were going to log all winter.

Comme il connaissait le Saint-Maurice dans le fin fond, Tipite Vallerand avait été chargé par le boss de gouverner un des canots — qu'était le mien.

J'aurais joliment préféré un autre pilote, vous comprenez ; mais dans ces voyages-là, si vous suivez jamais la vocation, les enfants, vous voirez qu'on fait ce qu'on peut, et non pas ce qu'on veut.

On nageait fort toute la journée : le courant était dur en diable ; et le soir, ben fatigués, on campait sur la grève — où's' qu'on pouvait.

Et puis, y avait ce qui s'appelle les portages — une autre histoire qu'a pas été inventée pour agrémenter la route et mettre les camarades de bonne humeur, je vous le persuade.

J'avions passé les rapides de la Manigance et de la Cuisse au milieu d'une tempête de sacres.

Jos Violon — vous le savez — a jamais été ben acharné pour bâdrer le bon Dieu et achaler les curés avec ses escrupules de conscience ; mais, vrai, là, ça me faisait frémir.

Je défouis pas devant un petit *torrieux* de temps en temps, c'est dans le caractère du voyageur ; mais, tord-nom ! y a toujours un boute pour envoyer toute la sainternité chez le diable, c'pas ?

Par malheur, notre canot était plus gros, plus pesant et plus chargé que les autres ; et — par une rancune du boss, que je présume, comme dit M. le curé — on nous avait donné deux nageurs de moins.

Comme de raison, les autres canots avaient pris les devants, et le nôtre s'était trouvé dégradé dès le premier rapide.

Ça fait que Tipite Vallerand ayant plus d'ordres à recevoir de personne, nous en donnait sus les quat' faces, et faisait son petit Jean Lévesque en veux-tu en vlà, comme s'il avait été le bourgeois de tous les chantiers, depuis les chenaux jusqu'à la hauteur des terres.

"The boss had made Pete Vallerand the steersman of one of the canoes, because he knew the Saint Maurice like the back of his hand. I was in that canoe.

"I'd a sight rather have had a different pilot, as you can imagine; but on those trips, kids, if you ever take up that trade, you'll see a fellow does what he can and not what he wants

"We paddled hard all day; the current was stronger' n hell; and in the evening, good and tired, we camped on the shore anywhere we could.

"And then there was what they call the portages - something else that wasn't invented to make the trip more enjoyable and put us in a good mood, I can tell you that.

We'd passed the Tough rapids and the Thigh rapids in a storm of curses.

"Now Fiddler Joe, as you know, has never been one to bother God and keep running to the priests with his scruples of conscience, but honest, all that cursing gave me the shivers.

"I don't get upset about an occasional little "Damn it!", it's in a lumberjack's character; but hell, you can't be forever sending the Father, Son and Holy Ghost to the devil, I reckon.

"To make matters worse, our canoe was bigger, heavier and more heavily loaded than the others. And no doubt because of a quarrel with the boss, we'd been given two men less.

"So of course the other canoes had gotten ahead of us, and ours had been damaged in the first rapids.

"That meant that, since nobody was giving Pete Vallerand orders any more, he was giving them left and right, and bossing us around to his heart's content, as if he was in charge of all the lumber camps from the mouth of the St. Maurice all the way to its source.

Fallait y voir sortir ça de la margoulette, les enfants ; c'est tout ce que j'ai à vous dire !

À chaque sacre, ma foi de gueux! je m'attendais à voir le ciel se crever sus notre tête pour nous écrapoutir, ou la rivière s'ouvrir sour le canot pour nous abîmer tous au fond des enfers, avec chacun un gripette pendu à la crignasse.

Il me semble voir encore le renégat avec sa face de réprouvé, crachant les blasphèmes comme le jus de sa chique, la tuque sus l'oreille, sa grande chevelure sus les épaules, la chemise rouge ouverte sus l'estomac, les manches retroussées jusqu'aux coudes, et le poing passé dans la ceinture fléchée.

Un des jurons les plus dans son élément, c'était : *Je veux que le diable m'enlève tout vivant par les pieds !* C'était là, comme on dit, son patois.

J'avais pour voisin de tête un nommé Tanfan Jeannotte de Sainte-Anne-la-Parade, qui pouvait pas voir sourdre c't'histoire-là, lui, sans grogner. Je l'entendais qui marmottait :

– Il t'enlèvera ben sûr à quèque détour, mon maudit ! et c'est pas moi qui fera dire des messes pour ta chienne de carcasse !

J'avions passé la rivière au Caribou, une petite machine de rivière grosse comme rien ; mais une bougresse qui se métine un peu croche le printemps, je vous le persuade, les enfants !

Jos Violon en sait quèque chose pour avoir passé trois jours et trois nuits, à cheval sur un billot, en pleine jam, là ous' que tous les saints du paradis y auraient pas porté secours.

Ça fait rien ! j'en suis revenu comme vous voyez, avec les erminettes aussi solides que n'importe qui pour la drave, et toujours le blanc d'Espagne dans le poignet pour la grand'hache, Dieu merci !

Enfin, on arrivait à la Bête-Puante – une rivière qu'est pas commode, non plus, à ce qu'on dit – et, comme le soir approchait, les hommes commencèrent à parler de camper.

"You should have heard it coming out of his mouth, kids, let me tell you!

"Every time he cursed, cripes, I expected to see the sky split open over our heads and fall down and squash us flat, or the river open up underneath the canoe and swallow us all to the bottom of hell, each one of us with a devil clinging to our hair.

"It seems to me I can still see the renegade with his face like a man damned, spitting out blasphemies like his tobacco juice, his tuque over one ear, hair hanging down to his shoulders, red shirt open to his stomach, sleeves rolled up to his elbows, and his fist stuck through his woven sash.

"One of his most typical curses was "May the devil come and drag me off alive by my feet!" It was what you might call his personal trademark.

"The guy next to me was called Kid Jeannotte, from Sainte-Anne-la-Parade, and every time he heard that line he grumbled. I'd hear him muttering:

"'He'll get you, around some bend, damn right he will, and don't expect me to pray for your bloody soul neither!'

"We'd passed the Caribou River. It's a pint-sized little stream, but the bugger gets way out of control in spring, kids, let me tell you!

"Fiddler Joe knows something about it. He once spent three days and three nights sitting astride a log in the middle of a jam there, and all the saints in paradise couldn't have helped him.

"Doesn't matter, I came out of it safe and sound as you see, with my shoulders as strong as anyone's for the log drive, and still plenty of muscle in my wrist to swing a broad-axe, thank God!

"At last we reached the Skunk River - and that one's no fun either, they say - and since it was getting to be evening, the men started talking about making camp.

– Camper à la Bête-Puante ! allez vous faire sacres ! dit Tipite Vallerand. Je veux que le diable m'enlève tout vivant par les pieds si on campe à la Bête-Puante !

– Mais pourtant, que dit Tanfan Jeannotte, il est ben trop tard pour rejoindre les autres canots ; où donc qu'on va camper ?

– Toi, tu peux te fermer ! beugla Tipite Vallerand, avec un autre sacre qui me fit regricher les cheveux sur la tête ; si y en a un parmi vous autres qui retrousse le nez pour se rébicheter, je sais ben ous' que je vous ferai camper, par exemple, mes calvaires. C'est tout ce que j'ai à vous dire !

Parole de voyageur, j'suis pourtant d'un naturel bonasse, vous me connaissez ; eh ben, en entendant ça, ça fut plus fort que moi ; j'pus pas m'empêcher de me sentir rougir les oreilles dans le crin.

Je me dis : Jos Violon, si tu laisses un malfaisant comme ça débriscailler le bon Dieu et victimer les sentiments à six bons Canayens qu'ont du poil aux pattes avec un petit brin de religion dans l'équipet du coffre, t'es pas un homme à te remonter le sifflet dans Pointe-Lévis, je t'en signe mon papier !

– Tipite, que je dis, écoute, mon garçon! C'est pas une conduite, ça. Y a des limites pour massacrer le monde. Tu vas nous dire tout de suite ous' qu'on va camper, ou ben j'fourre mon aviron dans le fond du canot.

– Moi étout ! dit Tanfan Jeannotte.

– Moi étout ! moi étout ! crièrent tous les autres.

– Ah ! oui-dà oui ! . . . Ah ! c'est comme ça ! . . . Eh ben, j'vas vous le dire, en effette, ous' que j'allons camper, mes crimes ! fit Tipite Vallerand avec un autre sacre à faire trembler tout un chantier. On va camper au mont à l'Oiseau, entendez-vous ? Et si y en a un qui fourre son aviron dans le fond du canot, ou qui fourre son nez ous' qu'il a pas d'affaire, moi je lui fourre un coup de fusil entre les deux yeux ! Ça vous va-t-y ?

"'Camp by the Skunk River? Like hell we will!" said Pete Vallerand. 'May the devil come and drag me off alive by my feet if we camp by the Skunk River!'

"'But it's much too late to catch up with the other canoes', said Kid Jeannotte; 'so where are we gonna camp?'

"'Shut your mouth!' Pete Vallerand bellowed, with another oath that made my hair stand on end; 'if any of you try arguing with me, I know where I'll make you camp, by Jesus!'

"Well, honest, I'm easy-going by nature, you know me; but when I heard that, it was too much for me; I couldn't help it, I felt my ears turning red under my hair.

"I said to myself: 'Fiddler Joe, if you let a wicked man like that weary the good Lord and insult the feelings of six red-blooded men who've got hair on their chests and a bit of religion in their heads, you're not fit to hold your head up again in Pointe-Lévis, and that's a fact!'

"'Pete', I said, 'listen to me. That's no way to behave. You can't just go on treating people like that. You tell us right now where we're gonna camp, or else I'm shoving my oar in the bottom of the canoe.'

"'Me too!' Kid Jeannotte said.

"'Me too! Me too!' everybody else said.

"'Are you now? Is that how things are? All right, by Christ, I'll tell you where we're going to camp!' said Pete Vallerand with another oath fit to make a whole camp shake. 'We're going to camp at Bird Mountain, d'you hear? And if any of you shoves his oar in the bottom of the canoe, or shoves his nose into what's none of his business, I'll shove a bullet right between his eyes! How does that suit you?'

Et tout le monde entendit claquer le chien d'un fusil que le marabout venait d'avemdre d'un sac de toile qu'il avait sour les pieds.

Comme on savait le pendard capable de détruire père et mère, chacun fit le mort.

Avec ça que le nom du mont à l'Oiseau, les enfants, était ben suffisant pour nous calmer, tout ce que j'en étions, que la moiquié en était de trop.

À la pensée d'aller camper là, une souleur nous avait passé dans le dos, et je nous étions remis à nager sans souffler motte.

Seulement, je m'aperçus que Tanfan Jeannotte mangeait son ronge, et qu'il avait l'air de ruminer quèque manigance qu'annonçait rien de bon pour Tipite Vallerand.

Faut vous dire que le mont à l'Oiseau, c'est pas une place ordinaire.

N'importe queu voyageur du Saint-Maurice vous dira qu'il aimerait cent fois mieux coucher tout fin seul dans le cinmiquière, que de camper en gang dans les environs du mont à l'Oiseau.

Imaginez-vous une véreuse de montagne de mille pieds de haut, tranchee à pic comme avec un rasois, et qui ferait semblant de se poster en plein travers du chenail pour barrer le passage aux chrétiens qui veulent monter plus haut.

Le pied du cap timbe dret dans l'eau, comme qui dirait à l'équerre ; avec par-ci par-là des petites anses là ous' que, dans le besoin, y aurait toujours moyen de camper comme ci comme ça, à l'abri des roches, mais je t'en fiche, mes mignons ! Allez-y voir ! Les anses du mont a l'Oiseau, ça s'appelle « touches-y pas » Ceuses qu'ont campé là y ont pas campé deux fois, je vous le garantis.

D'abord, ces trous noirs-là, pour dire comme on dit, c'est pas beau tout de suite.

"And we all heard the click of the hammer of a rifle, which the foul-tempered so-and-so had just pulled out of a canvas bag at his feet.

"Since we knew the scoundrel was capable of killing his own mother, we all shut up.

"Besides, the name of Bird Mountain, kids, was quite enough to calm us down, every one of us, in fact a lot mort'n enough.

"At the thought of camping there, a shiver of fear had run up and down our backs, and we'd started rowing again without a word.

"Only I noticed that Kid Jeannotte was still scowling, in fact he seemed to be hatching some plot that meant no good for Pete Vallerand.

"I have to tell you that Bird Mountain ain't no ordinary place.

"Anybody who's been up the Saint Maurice will tell you he'd a hundred times rather sleep all alone in a graveyard than camp with a whole crew of loggers in the neighbourhood of Bird Mountain.

"Imagine a damn great mountain a thousand feet high, with a peak cut as if with a razor, that looks as if it completely blocks the river so you can't get upstream.

"The cliff drops straight into the water as if it had been squared off, with little bays here and there, where you could always make a rough camp in the shelter of the rocks if you had to, but heck, just try it! The bays of Bird Mountain might as well have signs saying KEEP OUT. Nobody's camped there twice, believe you me!

"To start with, those black holes don't look inviting, not one bit.

Quand vous avez dret au-dessus de vot' campe, c'te grande bringue de montagne du démon qui fait la frime de se pencher en avant pour vous reluquer le Canayen avec des airs de rien de bon, je vous dis qu'on n'a pas envie de se mettre à planter le chêne pour faire des pieds de nez !

C'est pas une place ous' que je conseillerais aux cavaliers d'aller faire de la broche avec leux blondes au clair de la lune.

Mais c'est pas toute. La vlimeuse de montagne en fait ben d'autres, vous allez voir.

D'abord elle est habitée par un *gueulard.*

Un gueulard, c'est comme qui dirait une bête qu'on n'a jamais ni vue ni connue, vu que ça existe pas.

Une bête, par conséquence, qu'appartient ni à la congrégation des chrétiens ni à la race des protestants.

C'est ni anglais, ni catholique, ni sauvage ; mais ça vous a un gosier, par exemple, que ça hurle comme pour l'amour du bon Dieu . . . quoique ça vienne ben sûr du fond de l'enfer.

Quand un voyageur a entendu le gueulard, il peut dire : « Mon testament est faite ; salut, je t'ai vu ; adieu, je m'en vas ». Y a des cierges autour de son cercueil avant la fin de l'année, c'est tout ce que j'ai à vous dire !

Et puis, y a ce qu'on appelle la danse des jacks mistigris.

Vous savez pas ce que c'est que les jacks mistigris, vous autres, comme de raison. Eh ben, j'vas vous dégoiser ça dans le fin fil.

Vous allez voir si c'est une rôdeuse d'engeance que ces jacks mistigris. Ça prend Jos Violon pour connaître ces poissons-là.

Figurez-vous une bande de scélérats qu'ont pas tant seulement sus les os assez de peau tout ensemble pour faire une paire de mitaines à un quêteux.

"When you've got that damn great mountain right over your camp, and it seems to be leaning over and looking you up and down with nasty ideas in mind, I tell you, you don't feel like standing on your head to thumb your nose at it!

"It isn't exactly a place I'd advise lads to go and cuddle up to their girl friends by moonlight.

"But that's not all. That rotten mountain has got a lot of other tricks, as you'll see.

"First of all a yeller lives there.

"A yeller, you might say, is a critter nobody's ever seen nor come across, because it don't exist.

"So you see, it's a critter that don't belong to the congregation of Christians nor the race of Protestants.

"It's neither English nor Catholic nor savage; but it's got such a voice, it howls as if in fear of God - though of course it comes from the depths of hell.

"When a lumberjack hears the yeller, he can say, 'My will's made out, I've seen my salvation, goodbye, I've had it.' There'll be candles round his coffin before the year's out, mark my words.

"And then there's the dance of the jack mistigris.

"You guys don't know what the jack mistigris are, of course. Well, let me give you the lowdown on them.

"You'll see what a no-good bunch they are. It takes Fiddler Joe to know the likes of them.

"Imagine a bunch of rogues who don't even have enough skin on their bones among the lot of them to make a pair of gloves for a beggar.

Des esquelettes de tous les gabarits et de toutes les corporations : des petits, des grands, des minces, des ventrus, des élingués, des tortus-bossus, des biscornus, des membres de chrétien avec des corps de serpents, des têtes de bœufs sus des cuisses de grenouilles, des individus sans cou, d'autres sans jambes, d'autres sans bras, les uns plantés dret debout sur un ergot, les autres se traînant à six pattes comme des araignées, enfin une vermine du diable.

Tout ça avec des faces de revenants, des comportements d'impudiques et des gueules puantes à vous faire passer l'envie de renifler pour vingt ans.

Sur les minuit, le gueulard pousse son heurlement ; et alors faut voir ressoudre c'te pacotille infernale, en dansant, en sautant, en se roulant, en se culbutant, grimaçant, piaillant, ruant, gigotant, se faisant craquer les jointures et cliqueter les osselets dans des contorsions épouvantables, et se bousculant pêle-mêle comme une fricassée de mardi-gras.

Une sarabande de damnés, quoi !

C'est ça, la danse des jacks mistigris.

Si y a un chrétien dans les environs, il est fini. En dix minutes, il est sucé, vidé, grignoté, viré en esquelette ; et s'il a la chance de pas être en état de grâces, il se trouve à son tour emmorphosé en jack mistigris, et condamné à mener c'te vie de chien-là jusqu'à la fin du monde.

Je vous demande, à c'te heure, si c'était réjouissant pour nous autres d'aller camper au milieu de c'te nation d'animaux-là !

On y fut, pourtant.

Disons, pour piquer au plus court, que nous v'là arrivés, la pince du canot dans le sable et les camarades dans les cailloux, avec les ustensiles de couquerie sus le dos.

Pas moyen de moyenner : Tipite Vallerand était là avec son fusil, qui watchait la manœuvre et qui sacrait toujours le bon

"Skeletons, of all shapes and sizes, short ones, tall ones, skinny ones, tubby ones, straightbacked ones, hunchbacked ones, funny-shaped ones, men's arms and legs on snakes' bodies, the heads of oxen on frogs' legs, critters with no necks, others with no arms, some standing straight up on a bird's claw, others dragging themselves around on six legs like spiders - the devil's own rabble, in fact.

"And they've all got faces like ghosts, they do dirty things, and their mouths stink so much they'd put you off breathing for the next twenty years.

"Around midnight the yeller starts howling; and then you ought to see this infernal mob come out, dancing, jumping up and down, rolling around, tumbling, pulling faces, squalling, kicking up their heels, twitching, cracking their joints and clicking their bones in horrible contortions, and jostling each other like a Mardi Gras crowd.

"A saraband of the damned, you might say.

"And that's the dance of the jack mistigris.

"If there's anybody around, he's had it. In ten minutes he's sucked dry, emptied, chewed up, and turned into a skeleton; and if he happens not to be in a state of grace, he's metalamorphized into a jack mistigris too, and condemned to lead that rotten life until the end of the world.

"Now I ask you, did it sound like fun to us to go and camp among that mob of horrible creatures?

"That's what we did, though.

"To cut a long story short, we landed there, ran the nose of the canoe up on the sand and got out on the pebbles, with the cooking utensils on our backs.

"We couldn't get out of it, Pete Vallerand was there with his rifle, supervising the operation and still cursing

Dieu et tous les saints du calendrier comme cinq cent mille possédés.

Fallait ben obéir ; et comme j'avions tous une faim de chien, un bon feu de bois sec fut vite allumé, et la marmite se mit à mijoter sa petite chanson comme dans les bonnes années.

Naturellement, j'avions pas pris le temps d'installer une cambuse dans le principe, comme dit M. le curé.

Y avait là une grosse talle de bouleaux, et j'en avions crochi un gros pied ben solide, qu'on avait amarré, en le bandant avec la bosse du canot, comme on fait pour les pièges à loups.

C'est comme ça qu'on pend la crémaillère, dans le voyage, quand on a une chance et qu'on est pressé.

Pas la peine de vous raconter le souper, c'pas ?

Je vous promets que la peur du gueulard et des jacks mistigris nous empêcha pas de nous licher les babines et de nous ravitailler les intérieurs.

Ces documents-là, ça peut couper l'appétit aux gens qu'ont leux trois bons repas par jour ; mais pas quand il est sept heures du soir, et qu'on a nagé contre le courant comme des malcenaires depuis six heures du matin, avec tant seulement pas le temps d'allumer, et sans autre désennui que des sacres pour accorder sus l'aviron !

Seulement, après le souper, on avait le visage d'une longueur respectable ; et j'avions pas besoin de dire à personne de fermer sa boîte, je vous le garantis.

On se regardait tous sans rien dire, excepté, comme de raison, Tipite Vallerand, qui lâchait de temps en temps sa bordée de sacres, que c'était comme une rente.

Personne grouillait ; et c'est à peine si on osait tirer une touche, quand Tanfan Jeannotte — le sournois ! — se mit à rôder, à rôder, comme s'il avait jonglé quèque plan de nègre.

God and all the saints in the calendar, like five hundred thousand men possessed.

"We had to do what we were told; and since we were all starving, we'd soon lit a good fire of dry wood and the cooking pot started humming its little tune like in the good times.

"Of course, we hadn't taken the time to set up a regular kitchen.

"There was a big clump of birches there, and we'd bent over a nice strong sapling and tied it to the mooring rope of the canoe, pulling the rope tight, like a wolf trap.

"That's how you hang your pot over your campfire, where you can, when you're travelling up a river and you haven't much time.

"There's no point in telling you about the supper, is there?

"I can promise you, our fear of the yeller and the jack mistigris didn't stop us eating hearty and filling our insides.

"Those jokers can take away the appetite of people who get three square meals a day; but not when it's seven o'clock in the evening, and you've been working like a black paddling upstream since six in the morning, with not even a moment to light your pipe, and with no other entertainment except curses to keep time to!

"After we'd eaten, though, we were suitably long-faced, and we didn't need to tell anybody to quit chattering, believe you me.

"We all looked at each other and said not a word, except of course Pete Vallerand, who fired off his volley of curses from time to time, till we were fed up with it. Nobody moved, in face we hardly dared to smoke. Then Kid Jeannotte, the crafty beggar, started prowling back and forth as if he'd dreamed up some crazy plan.

À chaque instant, il nous passait sur les pieds, s'accrochait dans nos jambes etendues devant le feu , enfin, vlà la chicane prise entre lui et Tipite Vallerand

Comme de raison, une nouvelle bourrasque de blasphèmes

Moi, ça me crispait

— C'est pire qu'un mal de ventre, que je dis, de voir un chrétien maganer le bon Dieu de c'te façon-là !

— Le bon Dieu ? que reprend le chéti en ricanant, il peut se fouiller Y en a pas de bon Dieu par icitte !

Et renotant son jurement d'habitude, qu'était viré pour lui en vraies zitanies de conversation

— Si y a un bon Dieu par icitte, qu'il dit, je veux que le diable m'enleve tout vivant par les pieds !

Bon sang de mon âme ! Jos Violon est pas un menteur , eh ben, croyez-moi ou croyez-moi pas, Tipite Vallerand avait pas lâché le dernier motte, qu'il sautait comme un crapaud les quat' fers en l'air, en poussant un cri de mort capable de mettre en fuite tous les jacks mistigris et tous les gueulards du Saint-Maurice à la fois

Il se trouvait tout simplement pendu par les pieds, au bout de not' bouleau, qu'avait lâche son amarre , et l'indigne se payait une partie de balancine, a six pieds de terre et la tête en bas, sa longue crignasse echevelee faisant qu'un rond, et fouettant le vent comme la queue d'un cheval pique par une nuée de maringouins

Tout a coup, fifre ! la tête de mon sacreur venait de passer tout pres de nos tisons, et ft ft ft vla-t-y pas le feu dans le balai !

Une vraie flambee d'etoupe, les enfants !

Ça devenait terrible, c'pas ?

Moi, je saute sus ma hache, je frappe sus l'âbre, et crac ! vlà mon Tipite Vallerand le dos dans les ferdoches, sans connaissan-

"He kept on stepping over our feet and stumbling over our legs stretched in front of the fire, until finally him and Pete Vallerand got into an argument.

"Of course, there was another outburst of curses.

"It was getting on my nerves.

"'It's worse a bellyache,' I said, 'to hear somebody abuse the good Lord like that!'

"'The good Lord,' the wretch said with a sneer, 'can go shove it. There ain't no God out here!'

"And repeating his usual curse, which had become a regular refrain with him:

"'If there's a God out here,' he said, 'may the devil come and drag me off alive by my feet!'

"Well! Without a word of lie, and as true as I'm sitting here, Pete Vallerand hadn't got the last word out before he was leaping in the air like a frog, with all four feet off the ground, screaming as if he was dying, enough to put all the jack mistigris and all the yellers of the Saint Maurice River to flight at once.

"He was actually hanging by his feet at the end of the birch sapling, which had slipped its rope; and the poor sinner was swinging back and forth, six feet off the ground, head downwards, his mop of hair hanging down in a circle and whipping in the wind like the tail of a horse bitten by a cloud of mosquitoes.

"Suddenly, cripes, the curser's head passed close to the embers and whoosh! his hair was on fire!

"It flared up like tinder!

"It was getting scary, eh?

"I jumped for my axe, I cut the tree, and thud! Pete Vallerand was on his back in the bushes, unconscious,

ce, avec pus un brin de poil sur le concombre pour se friser le toupet

Pas besoin de vous dire que, cinq minutes après, toute la gang était dans le canot, et, quoique ben fatiguee, nageant à tour de bras pour s'éloigner de c'te montagne de malheur, ous' que personne passe depuis ce temps-là sans raconter l'aventure de Tipite Vallerand

Quant à lui, le boufre, il fut quinze jours ben malade, et pas capable d'ouvrir les yeux sans voir Charlot-le-diable lui tâter les pieds avec un nœud coulant à la main

Comme de raison, tout le chantier croyait trouver là-dedans une punition du bon Dieu, un miracle.

Mais moi qu'avais watché Tanfan Jeannotte, je l'avais trop vu nous piler sus les pieds, se faufiler dans nos jambes et tripoter la chaîne de la marmite, pour pas me douter que, dans l'affaire du bouleau, pouvait ben y avoir une punition du bon Dieu, mais en même temps une petite twist de camarade

C'est mon opinion

Quoi qu'il en soit, comme dit M le cure, ce fut fini fret pour les sacres

Tipite Vallerand passa l'hiver dans le chantier, sans lâcher tant seulement un « ma foi de gueux »

Il suffisait de dire *diable emporte !* pour le faire virer sur les talons comme une toupie

J'ai revu le garnement quatre ans apres , il etait en jupon noir et en surplis blanc, et tuait les cierges dans la chapelle des Piles, avec une espece de petit capuchon de fer-blanc au bout d'un manche de ligne

– Tipite ! que je lui dis

– De quoi ! qu'y me repond

– Tu reconnais pas Jos Violon ?

with not a hair left on his head that he could put in curlers.

"I needn't tell you that five minutes later the whole crew was in the canoe, and, tired as we were, paddling like crazy to get away from that damn mountain. Ever since, nobody goes by there without telling the story of Pete Vallerand.

"The poor bugger was very ill for a couple of weeks: he couldn't open his eyes without seeing Old Harry with a noose in his hand, feeling his feet.

"Of course, the whole camp thought it was a miracle and a punishment from God.

"But I'd been watching Kid Jeannotte, I'd seen too much of his stepping over our feet and getting in our legs and fooling with the chain of the cooking pot, and I suspected the birch tree business might well be a punishment from God, but it was also a little friendly joke.

"That's my opinion.

"Be that as it may, as the priest says, Pete Vallerand quit swearing then and there.

"He spent the whole winter in the camp without letting out so much as a 'darn it'.

"You only had to say "To hell with it!'" and he spun on his heels like a top.

"I saw the rogue four years later. He was in a black skirt and a white surplice, and was killing candles in the chapel at St. Jean des Piles, with a sort of little tin cap on the end of a fishing rod.

"'Pete!' I says to him.

"'What?' he says.

"'Don't you recognize Fiddler Joe?'

– Non ! qu'il me dit tout sec en me regardant de travers, et en prenant une shire, comme si j'y avais mis une allumette a la jupe

Ce qui prouve que s'il s'etait guéri de sacrer, il s'était pas gueri de mentir.

Et cric, crac, cra ! sacatabi, sac-à-tabac ! mon histoire finit d'en par là Serrez les ris, ouvrez les rangs ; c'est ça l'histoire à Tipite Vallerand !

"'No!' he says sharply, giving me a dirty look and backing away as if I'd put a match to his skirt.

"Which proves that if he was cured of swearing, he wasn't cured of lying.

"All right, kids, there ain't no more! That's the end of this evening's tale, don't none of you start to weep and wail. Let me out of here, that's my demand; you've heard the story of Pete Vallerand!"

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ABSTRACT

"Tipite Vallerand" features a number of different styles. Two of them one would expect, since the conte is (or purports to be) the re-narration by a bourgeois author in 1892 of a story he heard from a lumberjack in the 1840's. The story has a frame in which the re-narrator portrays the narrator and indicates what kind of story he is liable to tell, while the main part consists of the reconstructed narration. The frame is written in bourgeois or "international" French, whereas the narration is in popular Quebec French. There is the further complication that the narrator uses a frame of his own, akin to a spell or incantation, to open and close his story. Whereas the re-narrator's frame presents no problems, the narrator's frame combines plain statement with pure sound which conveys meaning by different means.

The narrator's style has called for the most commentary. Much of his vocabulary is Québécois. There are terms relating to the lumberjack's trade, and terms relating to Quebec life. Many other expressions, while they pose no problem as to their referent, are found in Quebec French and not in standard French; most of these are in glossaries, but a few are not.

Swear words (les sacres) are often not in any glossary save Pichette's, and seldom is their strength made clear. We have established that they do not seem to have changed their strength relative to each other over the years, but both they and English swear words have lost much of their power to shock. This does not help us choose the best English equivalents. Swear words being a culture-bound item, this failure of dictionaries is not unexpected. In this case, our choice is restricted by the constraint that the story is about the punishment of a man who blasphemes, and therefore we must use blasphemies rather than other kinds of English swear word.

The morphophonetic and syntactical features of the conte, on the other hand, are not so much dialectal as popular, and they set us a different kind of problem. No amount of research will enable us to find words in English having the correct meaning for the context and the same phonetic variation from standard pronunciation, even if the variation exists in English. Nor do many of the syntactical popularisms correspond to English ones. Even when they do, it is doubtful whether they should be mapped onto the corresponding segment of the translation, since in French they typify a flourishing dialect and in English they merely make the narrator seem ignorant. The alternative solution is to intersperse the text with equivalent popularisms, but the result of any such experiment is tedious reading. We have therefore contented ourselves in certain passages with a more neutral style.

A fortiori we have been cautious where the re-narrator's style intrudes into the narrator's. This intrusion reveals the tensions in the story. Firstly, "Tipite Vallerand" purports to be an oral tale, so that a written form of it is perhaps a paradox. Secondly, it is a légende, i.e. a moral tale, but it has been subverted by alteration of the ending so that the punishment of the blasphemer is not meted out by divine intervention. These tensions increase the problems caused by the hybrid nature of a story having a narrator and a re-narrator, and make its translation a greater challenge.

COMMENTARY

I INTRODUCTION

Louis Fréchette was born in Lévis, across the St. Lawrence River from Quebec City, in 1839. We could well begin "The poet Louis Fréchette..." Whether or not because he was born in a picturesque place, he was reading poetry at the age of eight. At eighteen he was thrown out of the petit séminaire in Quebec for (inter alia) writing poetry. As a law student at Laval University he was active in journalism and politics, but he was also and perhaps mainly a prominent member of the "Ecole littéraire de 1860", the group of writers who gathered in the bookshop of Octave Crémazie.

In 1866, seeing the lack of success of his law practice in Lévis, of the newspapers he founded (and in which he expressed views too radical for his readers), and of his poetry (other writers acclaimed his collection Mes Loisirs in 1863, but the public did not), he moved to Chicago. Here he continued his trades of journalist and political worker and tried his hand as a playwright, a talent he never had in high degree, and produced a long poem, La voix d'un exilé, which was acclaimed back in French Canada.

On his return home in 1871, however, he first concentrated on politics and not poetry. His efforts paid off, for in 1874 he was elected to the federal parliament, although he did not greatly distinguish himself and was defeated in the election of 1878. Only then did he become a full-time national poet. To be sure, he had published Pêle-Mêle in 1877, but his great and consciously Canadian works, Fleurs boréales and Oiseaux de neige (published together in 1879) and La légende d'un peuple (1887), were written after he ceased to be an MP. His intention in the latter work was to proclaim to French Canadians that

they should be proud of being French and that they had a glorious past; the poems gave Fréchette himself a glorious present. The Académie française awarded a prize to La légende d'un peuple, and he made five or six trips to France and met his idol Victor Hugo; various Canadian universities gave him honorary doctorates; he was a founding member of the Royal Society of Canada in 1882, and honorary president of the "Ecole littéraire de Montréal", a movement which flourished in the 1890's.

Honours, however, do not feed one. Even the semi-sinecure of secretary (greffier) to the Quebec legislative council does not seem to have provided Fréchette with enough income for his comfortable life in a big house in Montreal. He therefore began to produce prose narratives, which he published in serial form in magazines. At first these narratives were reminiscences: Originaux et détraqués (published in volume form in 1892) is a portrait gallery of eccentrics who lived in the Quebec City and Lévis area in Fréchette's childhood. The mostly sentimental stories of La Noël au Canada (published in English first, in 1899, translated by the author, as Christmas in French Canada; then in 1900 in French) are likewise set in that time and place. So, naturally, are his Mémoires intimes, which he serialized in 1900. Yet the goal of these publications, we feel, was not entirely to make money or to entertain. It is consistent with Fréchette's concern with Quebec's past that he would want to preserve memories of people, places and customs - of a whole way of life - that was being forgotten. His interest in folklore, indeed, led him in 1892 to become a founding member of the Canadian branch of the American Folklore Society, which he later left because it was interested only in oral narration.

None the less Fréchette seems to have regarded his prose output as secondary, perhaps not much different from his steady output of journalism. It was his poetry which he saw as his great life's work. Before his death he prepared a three-volume edition of his major poetic works, but he planned no definitive version of his prose. Indeed, he did not collect it all into books. He did at one time (probably in 1892) propose to publish twenty short stories under the title Masques et fantômes, but when that project failed to materialize, he did not try again until 1899-1900, when he published Christmas in French Canada / La Noël au Canada. This work was a commercial failure, and Fréchette thereafter made no attempt to publish books of his short stories. At most, a few stories of his appeared in collectaneous volumes. We therefore find it perhaps slightly inaccurate to say, as the editors of his Contes do, that they have fulfilled for Fréchette "un désir que les circonstances ne lui ont pas permis de réaliser."

Equally regrettably, the same pattern of isolated stories reprinted in volumes of tales by various hands persisted long after Fréchette's death in 1908. Until recent years only Originaux et détraqués had the honour of being reprinted (1943, 1972). The Mémoires intimes were not published in book form until George A. Klinck edited them in 1961, and indeed this was their first appearance in their proper shape; for the serialization Fréchette had used parts of his manuscript at random, guessing what the public would like. The Contes de Jos Violon were not so labelled and collected into one volume until 1974, and the complete Contes had to wait until 1976.

"Tipite Vallerand" is the first of the stories featuring the storyteller Jos Violon to be published; it first appeared in La Presse on October 22, 1892. Fréchette's success in living by his pen was partly due to his habit of selling his pieces to different publications, and thus our story appeared

twice more the next month, in L'Evangéline and Le Manitoba, and then in 1894, 1898 and 1905. However, the fact that it was also reprinted in magazines in 1914 and 1916, as well as in both editions of E. Z. Massicotte's Conteurs canadiens-français du XIXe siècle (1902 and 1908),[1] is surely due to its popularity and not to judicious recycling.

In the course of its re-use, various changes were made to the text. In republishing all his stories, indeed, "Fréchette supprime des introductions trop longues, modifie des dénouements, corrige la langue de ses personnages pour faire plus 'canadien'".[2] So the editors of the Contes report, and they regretfully conclude that he "retouchait plus ses textes pour créer l'illusion de la nouveauté que pour améliorer la forme." Their task is merely to establish and reproduce the text Fréchette finally chose, however, and they have followed the 1898 text of "Tipite Vallerand", which is the last one Fréchette corrected. The editor of the 1974 Contes de Jos Violon, on the other hand, has chosen to follow the text of Massicotte's recueil,[3] which was indeed published later, in 1902, but which presumably Fréchette did not correct. Even so, we do not feel qualified to judge which text is more authentic; we have chosen to follow the Contes text, but it is because in the majority of cases we prefer it on purely aesthetic grounds:

1. The Contes edition is free of misprints, whereas the CJV text is not: "Fanfan" (CJV p.21 l.30) occurs for "Tanfan" (Contes p.158 l.15) and "avait" (p.23 l.5) for "avais" (p.165 l.14); in addition the words "Bête-Puante!" (p.17 l.7) are repeated. ("Pilot" (p.15 l.9) for "pilote" (p.157 l.4) is not a misprint, unless it is one in Massicotte, but neither is it attested in any glossary).

2. There are cases in which CJV gives a less dialectal form than Contes. This is unlikely to be right, since Fréchette is giving free rein to such forms. Thus we find "la moitié" (p.18 l.12) for "la moiquié" (p.160 l.7), "la cimiquière" (p.18 l.24) for the nasalized "la cinmiquière" (p.160 l.17), and "ressourdre" (p.20 l.13) for "ressoudre" (p.162 l.13). The more dialectal forms are in each case attested in the Glossaire du parler canadien-français.[4] There is also a case where CJV gives a form (perhaps only a phonetic variant) which is not in any glossary ("acrapoutir", p.16 l.7) while the Contes give a form which is in the Glossaire ("écrapoutir", p.158 l.4).

3. In the middle of the long sentence describing the behaviour of the jack mistigris, CJV omits "en se culbutant, grimaçant, piaillant" (Contes p.162 l.14). It is not likely that Fréchette cut back from eleven participial phrases to eight, since his aim is surely to make the description as exuberant as possible. Besides, after three phrases in "en ___ant", two phrases in "___ant" seems too few. The Contes text has four phrases in "en ___ant" followed by four phrases in "___ant", then the three longer phrases, and this seems a more satisfactory rhythm, no doubt because there should be at least as many elements in each stage of the enumeration as in the stage before, in order to ensure a steady build-up to the climax.

On the other hand, CJV gives a preferable reading in some cases:

1. CJV has the more dialectal deglutinated form "des imites" (p.17 l.28) where the Contes have "des limites" (p.159 l.22), and the more dialectal (but politer) "une boufresse" (p.16 l.29) where the Contes have "une bougresse" (p.158 l.21).

2. CJV has, at p.16 l.20, "voisin de tôte" where the Contes (p.158 l.15) have "voisin de tête." The latter is plausible, since the probable meaning is "the man next to me, i.e. beside me in the canoe, on the front seat." The former does not at first seem to have any meaning except perhaps "the man who walked next to me in portages" (the Glossaire gives no such noun, but it does give tôter = transporter). But portages are mentioned only briefly, a page before that; this part of the story takes place in the canoe. Therefore the Contes seem at first to be right as usual. However, Harrap explains the mystery: une tôte means "a thwart", i.e. a seat for an oarsman, and we imagine it is the word "thwart" itself borrowed and modified. Indeed, in the Contes (at Vol.I p.165) we see Titange insanely whirling an axe about his head while standing in a canoe (on dry land, fortunately) "dret deboute sus une des tôtes." Thus, the CJV reading is in fact better.

There exists no translation of this conte that we can discover: indeed, none for any Jos Violon story are listed in the bibliography of the Contes, except Fréchette's own version of his Christmas tales. These include, of the Jos Violon stories, only "Tom Caribou" and " Titange," which is about the chasse-galerie. We have seen four English versions of the legend of the chasse-galerie; two of them, including the translation of Marius Barbeau's version, begin by evoking Jos Violon, but in fact they are all derived from Honoré Beaugrand's La Chasse-Galerie, which was published in the recueil put together by E. Z. Massicotte,[5] and not from "Titange."

The stories by Fréchette collected in 1974 under the title Contes de Jos Violon are those stories in which the author tells us that he heard the story from a storyteller called Jos Violon, and then recounts it in, as far as he can recall them, Jos' own words. How far this is the plain truth, we do not know. We shall see that, in the present story, Fréchette drew on other

materials besides his own memory to write it. Certainly, however, his own memory may be involved, for Jos Violon really existed.[6] In Fréchette's Mémoires intimes (p.52), where his first name is spelled Joe, he is described in exactly the same terms as in the first five paragraphs of our present story. He was, as Fréchette himself puts it (p.29), the "conteur à la mode" in Lévis when Fréchette was a little boy. The future author was allowed to go to the veillées de contes, chaperoned by his adoptive elder brother, and listened to "les récits du vétéran des chantiers dont le style pittoresque nous enthousiasmait." (Mémoires p.53). The romantic setting where the stories were told, at the foot of a cliff, among massive oak trees, by the light of the fire from a lime kiln, must have added to the effect of the narration.

Further heightening of this effect no doubt came from Jos Violon's prestige in the boy's eyes. The whole trade of lumberjack seemed romantic. Every spring, huge rafts of logs would come downriver and anchor at Lévis, where the returning crews would spend the summer working in the lumber yards beside the river. They came, swaggering and boastful, colourfully dressed in the garb Tipite Vallerand wears in our story, but once back home they changed to more subdued clothing and gave up swearing. Fréchette would listen to them tell stories, on their lunch break, even before he was allowed to go to the veillées de contes, and nobody in the riverside chantiers of Lévis ever used a swear word in a story when he was there. To judge from our story, however, Jos Violon could be less constrained at the veillées, whose audience consisted also of adults.

At this point we may ask ourselves how there can be such a difference between the "pure" speech of the lumberjacks of the Lévis chantiers and the curses of Jos Violon the storyteller, let alone the frightening foulness (by

the standards of the time as Jos Violon represents them) of the language and behaviour of Tipite Vallerand. We may perhaps seek an answer in the accepted idea that, as we shall see later on in this commentary in connection with the question of les sacres (p.49), men living away from civilized society in all-male groups use swear words far more than they do in the company of women and children. When they return home, this exaggeration of their masculinity ceases. Fréchette's own description of the lumberjacks confirms this change:

> "Le fait est que ces hommes de chantiers étaient presque tous de braves gens au fond. Ils étaient beaucoup plus fanfarons que méchants. Leur apparence de brutalité, leur langage trivial, leurs imprécations blasphématoires, leurs airs de matamores et de casseurs de mâchoires, c'était de la pose la plupart du temps. Tel individu, qui avait toujours sa hache à la main ne parlant rien moins que d'éventrer tout le monde, ne se serait pas pardonné d'écraser la patte d'un chien."
>
> (Mémoires p.50-51).

We may further wonder if in thus behaving outrageously the lumberjacks were, consciously or unconsciously, acting out a fiction, the same one that Jos Violon also offered in the more conventional form of storytelling. There was the real Jos Violon, and there was the Jos Violon and his fellow lumberjacks who figured in his stories, which transform the remoter parts of Quebec into a battleground of men and supernatural forces, as surely as any ancient epics do for their country of origin. Out there in the darkness and the distant pays d'en haut, so far as Jos Violon's audience knows, there could be absolutely anything, and the storyteller peoples the void with what that audience wishes to believe it contains, namely people and events having the intensity of fiction. Joe Violon's stories, we submit, are no more than part of the whole fiction about themselves that the lumberjacks created for consumption by the good people of Lévis -- among whom there was a demand for it.

In support of this suggestion, we note that the lumberjacks mystified the local inhabitants in other ways than by storytelling. Fréchette recalls in his Mémoires intimes that any farm lad who tried to hold down a job in the riverside lumber yards was the butt of such cruel practical joking that he soon quit. It is interesting that even in these jokes, storytelling played a part:

> "Un compère, qui faisait semblant de sympathiser avec lui et de prendre sa défense, lui racontait les choses les plus abracadabrantes, les légendes les plus invraisemblables; et quand l'imagination de la victime etait surexciteé à point, Satan faisait son apparition. Et alors le malheureux, terrifié, hors de lui, perdait connaissance, ou se précipitait n'importe où, au risque de se casser les reins." (p.37)

There is thus a well established connection between the lumberjack and the devil. It is not confined to Lévis in the 1840's, for Jean-Pierre Pichette's[7] collection of légendes about blasphemers contains a number of tales in which the swearer is a lumberjack. Most of the wicked people in these stories who are carried off by the devil, are lumberjacks; indeed, most of the lumberjacks in these stories are carried off by the devil. Few are granted any of the alternative fates, namely being saved by conversion or human or divine warning, or even punished by God directly (assuming that being carried off by the devil is a punishment God metes out by proxy).

These légendes, clearly, are cautionary tales. (Indeed, that is the etymological meaning of légende: a text which should be read, because its content is exemplary. The term was first used of the lives of the saints). Equally clearly, within the general literary genre of conte , "Tipite Vallerand" is a cautionary tale, and indeed a légende. This becomes clear if we consider the features of the légende as described by Marius Barbeau:[8]

> "The legend is considered truthful, whereas the folk-tale is pure fiction. ...folk-tales... have come down from the dim past, ready-made and detached from actuality, like the Arabian Nights."

Whereas

> "...legends set forth strange events in the lives of the people themselves, at the edge of the supernatural world. They might be called superstitions. The beliefs they rest upon and the patterns they assume are mostly traditional and ancient. But their form and particulars are usually known by name, and the action has taken place at a fixed date and in a definite place."

And the last detail in Barbeau's description is certainly true of "Tipite Vallerand": "Here the folk paint themselves as they are, with humour or in the grip of fear."

Pichette takes two légendes from a book published in 1892 by the Abbé N. Caron entitled Deux Voyages sur le Saint-Maurice. It is mainly a travel description, but in some passages it shows the author's especial distress at blasphemy. A lumberjack figures in one of the two légendes,[9] but the other one is strikingly like the plot of "Tipite Vallerand," even though it is set on a farm (p.56; Caron p.74-5). Two young men are working in a barn, and one of them is swearing horribly. He is told that he is risking punishment from God, and he replies "Il n'y a pas de bon Dieu ici." Whereupon he falls to the floor "comme foudroyé," raises himself up, points, and cries out "'Regarde donc le diable!' Alors il retomba de son long sur le plancher et se mit à râler comme un homme à l'agonie." For two years he could not speak at all, and he remained paralyzed on one side, but at least thereafter he "menait une vie assez chrétienne."

We think it probable that Fréchette read this book and that this story in particular reminded him of one of the tales Jos Violon had told. Indeed, perhaps he borrowed the plot or at least details of it, and either wove them into the Jos Violon story which came back to him, or perhaps even invented a story along traditional lines incorporating some details from the Caron story, ascribing it to Jos Violon. For the elements common to the two stories are numerous. "Tipite Vallerand" takes place on the Saint-Maurice; Tipite's punishment follows instantly on the blasphemous statement "Y en a pas de bon Dieu par icitte"; he thinks he is being dragged off to Hell; he is ill for some time; and he not only gives up swearing for the rest of the winter, he subsequently serves the Church.

It is important to note that the sin here is not just le sacrage but blasphemy. Fréchette did not return to so serious a subject in later Jos Violon stories, unless we count "Tom Caribou" (Contes I 145-156), in which a lumberjack refuses to go to midnight Mass at Christmas and is treed by a she-bear who claws a piece out of the seat of his pants - and the underlying flesh. But even a hundred years ago, missing church was probably less grave than blasphemy. Besides, the punishment is too farcical for the sin to be serious.

Pichette rightly remarks that it is indeed the punishment of blasphemy, and not just of swearing as such, that the légendes he has collected show. To say one is beyond God's reach is to challenge Him to prove that one isn't. To add, as Tipite does, that if God is around, then the devil may carry him away, is to challenge God to have him carried away. Indeed, any blasphemy involves the devil:

> "Non seulement ...(le blasphème) garde son caractère injurieux à l'egard de Dieu, mais encore il se présente comme un appel au diable, parce que c'est un acte gratuit, inutile, étant le fruit de l'habitude et de la mauvaise volonté, et que, par la suite, il est l'occasion des manifestations diaboliques."[10]

Fréchette, however, is not merely retelling a folk tale, whether one he heard from Jos Violon or one collected fifty years later by the Abbé Caron. Our conte is a légende, but in a literary form designed for the bourgeois reader of the 1890's, who is not asked to accept a supernatural ending, as if he were a simple lumberjack benighted by superstition. Instead of the devil actually appearing to claim Tipite, we have "une petite twist de camarade." It is a cruel joke, which recalls the practical joking practised on farm boys ill-advised enough to seek work in the chantiers of Lévis, but it is nothing supernatural. This is Fréchette's usual device for adapting these stories to his readers' level of sophistication. In "Titange", the chasse-galerie won't fly. In "Tom Caribou", the man is treed and clawed by the bear, not because he refused to go to Christmas mass, but because he enraged the beast by spilling in its eyes some of the whiskey he kept hidden in a jug in the crotch of the tree. In "La Hère", the echo which talks back to people is the trick of a ventriloquist. And so on. These devices, whether or not we think them plausible in themselves, exactly answer the objections which readers might make to the stories on the grounds of so-called realism or common sense: of course canoes don't fly, of course echoes don't talk back, of course God doesn't set bears on you for not going to church, nor does He let the devil visibly carry somebody away.

II PROBLEMS OF STYLISTIC MAPPING FROM SL TO TL

There are, then, two levels of sophistication in the story: that of Jos Violon's audience, who believe légendes without question; and that of Fréchette's audience, who believe only what is common sense and explainable in terms of what they know. Which attitude is simpler or more ignorant, is not our topic. What is relevant for us is the ensuing dichotomy in the style of "Tipite Vallerand". In the main the text is as colourful and popular as the introductory narrator (the author) promises us that he will make it, and it is because the author is not himself the narrator that it is so colourful. Indeed, hardly any of Fréchette's contes which are not put in the mouth of Jos Violon have this popular element, and none have it to this degree, which can seldom have been equalled till the discovery of joual as a literary medium in the 1960's. On the other hand, the opening page of the conte has two "Victorian" or "bourgeois" features, namely, a jocosity which has somewhat dated, and a certain fondness for rhetoric.

This juxtaposition of sharply different styles is due to the use here of a "frame" device commonly used in the nineteenth-century short story and in fact much older than that, whereby the persona who speaks to us first (whom we may call the re-narrator, since he goes on to retell the story Jos Violon originally told) introduces the narrator. By this device the author, whom we assimilate with the person whose name is on the front cover and whom we assume to be non-fictitious, persuades us that the narrator is not fictitious either. (Whether he is or not, does not affect the form of this device). Since in turn the narrator is telling of events he has either heard from good authority or (as here) taken part in himself, we agree to believe the events also are real. All this is part of the technique of realism, designed to make us suspend our disbelief. In the present case, the author or re-narrator is a

professional writer and the narrator is a lumberjack who is also a storyteller, so that they inevitably speak in different styles, i.e. they use different levels of language.

It is common to include in the opening development, the frame, a description of the exotic landscape in which the true yet unheard-of event is set, on the grounds that the milieu explains the characters and their behaviour. Perhaps as a variant of this exercise, Fréchette gives us a character sketch of the narrator, Jos Violon. A braggart and a fairly hard drinker, he will, it is implied, offer us a fairly tall story. The reference to "des histoires de cambuse" is probably intended to reinforce this implication, for such tales also tended towards exaggeration. We are told also that the style of the first page is about to give way to a more colourful style.

The combined effect is that the re-narrator is sharply distinguished from the narrator. In so far as the former is presumably a person in the ordinary world, we already expect that the narrator will be extraordinary and take us out of the everyday. This expectation is at once confirmed when we encounter a second frame, and an unusual one at that. We are not now referring to the sentence in which Jos Violon tells us that one year he went logging on the Saint-Maurice, but before that, to the formula by which he gets his listeners' attention (p.156, l.1-3). It has rhyme, and it has lines (Cric, crac, cra; parli, parlo, parlons; sacatabi sac-à-tabac) which are virtually meaningless, paradigms of pure sound, dense in alliteration. In other words, these are not so much communicative statements as incantations to transport the listeners out of the everyday world into one of make-believe.[11]

The re-narrator does not reappear at the end of the conte, so that the first frame is not symmetrical. The second frame is, however: at the end of

his story, Jos Violon has a formula for returning his audience to the real world (p.166 l.6-8). It begins by repeating two of the incantatory lines from the opening formula (cric, crac, cra; sacatabi, sac-à-tabac!) and the first statement rhymes with them: "mon histoire finit d'en par là." Thus the audience is given a moment to accept that the flight of imagination is over, a fact which the final couplet confirms.

We see, then, that the conte consists of a first frame, and nested within it a second frame, and nested within that, the narrative proper. Since each of these three components is functionally and stylistically differentiated from the others, we feel justified in dividing our discussion of the problems encountered in translating the text into sections corresponding to these three parts.

A. The first frame: the re-narrator's style

We have said that two "Victorian" or "bourgeois" features distinguish the first page of the conte. The first appears in the following remark describing Jos Violon:

> Et au nombre de ... (ses faiblesses) - bien que le mot faiblesse ne soit peut-être pas parfaitement en situation - il fallait compter au premier rang une disposition, assez forte au contraire, à lever le coude plus souvent qu'à son tour. (p.155)

This is word play on the opposition faiblesse- force. The two words are underlined, lest the reader miss the joke, and we can almost hear Fréchette himself, who enjoyed telling funny stories, verbally stressing the two words as he tells this one. It is the sort of opposition of which the nineteenth century seems to have been fond, depending as it does on the kind of abstract categories, arranged in opposing pairs, which perhaps philosophical and

scientific schooling made the basis of their reasoning. Such a system of abstractions is the basis of Roget's Thesaurus (1st ed. 1852); one sees in Rimbaud's work an attempt to break out of it; and it is used as a source of humour, in exactly the same way as in the passage we are discussing, by W. S. Gilbert in HMS Pinafore (1878),[12] in this pun on high and low in their social connotations:

> Ralph (a sailor): You see, I'm only a topman - a mere foremast hand -
>
> Sir Joseph (the First Lord of the Admiralty): Don't be ashamed of that. Your position as a topman is a very exalted one.

It is apparent from what we have said that English was used in this way as often as French, and so it is stylistically possible to reproduce the joke in "Tipite Vallerand" based on an opposition, given that English has the two antonyms in question.

The other and more pervasive "Victorian" element is a certain oratorical fullness, a style soutenu. We may note on the first page a certain fondness for ternary rhythm (the three clauses in each of the first two sentences; the adjectives "hâbleur, gouailleur, ricaneur" at l.7; the three rivers at l. 13-14), and the use of two rhetorical questions in the second sentence. These features can be rendered in English without difficulty.

What is harder to handle is the tendency for this rhetorical style to intrude into the narrative proper, but we will leave this question till we have discussed the popular style of the narration.

B. The second frame: the narrator's incantations.

We have said (supra p.16) that the opening and closing formulae of Jos Violon's narration (p.156 l.1-3 and p.166 l.6-8) are incantations designed to transport the listener to and from the world of make-believe, and that rhyme

plays its part in this. Indeed, the formulae are poetic verses, as we can see if we set them out in their proper form. The first one would look like this:

"Cric, crac, les enfants! parli, parlo, parlons!
Pour en savoir le court et le long,
Passez le crachoir à Jos Violon!
Sacatabi sac-à-tabac,
A la porte les ceuses qu'écouteront pas!"

Clearly we have a rhyme scheme aaa bb. Moreover, the first and fourth lines, which are the first lines on each rhyme, are the most incantatory, most connotative and least denotative parts of the stanza, and they introduce lines which say what Jos wants (firstly to speak, and secondly to be listened to). It is the formula of a spell, in which the incantation calls up the magical power, and the second makes the request. Thus in "Titange" (Contes Vol. I p. 164), to make the chasse-galerie fly, Titange says: "Acabris, acabras, acabram, fais-nous voyager par-dessus les montagnes!"

Fréchette himself, in Christmas in French Canada (p.202), translated his formula as:

"Cric, crac, girls and boys!
Parlons, parlee, parlow!
The whole thing if you want to know,
(Pass the spittoon to Fiddler Joe!)
Sac-à-tabi, Sac-à-tabac,
All who are deaf will please draw back."

Our objections to this version are manifold.[13] The second line's transcription seems designed merely to amuse the English reader at the expense of the French-Canadian. The fifth line translates the words but not the meaning. And the last line does not convey either: it is mere filler to provide a rhyme for the untranslated mild oath which serves as an incantation in the line preceding - and which the anglophone reader does not even know is an oath.

Our own approach to the incantatory lines is that they must and do convey a meaning: their sonority has a function. "Cric, crac, cra" means "Attention!" (it is the sound of a whip being cracked) and "Parli, parlo, parlons" means "je vais parler". "Sacatabi, sac-à-tabac" is a mild oath (derived from sacré + noun), which no doubt made children giggle and won their allegiance; it is used here as an affirmation of the following line, which requests silence. We may therefore say that the form and the meaning are combined in one unit, or even that the form is the meaning. From this it follows that both form and meaning must be transferred. Unfortunately this is beyond our powers, and we have resigned ourselves to transferring the meaning in the alien form of plain statement. We still prefer this to Fréchette's strategy, in his translation, of not translating the incantation at all, merely transliterating it somewhat, and hoping the form would convey the meaning without the support of the source language. And we do at least have a rhyme scheme, apart from the first line.

The story ends with a closing formula having the same rhyme scheme and also a quadruple internal rhyme in /i/: cric, sacatabi, finit, ris. There is a difference from the opening formula in that the two incantatory lines are at the beginning:

"Et cric, crac, cra!
Sacatabi, sac-à-tabac!"

as if they were the spell to break the spell; while the three remaining lines, as we have said, lead the audience back to reality. Again we have rhymed the stanza except for the first line, put plain language for the incantations (faute de mieux), and given the general gist of the formula. Our first line is designed to be of the same form as the first line of the opening formula, to make the two formulae as parallel as possible; to the same end, we have

used an incorrection ("don't none of you...") as we did in the opening formula ("them what won't listen"). Our last rhyme is based on the assumption that an anglophone reader would pronounce "Vallerand" to rhyme with "demand" in any case.

C. The narrative proper: the narrator's style.

1. Vocabulary.

Obviously the opening and closing formulae of Jos Violon's narration would not be sufficient in themselves to hold his audience's attention, if in between he were unable to spellbind them by his storytelling skill. The sheer exuberance with which he speaks has its effect, but it also sets his translator problems which we shall come to in due course, in the syntactical domain. First, however, we will look at the difficulties caused by Fréchette's choice - it is hardly Jos Violon's choice, he could choose no other - of a popular style, one which enables Jos' audience to enter de plain-pied into the make-believe world he builds for them.

We assume that the popular words he uses which are common to metropolitan French also (e.g. "la margoulette", "le sifflet", "une grande bringue") require no comment. It is those words and phrases which are confined to other French dialects, which form part of the rich French-Canadian lexical heritage, which need explanation and discussion. (We will not, however, signal their occurrence in the dialects of France, since this is irrelevant to our purpose).

We will begin our survey of the problems posed by the dialectal vocabulary with those terms denoting a referent in the life of the time; firstly in the lumberjacks' life, and secondly in French-Canadian life in general. From there we will pass on to vocabulary whose difficulty is strictly lexical and not perilinguistic in nature. We will speak first of those items listed in

glossaries of the French-Canadian parler (some being also archaisms) and then of those which are not so listed. Some of the latter are evident deformations or conflations of known words. Finally we will tackle the complex problem of the sacres (swear words) in our conte.

It will thus be apparent that vocabulary problems are extensive - far more so, in fact, than morpho-phonetic or syntactical ones. Our discussion of these will thus be brief; it will form subsection 2 of this section.

a. The Lumberjack's Life

Some of the words Jos Violon uses in his narration, of course, relate to the lumberjack's trade, that special and glamorous occupation he calls "la vocation" (p.157 l.5). First of all we have to decide what we will call someone who practises it. The two most suitable terms are "logger" and "lumberjack". The former seems more in use in the U.S., the latter in Britain, and Canada, as often in matters of English usage, is somewhere in the middle. The Gage Canadian Senior Dictionary gives each as a definition for the other. However, the English-language Canadian books about the trade which we have seen all use the term "lumberjack". MacKay, in the most thorough study of the subject that we know, concurs in this usage, himself putting "logger" only as an occasional variant for "lumberjack", except when speaking of the British Columbia forest industry. He explains why he makes this exception: "West Coast 'loggers', who don't like to be called 'lumberjacks', figure that lumberjacks are those funny old fellows in tuques who danced on logs in eastern rivers" (p.9). Even if the term "lumberjack" were as outdated as this implies, it would still be the right one for Jos Violon, who is old, lived in the last century, no doubt wore a tuque, and took part in river drives. Accordingly, we have adopted it.

Jos also uses the term "un voyageur". If left untranslated, it might evoke in the anglophone reader an image of the fur trader of old, exploring vast unknown territories in his canoe, living on next to nothing and adopting the ways of the Indians he traded with. We are not asking the reader to abandon that image entirely. The lumberjack not only succeeded him on the waterways of Canada, he was likewise rough and unconventionally dressed - and likewise saw himself as superior to the farmer or city dweller. Fréchette evokes this figure in his Mémoires intimes:

> "Au printemps surtout, quand il débarquait de sa cage, et qu'il faisait son apparition après six mois passés en hivernement; quand de simple travaillant il était monté en grade au point d'avoir droit au titre de voyageur, il fallait voir sa désinvolture!"[14]

We do not find "lumberjack" less evocative than "voyageur"; it is one of the things a boy may still dream of becoming, though the trade has completely changed, as have those of the cowboy, the sailor and no doubt other romantic callings. We have used the same word for the synonym "les gens du chantier"; "shantymen" would be etymologically closer, but is surely less well known.

Jos' logging experiences centre around two places, according to Fréchette's introductory page: the cage and the cambuse. Jos himself also mentions la drave (p.158 l.27), which is simply the English term "drive", the process of floating the logs down a river, in spring, to the sawmill or (in Jos' day) to where they could be made up into a raft and from there taken down to a port, usually Quebec, to be exported. A cage (p.155 l.15) is such a raft.

A more difficult problem is presented by the term une cambuse. We know what it is: "(une) sorte de poêle rustique dans un camp de chantier, formé d'un cadre de charpente grossière, rempli de terre, et élevé de quelques pouces au milieu du logis" (Clapin). Even in this definition, however, we

should note that the "camp" was usually one large building which served as bunkhouse, kitchen and sometimes stable as well. In English this building was called a shanty, or more fully a camboose or cambuse shanty,[15] because it contained the cambuse. The difficulty lies, then, not in the denotation but rather in the varying micro-contexts in which it occurs in our conte.

Thus at p.155 l.15, Fréchette speaks of "une bonne histoire de cambuse", evoking evenings around the fire in the bunkhouse; "a good shanty story" seems the desirable expression here. At p.163 l.6, on the other hand, we are concerned with the actual construction of a shanty kitchen, which is opposed to the simpler device used at Bird Mountain. Hence we feel justified in speaking of "a regular kitchen", and opposing it to "a campfire". We have rendered "pendre la crémaillère" as "hang your pot over your campfire" because a crémaillère is indeed an iron crossbar attached to an upright and ingeniously made adjustable, from which the pot hung by its handle. Here again we hesitate to use the term by which the device was known, a cramier (surely the French term borrowed and anglicized), since it is not known today. Nor, we feel, would the modern reader know what was meant if we wrote "the cookery" (Cf. MacKay p.199) for "les ustensiles de couquerie" (p.162 l.30), so we have put "the cooking utensils".

The tool which Jos Violon speaks of using is the "grand'hache" (p.158 l.28). This is a wide-bladed axe, with one cutting edge like a chisel, and is used to trim the trunk of the felled tree to a square cross-section. Square timber (du bois carré) was shipped to England in large quantities in the 19th century; the trade in lumber for sawmills, for which the logs were rafted without being squared, only began about 1850. Thus Jos was a square-timber man, and perhaps he did not even fell trees, since in the logging trade people had their specialities.[16] His tool, then, was the broad-axe, and not the

felling axe (Fr. cognée), which had a heavy head but a narrow blade, to hit the cut in the tree with as much force as possible.

There is mention in the same paragraph of the "erminette" or adze, which was used to strip the bark off. However, here it is a metaphor for some part of Jos' solidly built body, and we can only guess which part. Since a shoulder blade bears some resemblance to an axe blade, and it certainly requires strong arms and shoulders to push and pull the logs in a river drive so that they do not turn broadside to the current and tangle with each other, we have guessed that "les erminettes" denotes the shoulders.

Another passage which may not be clear is Jos Violon's statement that he once spent three days sitting on a log in the middle of a jam. The reader may wonder why, assuming Jos' legs were not caught between the logs (in which case he could hardly have "come out of it safe and sound"), he did not walk across the jammed logs to shore. In fact, the dangerous time to be in a jam was when it broke, once the key log had been pulled out, and hundreds of logs four or six or twelve feet long, piled sometimes higher than a house, were swept away by the pent-up river. Not all the lumberjacks who were swept downstream managed to get to shore. We are presumably to imagine that Jos drifted, threatened by a mass of logs around him, for three days, until the log he was on beached itself, or until it touched a stable expanse of logs caught in a bay, and he could walk to shore. Can any part of these explanations be worked into the sentence in which Jos briefly refers to this experience, without losing the rhythm and verve of the narration? We think not.

That leaves the phrase "des chenaux jusqu'à la hauteur des terres" (p.157 l.31-2). If translated literally this may not be understood; certainly the implications we see here may not be transferred. For these two terms designate the whole course of the St. Maurice river. We read in Fr. Caron

(p.170) that "Ceux qui étaient familiers avec le Saint-Maurice lui ont... donné un sobriquet, ils l'ont nommé Les Chenaux." He takes this to refer to the three mouths of its confluence with the St. Lawrence, the feature which led an early trader to call it "la rivière des Trois Rivières" (whence the name of the city). We think the nickname could equally well refer to the difficulty of choosing the right channel to pass the many rapids. "La hauteur des terres" is the watershed between the Great Lakes basin, specifically the valley of the St. Maurice, and the Hudson Bay basin.

Arguably, the whole of Quebec known to lumberjacks at the time extended up river channels to the Great Lakes watershed; but another page in Fr. Caron confirms us in thinking that Tipite is presented "merely" as the self-appointed boss of the St. Maurice, not of all Quebec. For among the conversions achieved by a famous missionary to the logging camps of the valley, Fr. Chrétien, was that of a man "connu dans tous ces endroits par ses blasphèmes et son ivrognerie" and nicknamed "le Diable des chantiers du Saint-Maurice" (p.158-59). We suspect this page also of inspiring Fréchette to write our conte.

b. Quebec Life

Despite the strangeness of his stories, Jos Violon is not, of course, alien to his hearers' world; he is a Québécois like them, or rather, as they say, a Canadian. The term "un Canayen", however, is at once less and more specific than a mere denotation of country of residence. It is more specific at p.159 l.17-19, where something like a description of the "Canayen" character is given: "six bons Canayens qu'ont du poil aux pattes avec un petit brin de religion dans l'équipet du coffre." The components here are courage and religious faith, virtues which the "Canayen" shares (perhaps in

more modest degree) with missionaries and warrior-saints of old, who, like them, set out into the dangerous unknown.

The term is less restrictive at p.161 l.3, where "le mont à l'Oiseau" looks "le Canayen" up and down with evil intent. Regardless of who stops there - even though in practice only a "Canayen" as previously described would have occasion to do so - he will be surveyed in this way. And we would likewise argue that "un chrétien", on this and the next page of the conte, means no more than "un homme". For the only men to be found here would indeed be Catholic, which is why at p.161 l.16 "chrétiens" is used where "catholiques" would make more sense. The interchangeability of terms in this passage is proof that their meaning is as general as possible. It follows, of course, that "un protestant" ("un anglais") is outside the pale of humanity, or at least of the "Canayen's" experience, and a "sauvage" (an Indian) is even more so.

None of this is stated in the various glossaries, all of which render "Canayen" as "Canadien" without comment. Bergeron, however, does hint at the connotations of the word by adding the entry "Ca prend du canayen pour... : Ca prend du courage."

The combination of ruggedness and bravery with piety is perhaps not one an anglophone reader expects to meet; however, he can probably envision it. But the word "Canadian" will not evoke such a character for him, especially if he is Canadian. An English settler in Canada was called "a British subject", and the term "Canadian" was reserved to the French-speaking inhabitants, for some years after the conquest, but by the time Fréchette was born, the distinction had probably ceased to be made. So at p.159 l.17 we speak of "men" plus the qualities the context calls for. At p.161 l.3 it seems preferable to put "you", thereby giving Jos Violon's listeners and our hypothetical readers the

frightening sensation of being there. As for "chrétien", at p.162 l.20 it seems sufficient to put "anybody" even though damnation is evoked in the next sentence. At p.161 l.14-15, on the other hand, we have translated literally, following Fréchette's deliberate confusion between Christianity and Catholicism, since it characterizes the speaker.

We are not told what Jos Violon wore, but we are given a description of Tipite Vallerand's clothes (p.158 l.7-11), and they form a typical French-Canadian outfit of the old times. Two words here gave us pause. On reflection, a tuque (knitted woolen cap) is perfectly well known in English Canada and needs no explanation, but "une ceinture fléchée" is a different matter. It is an ancestor of the belt, and Clapin describes it as follows:

> "Ceinture de laine autrefois fort portée, surtout en hiver, et qui est ainsi nommée parce que, dans la trame, de nombreux fils de couleur se dirigent en tous sens en formes de flèches."

The correct term is an arrow sash, but while the reader probably knows what a sash is, "arrow" might convey nothing. So we have put "a woven sash", which describes the garment and at the same time provides some local colour.[17]

Another question that has to do with the whole Quebec way of life - and a perennial question it is, as all readers of Vinay and Darbelnet will know - is the question of the names of mealtimes. The evening meal in Quebec, which is mentioned in our story at p.163 l.13, still bears the old name of "le souper", whereas in France today it is called "le dîner". That is the easy part. The hard part is choosing the right term in anglophone usage, which fluctuates. To solve this problem, we have consulted MacKay's chapter on cooking in the logging camp (p.198-217), to see what his informants called their meals. We

see there that, while the noon meal is variously lunch and dinner, the evening meal is invariably supper. So supper it is.

With "une torquette" (p.156 l.23), however, we are on ground familiar to both cultures of Canada. Both French- and English-speaking lumberjacks chewed "plugs" of tabacco as an alternative to smoking them. Fréchette himself uses the word "quid", but we feel this is out of date.

Superstitions, as we have seen, are also found among all loggers, whether anglophone or francophone, and all readers know that they exist, whether they believe in them or not. However, this may not ease the task of the translator. Of the two varieties of supernatural creatures described in our conte, the gueulard is simpler. It is simply a hoarse yelling or shouting, perhaps in fact the wind.

"Les jacks mistigris" is an altogether more interesting term. The Petit Robert gives the following etymology for "mistigri", with no s: "de miste, variante de mite, nom du chat". (Miste according to von Wartburg, was an adjective meaning neat, elegant, pretty, amiable or sweet and a noun meaning a young person). So a mistigris is a grey cat, and as such, in Europe at least, would suggest a connection with witches. There is in English a word meaning a grey cat connected with witches, and that is graymalkin. It is the name of the familiar devil of one of the witches in Macbeth. Like misti, malkin was a word used of people before pets (though this is true of most pets' names): a diminutive of Mary, in Middle English it meant a young woman, especially a wanton one.

Unfortunately for our hopes of using such a colourful term, Shakespeare was the only writer to employ it as the name of a devil. Its normal meaning is an elderly female cat[18] or an ill-tempered old woman. Accordingly we have left "jack mistigris" untranslated. Since in French it does not inflect

in the plural, we have used it as a plural form, with the result that when a singular is required (p. 162 l.23), we have to put "a jack mistigri" - which is the form recorded in the Petit Robert!

Lastly, in this review of words referring to Quebec life, we must discuss the translation of personal names and toponyms. In this conte we have characters called Jos Violon, Tipite Vallerand and Tanfan Jeannotte, who respectively play the roles of narrator-witness, sinner, and instrument of the sinner's salvation. It would be possible to leave their names as is on the grounds that local colour should be preserved. However, if the "colourful" detail has a meaning, that meaning should surely be transferred into the target language.

In the case of Jos Violon, Jos is a diminutive of Joseph, as the text tells us, and we see no virtue in making his given name exotic when in the original it is down to earth, suitably for a man who has lived a hard life. We may add that it is customary, when speaking of this character, to pronounce Jos /džo/ in English fashion,[19] and that Fréchette spells the name as Joe in his Mémoires intimes and in his own translation of "Titange" and "Tom Caribou" in Christmas in French Canada. As for Violon, there is no mystery about this nickname, despite Fréchette's pretence to ignorance. Jos is obviously an accomplished storyteller, such people were always in demand in lumber camps,[20] and it is reasonable to suppose that, as the entertainer, he also played the violin for dancing, even though we do not see him doing so in any of the contes he tells. Between "Jos Fiddler", "Joe the Fiddler", and "Fiddler Joe", the latter seemed to us to have the best lilt.[21]

Nicknames in Quebec commonly consist of "Tit" (= petit) prefixed to given names to produce diminutive forms of them, as is done by various means in other languages; it is also affixed to words other than names. Thus Tipite =

petit Pete (the English form of the name, it will be noted) [22], while Tanfan = petit enfant. Again, we could leave these utterly un-English-looking names untranslated in the name of local colour, but we would argue that the protagonists are not from another world, they are flesh and blood like Jos Violon himself, who really lived and spoke to a real audience.

By the same token, we maintain that place names should be given in an English form, to make clear that they are real and solid places, even if strange and wonderful things happened there. For, as we have said, this conte is a légende, a cautionary tale, and such tales are told of historically identifiable people to whom strange and wonderful things happened in ordinary, geographically identifiable places. It will be objected that the Mont à l'Oiseau "ain't no ordinary place." We would reply that any place may be seen as out of the ordinary if the imagination works on it; this is a basic process of creating fiction. And that all the places in the conte are real is attested to by the Canada survey map.

The striking thing about the toponyms here is that they are very ordinary:[23] the names of tributaries of the Saint-Maurice translate into Rat, Caribou, Skunk; and the mountain becomes Bird - either, says Fr. Caron (p.38-9), because of a fanciful perception of its shape, or because night birds gather there and make an unearthly din. (He speaks of the superstitions surrounding the spot, which Fréchette has embroidered on). St. Jean des Piles, according to Fr. Caron (p.9), is named for the grindstones used by Indians to grind their corn when they were coming south to trade their furs. Even an Indian name may be changed into an ordinary French word; thus Fr. Caron reports (p.27), the Manigonse Rapids, named for an Indian family, became the Manigance, as if because "il faut se donner beaucoup de mouvement pour la remonter." So strong is the instinct to tame the wilderness with ordinary

names, which this story reveals, that we are confirmed by it in our feeling our place names should be as ordinary as possible, and therefore in English. The settlers of English - speaking North America, after all, did the same thing, and so the anglophone readers of this conte should feel at home with such a procedure. We cannot, of course, apply it to the names of well-known towns (Trois-Rivières, St. Jean des Piles), but to natural features we can.

However, if these features have English names already, we should consider adopting those. The thing is to discover if they do. It has been many years since the Répertoire Toponymique du Québec gave English forms at all; the present Quebec government is firmly in favour of monolingual toponyms. The Federal government prefers French forms to be used, but it does have English ones in most of the cases we are concerned with. Unfortunately they are English only in their classifiers: Manigance Rapids, Cuisse Rock, Bêtes Puantes River, and Oiseau Creek. The Rivière aux Rats is not even half-translated.[24] Thus there exist no full translations of these toponyms, and so we have invented some.

c. French-Canadian Dialect Words

We encountered also vocabulary problems whose solution does not depend on knowledge of the lumberjacks' or French-Canadians' way of life, on the kind of factors which Vinay and Darbelnet call metalinguistic but to which we will give the less ambiguous modern label of perilinguistic. All that is needed for the next class of items is a shelf of glossaries.

Actually the translator into English does not need a glossary for one section of this class, namely borrowings from English: un boss, une gang, watcher, une twist. He does, however, need to consider if the borrowed word is the best one for the English version. "Boss" (p.157 l.2) is correct.

"Gang" (p.165 1.4), is acceptable, though "crew" would perhaps be better, since the men are lumberjacks but also at present the oarsmen of a canoe, and one speaks of a crew in both fields. "Was watching" is likewise acceptable for "watchait" (p.162 1.32), but "was supervising" seems more in keeping with Tipite's job; the term is perhaps too modern, but it is not confined to administrative style (cf. a sidewalk supervisor). At p.165 1.14, however, "had been watching" is better. As for "une twist" (p.165 1.18), the word does not have the meaning of "a practical joke" in English; the closest meaning it does have is a trick, device as in "all the old twists of oratory" (fide Webster). We should also list here the word "bâdrer" (p. 157, 1.17), a borrowing of the English verb to bother, where again we had to decide if the English word had the right meaning for the context. We think it does.

We turn now to the Canadian French words and phrases which occur in the glossaries. We recall that one or two words gave rise to discussion elsewhere in this thesis (une tôte, un patois)[25] and therefore we will not repeat that discussion here. Both here and in Appendix I, where we have put the great majority of cases because they are straightforward, we refer to the most helpful reference work, the Glossaire du parler français du Canada, as G. The titles of other compilers' works will be found in the bibliography.

Se métiner (p.158 1.14) is rightly a verb describing rebelliousness and obstinacy in a child or a horse; here it is used of a river. Since une rivière is feminine, with the result that the river is called une bougresse, we think it justifiable to see here a personification: rivers are violent and unreasonable in the way women seem violent and unreasonable to angry men.[26] The personification is only hinted at, however, and the translator should not spell it out. He does not have the advantage of grammatical gender to help him to do so: "bugger", unsurprisingly when we consider its original meaning,

has no feminine form. We trust that "gets out of hand", an expression which can be used of people and things, will be hint enough.

Insécrable (p.156 l.19). G gives "Intolérable." We think it is a variant form of sacrable, which Pichette defines as "détestable, qui fait sacrer." If the prefix in- is negative, we can perhaps explain this by saying that a person so described is somebody one cannot stand; but we doubt if it is negative. It is more plausible to assume it is intensive. The irony of using this deverbative in this context is clear enough: Jos Violon remembers the sacreur with so much annoyance qu'il sacre. No doubt he does it deliberately, enjoying the effect. We have tried to reproduce the element of surprise which is essential to the joke, and which the French sentence achieves by its succession of phrases qualifying the object "Tipite Vallerand".

In one case - maganer (p.164 l.7) - the glossaries were less helpful insofar as they offered too many possibilities, and our choice of one was necessarily arbitrary. Three of the four meanings in G seem plausible here: 1° Maltraiter, malmener; 2° Fatiguer (though it seems to relate to physical weariness, and if our villain could be said to weary God, it would be in the sense of ennuyer); 3°... salir. We contented ourselves with transferring the first meaning, by putting "abuse".

In another case we translated non-figuratively what is, in Canadian usage, a metaphor. "A quelque détour" (p.156 l.16) means simply "one of these days". However, we have no doubt that Fréchette used the expression because he was struck by the aptness of the image in an account of a journey by canoe, and so we have left it to the anglophone reader to work out the metaphorical meaning for himself.

A number of glossary entries prove to be not quite what is required by a particular context. This is the case with:

débriscailler (p.159 l.17). G gives the past participle, spelled with an â, as a variant of débiscâillé without an r. Under the entry for that form we read "1° Bossué, déformé, brisé (en parlant des choses), 2° Fatigué, brisé (en parlant des personnes)". However, the meaning called for by the context is rather "ennuyer, irriter".

"Massacrer" (p.159 l.22) is obviously used here in a much weakened sense, since nobody has died. It can mean "maltraiter", but this still refers to physical abuse, whereas in our conte the abuse is verbal. The participle "massacrant", however, means "furious"; standard French has the expression "être d'humeur massacrante", and Bergeron offers the example: "I a un air massacrant à matin". So our sentence means "you can't go on being furious with people." This is still not quite accurate, and in the context Jos did not need to spell out what the unacceptable behaviour was, so we have made him simply refer to it: "you can't just go on treating people like that."

Un marabout (p.160 l.2). G: Individu irritable, grincheux, grondeur, peu endurant. The English for this would be "grouch, grump, grumbleguts", but none of them seem strong enough for Tipite Vallerand's character. We have put "foul-tempered so-and-so", but that is perhaps still too weak for someone apparently subject to homicidal fury.

Manger son ronge (p.160 l. 11). G: s.v. manger, 10°: souffrir la raillerie sans y répondre. This definition is helpful if we extend the cause of the suppressed reaction to cover more than raillerie! -Ibid., s.v. ronge, 2°: Mâcher son ronge: ... = ronger son frein, (prop. et fig.); the figurative expression means, according to the Petit Robert, "contenir difficilement son impatience, son dépit", i.e. frustrated anger. That is closer to Tanfan Jeannotte's emotion. DesRuisseaux, s.v. ronge, quotes this passage of our conte and glosses the expression as "Etre pensif, renfrogné". This seems to

us completely the wrong emotion. The man isn't sulking!

Ca s'appelle "touches-y pas" (p.160 l.27). G, s.v. Touches-y pas: ce n'est pas pour toi. DesRuisseaux explains in what context it is used: "Se dit pour éloigner celui qui voudrait s'emparer de quelque chose qui nous appartient en propre." However, we must clearly put here something a little different from, say, "That's mine, keep your hands off it!"

Faire de la broche (p.161 l.7). G, s.v. broche 8°: faire l'amour, parler d'amour, conter fleurettes (à une jeune fille). Our first rendering of this expression was "to go courting", but this ignored the sexual innuendo of the "broche". We hope that "cuddle up to" provides enough of a knowing wink or nudges the reader in the ribs sufficiently.

Une fricassée (p.162 l.13) is here used in a sense far from the usual one, which is a rabbit or chicken stew. However, von Wartburg lists a meaning attested in 1808 which suits our context better: "Ancienne danse à figures irrégulières."[27] Clearly the spirits of the Mont à l'Oiseau do a sort of dance whose random movements bewilder the eye.

Some phrases have a function rather than a meaning, and a communicative translation rather than a semantic one[28] is necessary. In our conte it transpires that "pour dire comme on dit" (p. 156 l.21) is such a phrase. DesRuisseaux explains it as follows: "locution fort usitée...qui sert d'introduction à une affirmation péremptoire." The phrase is thus one of a number which Jos Violon interpolates into his narration, not indeed to be peremptory - one feels it is rather an effect of the force and enthusiasm he puts into the act of storytelling - but certainly to affirm the truth of what he is saying. It is thus comparable with other expressions such as "C'est Jos Violon qui vous dit ça", "je vous dis que", "je vous le persuade", and the

like. For all of these we have put a variety of phrases in English, chosen according to the context.

So much for the expressions which are purely Canadian-French, or which occur only in Canada and in dialects of France (we have not marked the dialect occurrences in Appendix I, but they are frequent). Other expressions seem to be not only dialectal but also archaic; we might expect this, since archaisms commonly survived in regions away from metropolitan centres. Naturally one must beware of seeing archaisms where they are not. Thus, on discovering that "nager" is a doublet of "naviguer" and formerly had the same meaning, one is tempted to translate "On nageait fort toute la journée" (p.157 l.8) as "we steered hard all day". But only Tipite Vallerand was steering. Nager is here used in an uncommon but modern sense: "Mar(ine). Ramer, aller à l'aviron" (Petit Robert), a sense found also at p.163 l.19-22.

Three of the words which occur in the conte, however, are genuine archaisms, to the point that they are entered in dictionaries of former states of the French language. Thus the highly expressive verb "écrapoutir" (p.158 l.4 = écraser) is to be found not only in G but also in Huguet.[29] "Aveindre" (p.160 l.2) is given in G ("Aller prendre un objet à la place où il est rangé, ...tirer d'un lieu"), but also in Huguet where it is defined in like terms: "prendre (une chose), la tirer du lieu où elle était placée", and in von Wartburg (s.v. advenire), as an Old French word, with the meaning "atteindre". It is in fact a doublet of avenir and advenir. Likewise "une souleur" (ibid. l.9) is given in Clapin ("Crainte, terreur, peur") but also in Huguet ("Crainte").

For other words it was not necessary to search so far, since the Petit Robert listed them with the mark "V(ieu)x". Thus we should perhaps call them obsolete in standard French rather than archaic. Two have ceased to be used,

namely "un jurement" (p.164 l.10, "Exclamation, imprécation sacrilège proférée par dérision ou dans une intention d'offense"), and "ris" (p.166 l.7, "rire"). "Abîmer" (p.158 l.5) has changed its meaning; it now means "to damage" but the meaning here is the old one of "précipiter dans un abîme." We are not sure if "crochir" (p.163 l.8) could be seen as an archaism or not. G gives it, with the meanings of "rendre crochu, tordre, fausser, courber," of which we choose the last. Huguet[29] gives it, with the meaning of "recourber". However, Fréchette himself provides evidence of a French-Canadian tendency to re-form first-conjugation verbs into second-conjugation ones. In "Le Diable des Forges" (Contes Vol.2 pp.242-257) he enjoys himself with this feature, using the forms trouvirent, tirit, laissis, occupis, regagnis, commencit, sarchit (= chercha), comptis, encouragit, and jouît (= jouât).

And there remain also a few words which are in the dictionary, but with meanings different from those they must have in our conte. Some are swear words and will be treated in the next section. Apart from these, "bonasse" (p.159 l.4) is usually pejorative, used of someone afraid to fight rather than calmly peaceable. The Robert-Collins has "meek and mild, soft*" (the asterisk indicating a familiar expression). This description hardly fits Jos Violon, so we have used "easy-going", which is also in the Robert-Collins and is not pejorative.

The use of "tout de suite" for "d'abord" (p.160 l.31) is not ratified by any reference work we have consulted, but such is clearly the literal meaning here. However, it seems unsatisfactory to repeat the component 'first point', putting something like "To start with, those black holes don't look inviting first off"[30]. Besides, the functional meaning of "tout de suite" here seems to be to intensify "pas beau", and so we have put a phrase which does

that: "...don't look inviting, not one bit." Une frime means "une apparence trompeuse" (Petit Robert), but at p.161 l.2 "faire la frime de" clearly means "to seem to" with no implication of deceit. "Ces poissons-là" (p. 161 l.27) and "ces documents-là" (p. 163 l.17) clearly mean "ces individus-là." We would love to know how "documents" came to be used in this sense - is it a deformation of another word? - but we can find nothing.

Une corporation in standard French means the body of people exercising a given profession, and is coming to mean a business corporation, yet "de tous les gabarits et de toutes les corporations" (p.162 l.1) clearly, in the context, means " of all shapes and sizes". French-Canadian glossaries give meanings closer to this than dictionaries of standard French: Bergeron gives the meaning "corpulence" for corporation, while the Glossaire gives corporence with this meaning and bien corporé with the sense of "bien pris de sa taille". At p.162, l.15 we find "les osselets", rightly small bones, especially of the eardrums, used to mean simply "les os".

The last case of unusual use of an attested word occurs in the curious intensifying clause (or such seems to be its function) "que c'était comme une rente" (p.163 l.28). A rente, of course, is any unearned income which one receives regularly. By analogy, we might take it to mean that Tipite's swearing has virtually gotten to be a regular habit. But we know it really has, so why "comme"? It is more plausible that both components of rente matter here, 'regularity' and 'receipt'. Perhaps, then, the phrase means the swearing was so bad, and his hearers felt they had been "served" it so often, that they were fed up with it (to pay a regular pension or similar income in French is servir une rente).

d. Words not attested.

A few words in the conte are not in any French dictionary or any French Canadian glossary. Whether they occur (or occurred) quite commonly, or whether they are more or less hapax legomena, we do not know. Thus the approximate meaning of "défouir" (p.157 l.19) in this context is "to be shocked", but the nearest meaning to this that we can find for the word is "fuir, éviter", and that occurs in the Saintongeais dialect of France (fide von Wartburg): it is indeed a form of fuir and has nothing to do with enfouir.

p.157 l.21 la sainternité. Fréchette translates "la saintarnité" in "Tom Caribou" as "the Holy Trinity" (Christmas p.206). In other words "la sainternité" must be a corruption of "la sainte Trinité". This is philologically plausible (metathesis tri/tir with opening of /i/> /e/ or further, before /r/), and one can also imagine a confusion between the synonymous prefixes ter- and tri-. We think the English-speaking reader will remember the formula "the Father, Son and Holy Ghost", and so we have put that.

p.162 l.22 emmorphosé. en - is an eminently reasonable prefix for a verb meaning to change into, and Jos Violon has substituted it for méta- in métamorphoser. In English, "to immorphose" or "to inmorphose" sounds implausible; the style our translation should have calls rather for adding unnecessary syllables. Perhaps also an anglophone storyteller would standardize the suffix. We have thus coined the verb "to metalamorphize". Alternatively, since an English speaker is at least as likely to use "transform" as "metamorphose", we offer "translated" (as in A Midsummer Night's Dream, but perhaps it would be resented by the reader as a translatorial intrusion), "transfirmed" (but it might be misread as a misprint), or "transmogglified" (from "transmogrified", a jocular and old-fashioned word which belongs in Fréchette's vocabulary rather than Jos

Violon's, but perhaps this objection to the undeformed word rules out the deformation also).

p.163 l.19 des malcenaires, for "des mercenaires". No doubt this form means no more than "mercenaires", despite the syllable "mal-"; the phonetic changes /e/> /a/ and /r/> /l/ are not unknown. In the present context, however, "paddling like mercenaries" seems a sufficiently unusual collocation that the reader might fail to understand a deformed variant of it. Indeed, the collocation itself seems unusable. So we have instead adopted an équivalence: "when you've been working like a black paddling upstream". ("Like a dog paddling upstream" would evoke an irrelevant image of a dog swimming with that ineffective stroke rightly called the dog paddle).

There is one image so fanciful that its meaning remains obscure even with the help of the context: "le blanc d'Espagne" (p.158 l.28). Dionne gives a very simple definition: "craie". But this is something in Jos Violon's wrists (presumably in both wrists) which enables him to swing a broad-axe. One can only assume it is strength or muscle, a strange meaning for something as brittle as chalk.

There are likewise a number of phrases unknown to the dictionaries and glossaries, perhaps in perfectly common use and perhaps unique to our conte, very probably occurring with a frequency in between those two extremes, whose meaning can in any case be deduced from their component parts and the context:

"Faire au bois" (p.156 l.7) seems to be a calque of the English expression "to make timber",[31] which was used in the trade. We find it only in Bergeron, who defines it as "couper du bois de chauffage". As "to cut wood" might also mean that household chore, which is the wrong meaning for the context, we have instead spoken of "logging".

"Le jeune homme", for the devil (ibid. 1.16), is most probably a little joke of the storyteller's, designed to arouse laughter by causing surprise. The devil is usually thought of as old, older than humanity; it is almost as if his great age accounts for his cunning.

"Donner des ordres sur les quat'faces" (de quelqu'un), (p.157 1.29) while not listed anywhere, does recall such expressions as "cracher à la face de quelqu'un", implying personal, direct and violent insult. (For his orders seem to have taken that form). At the same time, "sur les quat'faces" implies filth being poured over one's head and running down on all sides, an image which evokes how it no doubt felt to have this language coming at one all day. We wish we could give our phrase "he was giving them [orders] left and right" this added connotation.

"Retrousser le nez" (p.159, 1.8), for "relever le nez", i.e. to look up, is no doubt influenced by the expression "un nez retroussé", a turned-up nose, i.e. one of a certain shape. One thinks also of another glossaire entry, namely "retrousser la queue", which it defines as "regimber". This is indeed the sense, and since the expression is thus a synonym for "se rébicheter", it seems better to omit it.

"Remonter le sifflet" (ibid., 1.19) is decidedly obscure. In so far as "le sifflet" in popular French can mean "la gorge", we have guessed that to pull one's chest up is to "hold up one's head" proudly, an expression that always implied "walking tall" with the whole body. It is true that "le sifflet" can mean "la gorge" in the sense of the throat, not the chest.

"Ce n'est pas une conduite" (p.159, 1.21) can be understood if we remember that "avoir de la conduite" means "to be well-behaved" (Harrap). Thus "une conduite" is not merely any behaviour, but good behaviour, and if a behaviour

is not a "conduite", it is bad behaviour. Modern French says "c'est pas des façons" with the same meaning.

e. Les sacres

The most obviously "popular" feature in Jos Violon's language still remains to be tackled, and that is the presence of a considerable amount of strong language. The great majority of it, as usual in Quebec usage, is more or less blasphemous. Indeed, the near-coincidence of the semantic field of swearing and blasphemy in Canadian French has led the author of the best book on the subject, Jean-Pierre Pichette, to make no distinction between a sacre and a juron, and indeed to use the term juron throughout his study. Yet there is, as Legaré has pointed out, a distinction to be made, for juron is a hyperonym of sacre: "Tout sacre est un juron, non l'inverse. 'Marde!' est un juron non sacre."[32] What "marde!" lacks, of course, is "la connotation du sacré". A sacre is a word which, in the context in which it is used, connotes someone or something holy but denotes something else, the expression of an emotion like anger or admiration or contempt or of the felt need to affirm one's statement forcibly.

Pace Pichette, and in accordance with Legaré and others, we will speak throughout this section, as we have hitherto, of les sacres, un sacreur (he who uses them), le sacrage (the act of using them), etc. We will thus also be in agreement with Jos Violon and with everyday Quebec usage. In English, one may speak of swearing, profanity, and oaths, all of which relate specifically to using holy words in vain; other forms of juron one calls vulgar or obscene language.

The literal meanings of les sacres, then - Legaré's "lost" denotations - include, as will readily be recalled, the persons of the Holy Trinity, the

saints (including the mother of Christ), all ranks of priests, the sacraments, and what we may call religious objects, especially those used in the Mass.[33] These denotations are, we suspect, not entirely lost, or there would be no satisfaction in swearing by them, and Legaré's informants who claimed they did not perceive these words as blasphemous (p.130) may have been somewhat on the defensive. It is true that swear words tend to lose their force in time, and indeed the more openly they are used the faster they are weakened, a fact that raises for the translator a problem to which we shall return.

In any case we would have to know what Legaré's informants meant by blasphemous. Charest (p.17) was told that there were, in ascending order of force, jurons, sacres and blasphèmes; like Pichette, he learned that a blasphème is a sacre preceded by the further sacre "maudit", or otherwise qualified so as to debase the holy person or object involved.[34] Despite the apparent precision of this commonly held belief, it may well serve as a salve for the conscience of the sacreur, who can always claim that at least he doesn't blaspheme - a verb whose meaning is then somewhat flexible, approximating to "to swear worse than I do".

Pichette traces the history of le sacrage in France and French Canada. He is thus taking up a story no doubt as old and extensive as humanity itself, dating back to a hypothetical "first man to" use the name of something he regarded as holy in order to affirm a statement or relieve an emotion. In France, it seems, the practice was always officially condemned; punishments for it included cutting off the offender's lips and removal of his tongue, banishment combined with the destruction of one's house, or hanging. These are punishments of medieval brutality, and the remarkable thing is that they remained on the statute books till the Revolution and were still applied in

Louis XIV's day, though Pichette considers they were used as a cover to persecute Protestants and Jews. (p.106) He is led to this conclusion by the fact that in French Canada, where there were only Catholics, prosecutions for swearing were rare and never entailed worse punishment than fines, short prison terms, or a few hours of public humiliation in devices similar to a pillory. (p.113-20)

The irony of the situation in France was that, especially in the sixteenth century, the king and the nobles considered it fashionable to swear. Henri IV, having taken to saying "jarnidieu" (= je renie Dieu),

> "en fut vertement réprimandé par son confesseur, le révérend Père Cotton. 'Eh bien! fit le roi, si cela vous déplaît tant, c'est vous désormais que je renierai et je dirai jarnicoton!" (p.108)

We see here another feature of swearing. In the face of disapproval, people accustomed to swear develop milder forms of their favourite oaths to avoid offending other people or to avoid being punished. The ordinary citizens of France were certainly in danger of severe punishment if they swore, and their rulers set them not only the problem of how to relieve their feelings safely but also the example of how to solve it. Or so Pichette maintains; but these milder forms are found in medieval texts already, and in fact a popular origin seems perfectly plausible. At all events

> "les Français ne renoncèrent pas à leurs jurements pour autant; tout au plus les transformèrent-ils pour échapper aux législations ecclésiastiques. De là viendraient les morbleu, tudieu, vertuchou et autres jurons qui colorent les plus belles pages de Rabelais et de Molière." (p.109)

This circumvention of the law, of course, called for ingenuity and became a game. Bougaïeff (p.842) rightly speaks of the role of the play instinct in creating these modified swear words, and Guy Robert (p.62) calls swearing "un sport oral."

French rulers, then, with the notable exceptions of Louis IX and Louis XIV, set a bad example in so far as they themselves swore. Indeed, they tended to adopt one particular expression as their trademark. François I, a religious man according to the Chronicler Brantôme, said "Foy de gentilhomme", which is no more than an affirmation, but Charles IX used "par la mort Dieu" and "par le sang Dieu", oaths for which his subjects could be - and were - punished severely. Regardless of the mildness or awfulness of their trademark expressions, however, the important point is that they had them; and this custom also no doubt filtered down to all classes and emigrated to Canada along with the habit of swearing (against which Church and State alike fulminated from the moment the colonies were founded). The French have, it seems to us, lost the custom, but it is flourishing in Quebec, where one's personal blasphemous expression is called one's patois. Tipite Vallerand, in our conte, has his.

Thus swearing, the use of minced oaths to avoid punishment, and the patois, have always been features of French-Canadian life and language. Today they have reached a remarkable degree of development, both in numbers and in the ease with which they can be formed. Evidence of their great number is afforded by Pichette, both in his thorough "recueil" or "dictionnaire des jurons" (p.167-289) and in some figures he gives. (p.17-18) He himself began his collection by remembering as many sacres as he could; 167 came to mind. After talking to a few people, he had increased this number to 328, and the

hundred or more people who responded to a questionnaire raised the total to over 1800. Each person surveyed could recall, on average, 130.6 sacres.[35]

A partial cause, effect or both of such fluency is the existence of swearing contests, the object of which is to swear longer and more horribly than anyone else. They may occur even today, in any social milieu, though Pichette reports (p.85-86) that his informants were reluctant to talk about them (often, to be sure, they knew about them only by hearsay). They are most closely associated, however, with lumberjacks, who according to one informant used to hold them every Saturday night as part of their leisure activities. They could produce string of oaths lasting, depending on which of Pichette's informants one believes, two or three minutes or half an hour. Pichette quotes the achievement of Tipite Vallerand in winning "la torquette du diable" in the contest at Bytown, three years running, but he does not offer an opinion as to whether it took place. He does confirm that the town of Sorel had a reputation for swearing; indeed, it is among the place-names he lists as sacres![36]

One reason for this great development of sacres is that they may change their part of speech easily, surely more easily than non-taboo words. As Legaré puts it (p.141):

> "Le champ d'évolution du sacre est celui du niveau populaire caractérisé par une plus grande liberté vis-à-vis de la norme. De la transgression des règles de la langue commune, à celle des tabous culturels, il y a une analogie frappante."

A second is that, confronted with the necessity of resorting to milder or disguised[37] sacres to escape reproof, the Québécois seem have used every known device for derivation: prefixation, infixation, suffixation, loss of the first or last syllable, change of a consonant, vowel or syllable, and combination of two sacres in one word (e.g. câlice + ciboire = câliboire)

by a process Pichette (p.35) calls agglutination. The change of a consonant or vowel is frequently designed to produce a pun, as in the case of joual vert for calvaire. Be it said that the sacres can be intensified, but the methods for achieving this which Legaré lists are common in standard language also: words are linked together in phrases, repeated, qualified with intensifiers (in this cause maudit usually performs this function), or else the pronunciation is varied (e.g. viarge) or a syllable is stressed (e.g. bap in baptême). No doubt one method of intensification, that of amalgamation (as in je m'en décontresaintciboirise!), is more specific to this level of language.

We may wonder why this hypertrophy has occurred in Quebec, while swearing by what is holy has become a minor class of expletive in France. When Pichette remarks that all anti-blasphemy laws were swept away by the French Revolution, he suggests to us a historical explanation. People are especially tempted to do what is forbidden. In Quebec, swearing was reproved by a church which had been granted considerable moral power. The historical reason for this power is that, after the English conquest in 1759, the Québécois' identity had to depend on two factors, their language and their religion; the Church thus become unusually pervasive in everyone's life. At the same time it proved to be a very severe moral guardian. The effect of the pervasiveness, specifically of regular Church attendance reinforcing education in Church schools, was that people searching for words to express their anger naturally fell back on what Pichette calls "ce vocabulaire liturgique encore mal digéré."[38] The effect of the severity was to cause resentment, which, we would speculate, is the cause of a phenomenon noted by Pichette: even today the Church is blamed for interfering in matters which are not its concern, and for keeping Quebec backward. Pichette does not agree with this anticlerical view. Charest does, maintaining further that the Church asked

for blind obedience and left the Québécois uneducated, and he argues that "Sacrer, c'était se venger de ne pouvoir comprendre ce qui nous dominait."[39]

Apart from these historical considerations, geographical factors may have influenced the development of Quebec sacres. Pichette accepts what is commonly argued: the French Canadians found themselves in a harsh land infinitely vaster than they, and survival required the sort of brute masculine strength which goes with violent language. Indeed, those who went out to earn a living in the great open spaces felt that to compete with this landscape they had to be larger than life. "Dans la bouche du Canadien," says Pichette (p.89), "le juron a une saveur de défi." This argument would apply less to those who settled in towns, and it is not even very valid for a farmer, if he inherited the land already cleared and put into production. It is a valid argument, though, for those who began leading a life of very hard physical labour in untouched forest, at the beginning of the last century. We mean, of course, the lumberjacks. The church had no doubt that the sudden sharp increase in the incidence of swearing at that time was due to the new logging industry (ibid. p.132). A lumberjack, indeed, was away from civilization for long periods and thus came to feel freed from conventional morality.[40] It is certainly the case that people who go into a remote place may say it is "God-forsaken", perhaps expressing a confusion between God's extent and that of the network of churches.[41] This may also be letting slip a feeling that indeed they are forsaken, and afraid. There is perhaps more than one note in Tipite Vallerand's exclamation that "Y en a pas de bon Dieu par icitte!"

At all events the lumberjacks were the object of constant efforts on the part of the Church to persuade them that their swearing endangered their salvation. No doubt the good Abbé Caron's book about the Saint-Maurice, published in 1892, which contains cautionary tales about loggers who are

hauled off to hell for swearing, and which Fréchette surely read,[42] was part of this continual effort.

Before we turn to the translation of the sacres in this particular case, namely our conte, we must discuss the problems raised by their translation in general. The chief difficulty, of course, is selecting words of the right strength in English: we have to reconcile the needs of the context with the strength of the oath in French. This task is complicated by the fact that Fréchette published his story in 1892, and we are translating in 1982. The use of swear words is tolerated far more today than formerly. Therefore the translator must decide whether to use English swear words strong enough to produce the required effect on today's reader, at the risk of distorting any nineteenth-century atmosphere the story may have, or whether to use oaths which (so far as one can tell) would have produced the required effect on the English reader of 1892, at the risk of not producing it today. It is relevant to the problem that the same loss of force has affected les sacres in Québec. Ludmila Bovet (p.39) reports that maudit has recently become "très faible, parfois même pas considéré comme un juron," while Nancy Huston (p.64) claims that hostie in its elided pronounciation of /sti/ "can serve to punctuate any conversation, a little like 'you see'." If the Québec reader of today does not react to the sacres the way readers did ninety years ago, then the story may need modernising, i.e. the swear words should be stronger than perhaps a glossary would indicate.

We are thus asking a great deal of the available dictionaries and glossaries. Not only do we want them to do what they should do for any semantic field, namely cover it adequately; since we are dealing with a Quebec linguistic feature, we also want them to cover Quebec usage adequately. And now we are further asking them, between them, to provide a diachronic picture

of the changing force of les sacres, to help us to decide whether to translate "in period" or for a modern public. At least Quebec glossaries dating back to the 1890's have been republished.

Unfortunately, the dictionaries and glossaries are not very helpful. When we say that we wish to see them deal adequately with swear words, we mean that they should list them and also give a fairly detailed gradation of their degrees of unacceptability. The dictionaries which attempt this, however, come from Britain and France. Thus the Robert-Collins gives clear definitions for the three levels of language which are to be used with caution, and indicates which level the expressions it lists belong to by putting one, two or three asterisks which refer us to these definitions; but it does not list any of the expressions in question, or else they have nothing like the meaning appropriate to our text (e.g. "sacre" is given as "consecration"). Even if it did, we would still be unable to establish the necessary diachromic perspective. We could do so to a limited extent by using successive editions of the Harrap, but it does not list the expressions we want either. Judging by its erratically wide range of translations of some metropolitan French swear words,[43] it might not be very reliable if it did list Quebec ones. Nor would we be able to rely for help on its classification of degrees of unacceptability, which is too terse: "colloquial", "uneducated speech", and "vulgar, not in polite use."[44]

We thus turn to Quebec glossaries, expecting to find all the expressions we are looking for. We are disappointed, because the sacres are surprisingly often omitted. There are six of them in our conte, and we find very few entries about any of them:

Torrieux is given in Bergeron (without the -x), and marked simply "Juron." Pichette adds that it is derived from "tonnerre de Dieu".

Tord-nom is called a "Juron inoffensif" by Bergeron, and Pichette says it is probably derived from "tonnerre d'un nom de Dieu," which we find a surprising speculation.

Maudit is listed by Pichette without comment. Bergeron calls it a "Juron" as an interjection, and glosses the noun as "coquin."

Calvaire is likewise listed without comment in Pichette and as a "juron" in Bergeron.

Crime, on the other hand, warrants an entry in Bélisle ("sorte de juron"), and G glosses it as "Diable." Pichette and Bergeron both explain that it is an attenuated form of Christ (thus Pichette) or Crisse (Bergeron). (We wonder if it is not rather derived from chrême, though that word is not listed in the form crime in von Wartburg). As for the expression "aller vous faire sacre", no glossary gives it at all. The nearest expression to it, in the extensive entries on sacre and related terms, is "aller au sacre" (= aller au diable). We mention this because Pichette quotes as an example precisely the sentence in our conte in which the expression occurs. This, however, is reading sacre as a noun, and it must be an infinitive. We assume it is rather a synonym for ficher, and we are confirmed in this view by the remark in Clapin under ficher le camp: "On dit aussi, dans un sens plus trivial, sacrer le camp."

There exists now, at last, a bilingual English - Québécois dictionary, published in October 1982, and compiled by Léandre Bergeron. Unfortunately it is half the size of his monolingual dictionary and no more precise than the latter when it comes to indicating the strength of various sacres. Indeed, neither tord-nom nor allez vous faire sacre (nor even aller au sacre) are entered. Calvaire is a "swearword" and crime is a "harmless expletive." Perhaps the most disappointing thing of all is that torrieux, maudit and crisse[45] are all rendered as "sonovabitch." Apart from the fact that we

cannot use this word, for reasons we shall see, its repetition is all the more disappointing because it is, as Pichette remarks (p.272), almost the only English swearword every Québécois knows and indeed uses!

We see, then, that even when the glossaries give sacres, they do not give a detailed gradation of levels of strength; in fact, there are only two such levels. The reason for this lies in the historically determined morphological fact which we have seen: there are the "jurons religieux authentiques", and there are the "dérivés morphologiques" thereof, which are milder. The glossary in Pichette's study, notably, is based on this two-level system. The fact that no two critics seem to regard all the "authentic" forms as very shocking, and no two are agreed on how many such forms are so, does not help the translator: he cannot plausibly list the oaths in order of their frequency in critics' lists of shockers, and maintain that he has thus compiled a list ranked in order of shockingness.[46] Thus he is thrown back on his own initiative.

On the other hand, we see no sign that we have to reckon with diachronic change in the strength of various sacres relative to each other. Nothing in the glossaries suggests that maudit and hostie, singled out by Bovet and Huston respectively as words which have lost their force, have in fact changed their position in any league table. Rather the weakening of these words is symptomatic of a loss of force among sacres in general. Thus we do not have to worry about the particular present strength of the sacres occurring in our conte, merely about the general question of the strength of the effect we wish to produce on the anglophone reader. This is likewise something we have to decide by the exercise of our own judgement.

Dictionaries and glossaries are unhelpful for the translation of les sacres, partly because their compilers have been hesitant to grant such words

a place in their works, and partly no doubt because it was difficult to decide how many of the vast number of variants to enter (they needed a dictionary all to themselves, comparable to the dictionaries of slang and unconventional language published in other countries, and Pichette has finally provided it). When it comes to translation of such words into another language, and therefore into another culture, the virtual absence of dictionaries is rather due to the near-impossibility of the undertaking. The paucity of monolingual glossaries for the compilers of the bilingual dictionary to work from compounds the difficulty but does not create it.

This difficulty stems from the fact that les sacres are a culture-bound phenomenon. Indeed, for the last twenty years they have been regarded in some circles as the cultural feature par excellence of Quebec. Now, culture-bound items present precisely the kind of problem with which dictionaries cannot or do not help very much, so that the translator must draw on his knowledge of the source- and target-language cultures in order to find what Nida calls dynamic equivalences, and this is what we must do.

To the restrictions placed on the translator by the inability of dictionaries and glossaries to offer renderings of these culture-based items must be added the constraints placed on him by the text. For the sacres which occur in our conte have also a more immediate role to play besides their cultural one: they have a structural function in the narration. Since this is a story about the evils of swearing, the sinner must be a sacreur, and so he must be seen to commit the sin. At the same time, one cannot reasonably present as narrator a lumberjack who does not himself swear somewhat. Fréchette's problem is thus to distinguish, by the force of the oaths, what is acceptable and what is not.

The solution is twofold. Firstly Tipite Vallerand is given an expression of his own, a patois, which is blasphemous and therefore deserving of divine punishment (or a simulation thereof) not merely because it is a sacre, but because it constitutes an invitation to the devil himself. No sacre used by Jos Violon exposes him to that risk; he never says "le diable m'emporte si..." or any other expression liable to be taken literally. Secondly, Tipite is very seldom quoted in the conte. Apart from the exchange which leads him to utter his provocation once too often, we have only one page on which he speaks. Here he utters three oaths, of increasing foulness, as his fury against the crew rises to the point where he threatens to shoot them if they argue any more: "allez vous faire sacres (sic)",[47] "mes calvaires", and "mes crimes". If Fréchette had given Tipite any more lines, he would have had to put more shockers in Tipite's mouth, and the shock effect would have been diluted.

It is noteworthy that, whereas the three sacres serve the customary fictional purpose of typical phrases put in a personage's mouth, namely to establish his character (as sacres are used today to establish the québécitude of personages), the patois has a different function here: it is the mainspring of the plot, provoking the dénouement.

We should also point out that two of the passages containing Tipite's sacres are ambiguous, since they give a sacre and also speak of "un autre sacre." It is as if in each case Tipite utters another one so horrible that Jos Violon refuses to say it. However, to suppose they came two at a time and in each case Jos Violon has chosen to repeat only one, is surely to admit a needless complication; indeed, it would weaken the effect created by the three single sacres arranged in ascending order of foulness. None the less, syntactically there could be a sacre after "tu peux te fermer" (p.159 l.6),

but not, we think, in "Eh ben, j'vas vous le dire, en effette, ous'que j'allons camper, mes crimes" (ibid. 1.27), where we cannot see how to fit another sacre into the syntax. On the whole it seems more probable that Fréchette is merely excusing himself for writing such awful words. However, if in the latter case there is only one sacre, the climacteric one of the series, then it seems ill chosen, for it is weaker than the sacre before it. In other words, crime, which is a modified sacre, is used as if it were stronger than calvaire, which is a full-strength one. We therefore suspect that Fréchette wishes his readers to understand Crisses (= Christ) instead of crimes. In any case, the translations of these three sacres should form a series building to a climax.

There is a problem arising from the obvious fact that, since Jos Violon is speaking far more often than Tipite Vallerand, he has far more opportunity to swear. Fortunately it is a problem that the author has had to solve, or else it would fall to the translator to do so. One has the first impression, indeed, that oaths of varying strength occur in considerable numbers in the narration, but closer examination proves this impression is false. Some curses, for example, are not used frivolously but with their right meanings. Tanfan Jeannotte calls Tipite "mon maudit" (p.158 1.18) because by any reasonable guess he is indeed damned; the word belongs in the series which Jos Violon uses in his own name about the sinner: renégat, réprouvé, indigne. "Diable emporte" (p.165 1.24) also has a literal meaning for Tipite Vallerand, recalling the patois he has renounced, and the ideal rendering of it would evoke that literal meaning. Unfortunately, we cannot find a suitable English swear word used today. "Devil take it" is too old-fashioned. Any word applied to the Mont à l'Oiseau and its inhabitants, which evokes damnation, is also being used literally; be it said that some of these

expressions (véreuse, rôdeuse) are mild. Other expressions, also mild, are used merely as affirmations; "ma foi de gueux"[48] and "bon sang de mon âme" are hardly any stronger than "parole de voyageur." All of these can in theory be translated without seeking cultural equivalents, although of course the contextual situation overrides all ("mon maudit" can hardly be rendered as "you damned man", and we have accepted a loss here).

That leaves one pair of oaths, which occur at p.157 l.19-20 and are Jos Violon's examples of acceptable swearing. Both words, "torrieux" and "tord-nom", are derived forms, as we have seen. Even in this dissimilated form, they have a certain force when uttered, and so "darn it" and "heck" seem too weak. Besides, we cannot imagine a lumberjack contenting himself with words like that even in 1892. Such mild expressions do not occur in any oral reminiscences recorded in MacKay's book; "hell" and "damn" occur frequently, and if the book is recent, the reminiscences go back several decades. So we must take the risk of lessening the shock effect of Tipite Vallerand's triad of oaths by using two strong ones for Jos Violon. We think this loss of effect is slight.

Which brings us to the worst oaths of all, those of Tipite Vallerand. Let us recall the constraints on our translation of these expressions: they must be arranged in increasing order of strength, and, since we are translating a story about a man whose swearing is a defiance of God, we must confine our choice of English expressions to blasphemies. And this is a severe constraint, since English has more strong sexual and excremental expressions than blasphemous ones.

In the case of the first expression -"allez vous faire sacres"- we must therefore rule out such literal equivalents as "go and stuff/screw (etc.) yourselves". For the other two, which are synonymous -"mes calvaires" and

"mes [crisses]"- we cannot substitute any English expression allowing use of the same syntax as the original, because none of those which use the same syntax - e.g. "I'll tell you where we'll camp, you buggers" or "I'll tell you buggers where we'll camp" - are blasphemous. The only English blasphemies we can think of are hell, damn, God, Jesus and Christ, plus their derivatives and combinations. (None of their attenuated forms seem to be swear words today.) Of the above list, the most plausible use in the contexts under discussion is, in our view:

- "Camper à la Bête-Puante? Allez vous faire sacre!" (p.159 l.1): "Camp by the Skunk River? Like hell we will!"

- "Si y en a un parmi vous qui retrousse le nez pour se rébicheter, je sais ben ous' que je vous ferai camper, par exemple, mes calvaires" (ibid. l.7-10): "If any of you try arguing with me, I know where I'll make you camp, by Jesus!"

- "Eh ben, j'vas vous le dire, en effette, ous que j'allons camper, mes crimes!" (ibid. l.27-28): "All right, by Christ, I'll tell you where we're going to camp!"

It will be apparent that in order to achieve this climaxing series, we have had to opt for expressions which ninety years ago were probably too strong to print. Accordingly, this one crux has tended to dictate a general style for our translation which is modern and not Victorian. In any case we suspect that, if it is permissible and even fashionable to print words today which were not printable in 1892, such expressions were spoken then as now, and in working-class circles they were as frequent then as they are today.

Certainly also Fréchette's own choice of English expressions to translate the sacres in "Tom Caribou" and "Titange" for Christmas in French Canada seems very mild and out of date by today's "standards." For example, "mes bouts de

crime!" (Contes I 149) is rendered as "you confounded fools!" (Christmas p.210), while "Bout de crime!" as an interjection not addressed to anyone (Contes I 164) is omitted. One serious oath is found in one conte, and that is "Mes calvaires!" (Contes I 165); Fréchette has "By all thunders!" (Christmas p. 237).[49] These examples serve as a warning, we feel, that milder oaths seem sufficiently dated today to hinder communication between Fréchette and the reader, and accordingly they seem to us to confirm the correctness of our decision to use English swear words of modern strength.

2. Morphophonetics and syntax: equivalents for popular elements

We must speak next of the fact that Jos Violon's narration is of a popular level of language not only in its vocabulary but also in its construction. There are French-Canadian dialectal pronunciations as well as words, and Fréchette has put a number of these into his storyteller's mouth. We have trouble in deciding whether some of these variants are morphological or phonetic, so we have classed these items together. After discussion of what to do about them, we will turn to the harder question of syntactical "popularisms."

a. Phonetics and morphology

We note in our conte the following items:

An extra initial e- appears before /sk/ in escrupule and esquelettes. On the other hand, an initial /l/ is lost by deglutination from limites and litanies. That is to say, speakers come to think that the /l/ of these words is the definite article, and so litanie becomes in their minds *l'itanie. The plural form with the partitive is thus des itanies, and indeed Fréchette makes it clear that this is so, marking the liaison which occurs by writing "de vraies zitanies"!

In the middle of words also we find phonetic changes. Lécher becomes licher, and mercenaries becomes malcenaires. In the latter case one wonders if folk etymology is not also at work, since mercenaries must be seen as evil by those over whose territory they fight. We find /tj/ palatalized into /kj/ in moiquié and cinmiquière; this latter word also shows nasalization of /i/ to /ɛ̃/ (fide the Glossaire). There is elision of /l/ in quèque (i.e. quelque), and vocalization of /l/ to /u/ in queu (i.e. quel). We should also note the very common elision of /ə / in the syntagm j'fourre.

As for final sounds, /l/ has been dropped from il to give y (it also means lui), and final /r/ has been dropped from quêteux, rasois and leux (but added to sour), while final /t/ is added - i.e. the etymological t, silent in standard French, is pronounced - in motte, boute and en effette. Most striking is the addition of /z/ to mark the plural of a word which already has a plural marker, namely ceuses for ceux.

Some of the forms met with, whether considered as phonological or morphological phenomena, seem to be of some antiquity. The nasalization of cinmiquière is a case in point, since /i/ ceased to be nasalized in standard French in the sixteenth century. The spellings dret and ben transcribe medieval states of the words.

Chenail is a phonetic variant of chenal, though of course it could equally well be a modern back-formation from the plural form chenaux.

We should no doubt class as morphological variants such dialectal verb forms as je m'en vas, voirez, and crochir (whether this last word is ancient or modern; see our remarks about it supra p.36, in the section on vocabulary).

The translator could not imitate much of this even if he wanted to. He cannot put non-existent words like *an eskeleton, *imits, *to leck, *a razo, or *a channail. Deformations of some of the English words in question exist -

a skellington and a cetemery can be found, if we remember rightly, in Treasure Island - but then we must judge if they are suitable here. The question is: do they belong to a flourishing English popular speech or a dialect, or may they make Jos Violon seem ignorant? We feel they are not well enough known to the English-speaking reader to be used.

In the case of j'fourre, the elision is a phonetic phenomenon, but it could be tackled if we consider the whole syntagm together and look for a popular English equivalent of it. We find "I'm gonna shove", but we are not sure if "gonna" is used much outside Brooklyn; we do not hear it around ~~as~~ us in Canada. "I'm shovin'" occurs in this country, but if we elide one final -g from -ing we should probably elide them all for sake of unity of style, and the text will become littered with apostrophes. This, we suspect, the reader will find tedious.

When it come to variants of grammatical forms, we are bound by such popular forms as exist in English. There is no variant for "some" to correspond to quèque, nor for "any" to correspond to n'importe queu. English has "what" for relative "who", "which", and therefore "them what" for "those who".

In the case of "y" for "il" or "lui", English can use "him" for "he" in certain constructions, but never "he"for "him", unless the idea is to convey that the speaker is not only making a mistake but believes he is in fact being refined (e.g. *I work for his brother and he). And Jos Violon is not here trying to impress his superiors with his grammar, nor can we imagine him ever doing so.

What emerges from these facts is that it is very seldom possible to map a phonetic or morphological popularism of the original onto a corresponding segment of one's translation, in the form of phonetic variants or popular

grammar respectively. What, then, can one do to palliate these repeated losses? One can always, of course, consider the compensatory use of equivalent popularisms elsewhere in the text. However, it may be unwise to put too many of these, since Fréchette is using a flourishing and highly marked dialect such as English hardly has left, or if it does, the anglophone reader is likely to dismiss the popularisms as marks of ignorance rather than dialect - and thus to undervalue the whole conte. In moderation, however, such a procedure can be useful. We have not indulged in much elision to imitate popular phonetics ("stronger'n hell", "they'd"), but we have used some popular forms of words ("critter" and the invented "metalamorphized") and some popular words ("cripes", "jokers"). More often we have added touches of popular grammar ("there ain't no God"), but this already leads us into our next subsection, on syntax. In all these cases, as with the choice of English swear words to translate sacres, the suitability of a given item in the context had to be the deciding factor.

Needless to say English has other popularisms, both morphological and phonetic, to which nothing corresponds in French. To remedy our inexperience at imitating oral delivery in writing, we could draw on the transcription (in the broadcaster's sense, not the phonetician's) of John D. Robins' retelling on CBC radio in the 1950's of some Paul Bunyan tales. In imitation of them we can devise a number of transcriptions (in the phonetician's sense) of elisions (more'n, an', c'n, jus', 'cause, nex', reg'lar, 'cept, ol') and of vowels reduced to /ə / (fer; yer for both "you" and "your") to use in our version of "Tipite Vallerand" so as to give it a thoroughly popular appearance. But would it not be tedious? Robins is; MacKay's written-down oral testimony, which uses incorrections more sparingly, is not. (We give specimens of both approaches in Appendix II).

Robins is tedious in print, in our opinion, because his text was designed to be delivered orally in a certain way, probably in imitation of some old fellow he heard telling stories when he was a boy near Sault Ste. Marie. That his pronunciation was authentic we do not doubt, and indeed an academic not born in Canada had better not doubt it, but transcribed into print the popularisms are excessive because they are in the wrong medium. "Tipite Vallerand", on the contrary, even if it recaptures the verve of an oral narration, was written to be read. Its popular nature accordingly rests not so much on phonetic or even grammatical popularisms as on vocabulary (Fréchette here has the advantage of Robins, and not only because in the 1890's he could use strong language that Robins, in the 1950's, could only hint at) and on a general boisterousness of style which we will discuss in a moment.

b. Syntax

Again we begin by listing the features we found:

At the syntactical level, only one construction looked like a calque on English: "rester un peu craignant Dieu" (p. 156 l.9-10; cf. "to stay a bit God-fearing"), and that is uncertain. There were likewise, it will be recalled, very few borrowings from English at the vocabulary level (cf. supra p.32).

The variant syntax we found is all certifiably common in Quebec dialect (again, in French dialects also, but that is outside the scope of our topic). Apart from such phrases as "tant seulement pas" for "même pas" (p.163 l.20) and the use of /ti/ to make a statement interrogative (here written as "t-y", as if it were -t-il, in "ça vous va-t-y?", p.159 l.33), we can arrange our items in three groups. Firstly, there is the combination of singular pronoun

with plural verb form - in this case the pronoun has a plural meaning - so frequently met with in Quebec usage ("j'avions passé", "je nous étions remis"), which in one case is combined with another non-standard construction ("tout ce que j'en étions" for "nous tous tant que nous étions," p.160 l.7). Secondly, there are popular uses of pronouns: "je vous le persuade"; ("le" for "en", p.157 l.13), "les ceuses qu'" ("que" for "qui", p.156 l.13, p.160 l.27, and also in the opening formula).

And thirdly there are various features which may or may not be popular strategies for simplifying French syntax. We accept that the omission of "ne" in negations is such a development. However, the use of "où donc qu'on va camper?" p.159 l.5) strikes us rather as a complication. It is true, as Guiraud[50] says, that it permits the use of normal word order, which popular French tends to adopt; the use of "que je dis" for "dis-je" after direct speech shows the same tendency. But as Guiraud also says, "que" tends to be added to any one-word conjunction as part of a tendency to make "que" into the all-purpose conjunction it was in Old French. He further sees both "où que" and "ous'que" as syncopes of "où est-ce que", which for him is one of the "barbarismes [qui] sont en fait des hypercorrections nées de la pression de l'usage savant mal compris et mal assimilé." Whatever their explanation, the forms we list here are all typical of popular French.

Again, it is of no use for the translator to expect to map all these popularisms onto the corresponding segments of his own version. It is not possible, for example, to reproduce "j'avions"; "had" is invariable. For "j'étions" one can put "we was", but is it desirable? Conceivably it could be desirable in some contexts and not others. Among English relative pronouns, only "who" shows case, and "*those whom" for "those who" is an incorrection we have never seen and would not expect to be understood as a dialect form or a

linguistic joke. "Them what" (British: "them as") is frequently heard, and we can use that. English has no popular form of "where" (there is "somewheres" and "anywheres" but not "wheres"), so that, if we want to reproduce "ous'que" in "c'te montagne de malheur, ous'que personne passe depuis ce temps-là" (p.165 l.5-6), we will have to make do with "that damn mountain what nobody passes by ever since..." But to that sentence we will return in the next section.

Again, there are a few English resources by way of syntactical incorrections which French does not enjoy. Thus "don't" can replace "doesn't" and "ain't" can supplant "isn't." For "those creatures" we can write "them creatures" and for "himself", "hisself". "Like" can be used for "as if" ("the mountain... looks like it completely blocks the river") or for "as" ("the cooking pot started humming its little tune like in the good times"), and "I noticed that" can become "I noticed as how". But again, we have not made all these substitutions. When we conscientiously replaced standard English forms with their non-standard equivalents for a whole page of the conte, the result was tedium.

Even in the cases where we seek to put non-standard forms only as equivalents of precise occurrences of non-standard French forms, we again find that the context decides whether we should do so or not. One example of this constraint will suffice. We can use "I says" and "he says" to convey the non-standard nature of "que je dis" etc. in the conversation at p.165 l.30 - p.166 l.3, but we cannot do so in the conversation on p.159, because of the verbs "beugla" and "crièrent". "Bellows" and "cry" are impossible: "say" is the only verb that can be so used in the present tense, and we cannot be switching from past to present and back again, so we must use "said" throughout that page.

There is enough switching in the original text of "Tipite Vallerand" as it is, between two levels of style; it is an inconsistency which the translator has to deal with, and to which we devote our next section.

D. Intrusion of the re-narrator's style into the narrator's

We said previously (supra p.18) that there is in this conte a tendency for the rhetorical style of the re-narrator to intrude into the popular style of the narrator; indeed, we may think there are more markedly rhetorical features in the narrative proper, where they do not belong, than in the re-narrator's own text, namely the opening page.

At the level of vocabulary, this intrusion seems confined to one feature which we have already seen (supra p.56): Jos is sometimes made to utter words from the priestly vocabulary ("renégat" and "réprouvé" p.158 l.7, and "indigne", sc. du salut éternel, p.164 l.20) without reminding us that they come from it. However, this is acceptable, because these cases occur where he is insisting on Tipite Vallerand's sinfulness; here Jos Violon is not using sacres, he is stating that Tipite deserves damnation. (Of course, we are here on the borderline of les sacres, which are the most distinctive feature of popular speech in this conte, as we have seen). As a result, we may say that there is an element of priestly vocabulary in the various epithets qualifying the Mont à l'Oiseau and in the expression "mon maudit", which Tanfan Jeannotte applies to Tipite (p.158 l.15) and which is a curse in the proper sense of a condemnation.

As we said before, these ambiguous vocabulary items can be translated satisfactorily, provided we pay due attention to their context.

After this vocabulary question comes what we may term a morphological one. We can perhaps see an intrusion of the re-narrator into the domain of

the narrator in the incongruous grammatical precision with which his popular speech is occasionally transcribed. Thus it seems to us that to write, as Québécois often say, "j'étions" for "nous étions" (p.156 l.7), should be matched by an incorrection in the agreement of the next word, "allé". (Jos Violon and his hearers, of course, could not hear the difference and would not have thought about it). In fact, Fréchette writes "allés" with the correct agreement. We suspect him of enjoying the incongruity and wishing to draw the reader's attention to the savoureux dialectal "misuse" of the pronoun, and this constitues the sin against realism called authorial intrusion. We also wonder how often this incorrection is combined with the pluperfect, which is a rather literary tense.[51] In "je nous étions remis à nager" (p.160 l.10) the "misuse" of the pronoun is even more marked because of the juxtaposition with a "correctly" used pronoun, again combined with the pluperfect tense.

On one occasion, this concern to keep the agreements correct even reveals a mistake on Fréchette's part. At p.159 l.1, as we have said, he mistakes "sacre" in "allez vous faire sacre" for an adjective, when it is surely an infinitive (for sacrer, by analogy with foutre) and therefore he writes "sacres" to make it agree with "vous". If he had not been concerned to make correct agreements where they could have been dispensed with, nobody would have known what part of speech he took the word to be!

We have said that it is not desirable to attempt to put a popularism to correspond to every popularism in the original, that the most we can hope for is to establish a satisfactory popular English style. Consequently the problem of being grammatically incorrect and overly correct at the same time does not, we are thankful to say, arise for us. However, we also find in the narrative some sentences of a complexity which we would only expect in the re-narrator's style. This problem we do have to tackle, and it is harder.

The intrusion is also less justifiable. We are not saying that a popular storyteller would never use an element of style soutenu. The storyteller at the veillée in the film The Tree of Wooden Clogs seems to be reciting by heart a ghost story taken from a nineteenth-century book, and we have no doubt this is authentic, since in such scenes the peasants were simply enacting their ancestors' lives before the camera.[52] If our conte were retold in the exact words in which Jos Violon told it, then we could not object if he allowed "educated" usage to creep into his narration. But Fréchette could hardly be expected to achieve this, or to wish to, and indeed he warns us that he has not done so. In which case we feel it is an error to allow such usage in the re-narration of such a story. Even if it is a decision made and followed with care, it seems an error of judgement on the re-narrator's part.

There are, to be sure, three passages where the intrusion is clearly deliberate, because it is explained: after the phrase or clause, Jos adds "comme dit M. le curé." This time, however, religion is not being invoked; it is merely that for the narrator the priest is the only man who uses "learned" language. In two of the three cases, however, the expression creates a problem. At p.157 l.24 we have a complex sentence as it is, and the extra subordinate clause makes it even more complex. So much so, indeed, that we preferred to omit the reference to the priest and divide the sentence into two, eliminating the semi-colon and the dashes. At p. 163 l.7 the problem is one of vocabulary. The word "principe" may frequently be on a priest's lips,[53] but "dans le principe" is an odd expression to mean "regular" or "in due and proper form" (Harrap translates it as "in the beginning"), and we can find no phrase in English that both has the right meaning and could be found in priestly discourse, so again we omitted Jos Violon's catchphrase. It seemed a pity to lose it altogether, however, and so we retained it on its

last appearance, at p.165 l.20, where it was feasible to do so. Since the "M. le curé" whom Jos' audience thought of was undoubtedly the parish priest of Lévis, we were tempted to put "as Father _____ says", inventing a likely name.

Often, as with the first of the three cases we have just spoken of, the problem is syntactical complexity such as a popular style, even in French and certainly in English, would not display. It sometimes goes hand in hand with a rhetorical amplitude greater than that of the opening page of the conte, whereas less of that quality is needed in the body of the story. The first two lines of the sentence which begins at p.158 l.7 (significantly, it is the one marked by terms from priestly discourse) offer the highly melodramatic opening clause "Il me semble voir encore" and an unusual simile with the features of a zeugma (blasphème = jus de chique), neither of which we can imagine Jos Violon saying. The sentence at p.165 l.14-18, with its abstruse main clause ("j'avais trop vu... pour ne pas me douter..."), also sounds too complex to be delivered orally to an average audience. All the sentences put in the narrator's mouth are well-formed, which is remarkable in itself for a supposedly oral performance, but these two stand out as being exceptionally highly wrought.

We must at once, however, qualify what we have just said. Into these well-formed sentences the re-narrator often introduces an incorrection, in an endeavour to make the style more convincingly popular. The result is a hybrid level of language which we find odd. It is also odd in literal translation. As an example of how we have varied from literalness, we may take p.157 l.1-3:

> Comme il connaissait le Saint-Maurice dans le fin fond, Tipite Vallerand avait été chargé par le boss de gouverner un des canots - qu'etait le mien.

This is a periodic sentence, it has a pluperfect passive, and it concludes with a relative clause. We have made the sentence loose and active and, since these changes separated the relative clause from its antecedent, have made that a separate sentence. In addition, Fréchette tries to give this very well-formed sentence a little ill-formedness by writing the "incorrect" qu' for qui. If we attempted to reproduce both levels of style at once, we would have something like:

> "Since he knew the Saint-Maurice like the back of his hand, Tipite Vallerand had been detailed by the boss to be the steersman of one of the canoes - what was mine." (Italics added).

We believe that in English this would merely seem ridiculous.

Similar clashes of popular and soutenu style, equally incongruous from a stylistic point of view, could be obtained from:

p.160 l.11-13, which would conclude "hatching some plot what boded no good for Pete Vallerand", where "what" is an incorrection corresponding to "qu'" and "boded" is a word suitable for a style soutenu and corresponding to the stylistic level of the whole clause of the original;

p.163 l.3-4, which literally would be "since we was all starving, a good fire of dry wood was soon lit" - the latter clause could have come from the memoirs of some army officer or explorer, who would not write "we was";

and p.165 l.3-8, which would have to conclude "that damned mountain, what nobody passes by since that time without telling the story of Tipite Vallerand," since English has no vulgarism for "where".

It is surely clear that such a mixture of oratorical and popular styles would be disconcerting in English. Accordingly we have retreated from both extremes. On the one hand, we have simplified the syntax of some sentences to

the point where we can mentally hear an English speaker say them comfortably. On the other hand, we have been cautious in our attempts to reproduce the popularisms of Jos Violon's speech. The result lacks the colourful quality which Fréchette begins by promising us, no doubt, but rightly or wrongly we are uncertain whether a narrative style of Jos Violon's sheer boisterousness is entirely readable in English. We can but assume it is so in Quebec, where in the past twenty years they have in effect rediscovered Jos' stories and are still thoroughly enjoying them.

III CONCLUSION

Translating "Tipite Vallerand" is made more challenging by its hybrid nature: it is at once the work of a cultivated author writing for a bourgeois public, and an oral narration delivered by a man of the people for an audience in a small town in an earlier age. At the level of structure, Fréchette solves the problem of this dual nature by the classic device of a frame. The re-narrator firstly, in his own style, introduces the narrator, and then retells the latter's story in the latter's style, which in principle is very different. We say in principle, because at the stylistic level the distinction is not made entirely successfully.

However, other styles intervene. One characterises a second frame which is interposed between the first frame and the narration, and which also closes the story. This is an incantation in verse designed, the first time to mark the crossing from the real world into the world of make-believe, where the natural and the supernatural co-exist, and the second time to return the audience to the real world. The challenge, in transferring this style into English, is to convey the purpose of the incantation and yet retain the effect of the sheer sound. It is the challenge posed by all poetic language, it is uncommon for the translator to be totally successful, and we have not been.

Jos Violon's narration, however, is not simply a folk tale of the marvellous; it is a légende in the further, Christian sense of a cautionary tale. As such, it also contains elements of priestly discourse, terms which condemn the villain. Now, what he is guilty of, what the story seems to warn the audience against, is swearing; that is to say, in the Quebec culture, blasphemy. Consequently, there are passages in which the boundary between

swear words and priestly discourse is almost unclear; "maudit", for example, may belong to either field.

We mention this fact because it is similar to the disturbing feature of the narration proper, namely the tendency of the re-narrator's bourgeois style to intrude into the narrator's popular one. The unity of the popular vocabulary is by and large respected, but there is some highly complex syntax and some bourgeois rhetoric - indeed, the latter is more evident than in the frame at the beginning of the story. This happens, we suspect, because "Tipite Vallerand" is not merely a cautionary folk tale. The plot has been altered from what it would have been, say, in Fr. Caron's book: the punishment from God is in fact a practical joke. Fréchette's audience no doubt reckoned itself too sophisticated to believe superstitions about the devil. Consequently the co-existence of a bourgeois re-narrator and a lumberjack narrator corresponds to a tension between two opposed purposes for this story, this legend which denies it is one.

We have spoken of the challenge set up by the incantations. The bourgeois style per se is less of a problem, since English has it. The popular style presents problems of comprehension of vocabulary, plus the well-known problem of translating a culture-bound item, namely les sacres (especially given the added constraint that we must render them by English blasphemies), but the hardest task is deciding what can be done about the morphophonetic and syntactical popularisms, and accepting that not much can be done. A fortiori then, the intrusions of bourgeois rhetoric into Jos Violon's popular style, especially when Fréchette attempts to compensate for the intrusion by adding a grammatical popularism, are wellnigh impossible to map onto the corresponding segment of our translation. And the solution of putting English popularisms

in the translation at random, if pursued at all systematically or extensively, seems to create tedium.

Here again, then, as in the matter of the incantations, we seem to hyave reached the desirable limits of translatability and in some passages settled for more neutral language than the original uses.

Appendix I: French-Canadian Vocabulary requiring no special comment.

p.156 l.21 ibid. ça se bat point. G, s.v. battre, 3°: n'a pas son pareil.

l.25 dépareillé: G, 1°: comme il n'y en a pas d'autre.

l.29 un canot: Petit Robert 1°: V[ieu]x. ou région [al] (Canada) Embarcation légère qui avance à l'aviron... v. Canadienne, canoé.

l.30 faire chantier. G, s.v. chantier 1°: exploiter une fôret.

p.157 l.17 achaler. G, 2°: "Ennuyer...importuner... harceler..." We are quoting the most relevant terms from a list. Clearly a synonym of bâdrer in the preceding line.

l.21 y a toujours un boute. For the form, cf. G s.v. bout': Bout. For the meaning, cf. G s.v. bout, 9°: "...Ex.: Il y a un bout pour se faire achaler = les importunités finissent par fatiguer, doivent avoir une fin."

p.157 l.30 faire son petit Jean Lévesque. DesRuisseaux: faire son chef.

p.158 l.6 une gripette. G: Diable. (G spells it with a double pp). Clearly a creature who s'agrippe à vous, and carries you off.

ibid. la crignasse. G: Chevelure.

l.21 un peu croche. G, s.v. croche adv. 3°: = beaucoup, grandement, superlativement.

p.159 l.7 regricher, G, 1°: Hérisser.

l.8 se rébicheter. G (which writes it without an accent): Se rebiffer, regimber.

1.18 victimer. Either this means to make someone your victim, i.e. abuse them, or (more likely) it is a variant of invictimer, which G defines as "injurier, accabler d'injures, invectiver". Clearly invictimer in this sense is a variant of invectiver formed under the influence of victime.

ibid. avoir du poil aux pattes. G, s.v. poil 6°: ...être du terroir [and] être brave, courageux, hardi, ne craindre rien.

1.19 un équipet. G has une équipette: petit compartiment d'un coffre, destiné à recevoir les menus objets. Ex.: mets les ciseaux dans l'équipet du coffre. Presumably the head is seen as a little box on top of the... chest, perhaps containing valuable things like brains.

p.159 1.20 je t'en signe mon paper. DesRuisseaux: En passer un papier à quelqu'un: En assurer quelqu'un. He explains: "Passer un papier, c'est garantir la véracité de ses paroles par un acte" (i.e. a legal document), and he gives the variants "En signer un papier, en signer son papier", with a supporting quotation from... the passage in our conte which we are discussing.

1.25 étout. G: Aussi, pareillement, de même. G spells it "étou, itou".

p.161 1.4 planter le chêne. G s.v. planter, 1°: se tenir sur la tête, les pieds en l'air.

p.162 1.2 ressoudre. G, 1°: sourdre, sortir de terre. Jos Violon may have chosen the word because the prefix re- implies habitual or repeated action, though in this sense G does not give it that meaning. Whether the spirits sourdaient in the sense of 'suddenly appeared' or 'came up out of the ground' is not clear.

ibid. une pacotille. G: Ribambelle d'enfants.

1.12 virer. G, 1°: Tourner. Occurs also at p.164 1.10 and p.165 1.24.

1.28 piquer au plus court. Clapin: On dit... dans une conversation: Pour piquer au plus court, dans le sens de Bref, Pour en finir.

1.29 la pince. G, 1°: Pince de canot = bout d'une pirogue, d'un canot, en écorce ou en bois.

p.163 1.8 une talle. G, 1°: Touffe de plantes d'une même espèce.

1.9 amarrer. G, 1°: Attacher, lier.

1.21 accorder. Cf. G, 2°: v. intr. "Frapper en cadence. Ex.: accorder sur la musique... = marquer la mesure... en faisant sentir... la cadence par des mouvements de pieds, de mains, etc." To judge by this entry, the construction in this passage of our story would more correctly be "pour nous faire accorder sus l'aviron," to make us keep time with the paddle, i.e. to keep us in time.

1.20 allumer (used absolutely). G, 2°: (absol[umen]t). Allumer sa pipe, son cigare, sa cigarette.

1.29 tirer une touche. G, s.v. touche, 2°: fumer.

1.31 jongler. G, 2°: Réfléchir, penser sérieusement.

ibid. un plan de nègre. G, s.v. nègre: idée saugrenue, projet irréalisable.

p.164 1.4 comme de raison. G, s.v. raison, 1°: = il va de soi.

1.8 chéti. G, 2°: vaurien.

ibid. il peut se fouiller. Not in any Canadian dictionary. Robert Collins has: you're wasting your time, nothing doing. We think rather it is here simply a euphemism for "se fourrer", which in turn is a euphemism we have heard (but not found in any Canadian dictionary either) for "se foutre, aller se faire foutre." If the term is two levels of euphemism away from the full-strength vulgarity, "shove it" seems preferable to "screw himself", which is only one level away.

1.10 renoter. G, 2° = Rebattre, rabâcher, répéter inutilement.

1.21 une balancine. G: balançoire, escarpolette. G also gives the forms balancigne, balancignouére, balancille, balançoué and galancine.

1.31 les ferdoches. Clapin: Assemblage plus ou moins épais d'arbrisseaux, d'arbustes, de broussailles. Dionne, s.v. fardoches: Ecrues ou bois de croissance récente.

p.165 1.15 piler. G, 5: Marcher, appuyer le pied (sur quelque chose), fouler au pied.

p.166 1.2 prendre une shire. G s.v. chire, 1°: Embardée. Ex.: prendre une chire. Etym. Ang. sheer = m[ême] s[ens]. (To sheer is to change course, of a ship, or to swerve). ...3°: Fuite précipitée. Ex.: ...le voleur a pris une chire = a délogé sans trompette.

In fact Tipite probably neither turned aside while walking forward, nor ran away from Jos Violon, but something between the two: backed away a step or two, and perhaps turned aside.

Appendix II: Popular style in Robins and MacKay.

Robins: (p.29)

I s'pose Paul had ought to of knowed better, but I guess he thought a surveyor couldn't go far wrong on just buildin' a tote road to take supplies in on. Well, that fool couldn't get out of the notion he was buildin' a railroad right-of-way, an' he made that road so crooked it made you dizzy walkin' on it. She wasn't too bad the first twelve miles, follerin' the concession lines, but after that she was a humdinger. Paul cussed around considerable when he seen her.

MacKay: (p.144)

"The Dungarvon Whooper, the way I heard it, happened on the log drive in the spring. On the Dungarvon River which feeds into the Miramichi there's a place they call Whooper Springs and Whooper Landing. I've seen it, there's a big spring there and a big high landing, I suppose all overgrown with trees now. That's where the Dungarvon Whooper is supposed to have put in an appearance. There must have been something because some of those old fellas - look, they weren't scared of nuthin'. Bad old bastards, some of them, if the Devil himself come along they'd go and pull his tail. They didn't scare easy, but by jeeze after that drive they got so they wouldn't even go in there!

"The story I heard they were coming down on the drive. The spring before they'd had hard drivin' and had left some landings - logs piled high on the shore - so this time they had orders to put those logs into the water. But by this time the logs had all settled together and tipped over onto each other, a helluva mess."

NOTES

[1]Edmond-Zotique Massicotte, Conteurs canadiens-français du XIXe siècle (Montréal: Beauchemin, 1902), 2nd ed. 1908. A "3e série" of stories, likewise chosen by Massicotte, was published by Beauchemin in 1924.

[2]Aurélien Boivin and Maurice Lemire, Préface to Louis Fréchette, Contes (Montréal: Fides, 1976), p.12.

[3]We have established this by comparing the two texts.

[4]The Contes also have "son heurlement" for "son hurlement" (p.162 l.12), which we have not found attested in any glossary, but George A. Klinck (Louis Fréchette prosateur, Lévis: Le Quotidien Ltée, 1955, p. 174) notes the same sound shift in "la leune" for "la lune".

[5]Massicotte p.209-24.

[6]Jos Violon is not the only real person in our story. The incident he narrates here occurred one year when "j'étions allés faire du bois pour les Patton dans le haut du Saint-Maurice". Horatio Patton was, when Fréchette was a boy, the bourgeois of Lévis, "c'est-à-dire le marchand de bois, ou plutôt l'agent des grandes compagnies européennes au nom et au profit desquelles se faisait l'exploitation de nos forêts", and therefore "une espéce de seigneur ou de lord anglais qui habitait une villa magnifique et vivait dans un luxe étourdissant" (Mémoires Intimes, ed. George A. Klinck, Montréal: Fides, 1961, p.55). He was a most charitable man. In particular he had helped the author's father once and set him on the road to prosperity; the two men had remained firm friends, and Fréchette's first playmate was Patton's adopted daughter Harriet. When in 1845 Patton ran unsuccessfully for Parliament, against a newly appointed cabinet minister who was parachuted into the riding, Fréchette's father "mit tout en oeuvre pour le succès de son ami" (Mémoires

p.109), but in vain: the voters chose the minister, André Taschereau, because he was of French descent and Patton was English.

[7]Jean-Pierre Pichette, Le guide raisonné des jurons (Montréal: Les Quinze, Editeur, 1980).

[8]Marius Barbeau, The Tree of Dreams, tr. anon. (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), p. viii-ix.

[9]This légende also is interesting for the genesis of "Tipite Vallerand." It concerns a raftsman who wanted a wind to help move his crew's raft (they had sails). He swore horribly, then called on the devil to send a wind; when he threw his knife and his tobacco in the water, as a sacrifice, a terrible wind sprang up and blew all night. We see here a connection between swearing, tobacco and the devil, as we do in "Tipite Vallerand" when we learn that Tipite won "la torquette du diable" three years running at the great Bytown swearing contest. The connection is no doubt due to the great value the lumberjack set on his tobacco; to give it to the devil was, in both senses of the word, a sacrifice.

[10]Pichette p.63. Stories where the blasphemer was carried off by the devil were not unknown in English-speaking Canada. Donald MacKay (The Lumberjacks, Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1979, p.144-46) recalls the tale of the Dungarvon Whooper, a large brown animal which carried away a blasphemer who sought the devil's help. (We quote an extract from this story in Appendix II for its style). MacKay adds that the description of the animal suggests a cougar.

[11]Not that we can call "Tipite Vallerand" a fairy story. Jos' audience is not composed solely of children. But the boundary between fairy stories and folk tales is ill defined.

[12]The Best Known Works of W. S. Gilbert (New York: Illustrated Editions Co., 1932), p.49-50.

[13]We have no quarrel with "boys and girls" in the first line, but we have not used the expression in translating the conte, because today it would only be used to very small children. Fréchette also uses "boys" in his translation, but judging from the stories in MacKay, this term was used among lumberjacks, and therefore if we used it, the result might be to confuse the reader. It used to be a term of address to employees.

[14]Mémoires p.38; italics of original. In another of the Contes de Jos Violon, "Titange", the storyteller speaks of "les bûcheux de bois carré, autrement dits voyageurs" (Contes Vol.I p.154).

[15]MacKay p.25.

[16]In "Titange", Jos Violon speaks of missing the line (marked on the trunk with chalk, which he had to "hew to"), "c'qui m'était pas arrivé de l'automne" (Contes Vol.I p.161).

[17]We retain this rendering even though we find in Fréchette's own translation of "La Tête à Pitre" (Christmas in French Canada, Toronto: Morang, 1899, p.149) the expression "a belt of gaudy coloured wool." This is an explanation. In this book, in which he is making himself known to English-Canadian readers, he is constantly explaining things.

[18]Harrap gives "graymalkin" and "puss" as synonyms which can translate Mistigri (also without a final -s). The mistigri is also the jack of clubs in a card game of the same name.

[19]Fide Denise de Montigny, a fellow-M.A. student in translation at the University of Ottawa.

[20]MacKay p.243. On p.240-42 there is a description of the dances that the lumberjacks performed.

[21] In Christmas in French Canada, Fréchette calls his narrator Fiddle Joe. Of the two English versions of the Chasse-galerie legend which evoke him (cf. supra p.8), Downie calls him Fiddler Joe, and Barbeau's translator, alas, calls him Jos Violin.

[22] In "La Tête à Pitre", Pitre is a first name. Fréchette translates it as Peter.

[23] Fréchette himself does not translate "la rivière Galeuse" in "Titange", thereby losing the point of the name. Thus for "une petite rivière qu'on appelle la Galeuse, un nom pas trop appétissant comme vous voyez" (Contes Vol.I p.146), he has "a small river called La Galeuse, a funny name" (Christmas p.204). The anglophone reader may well wonder what is funny about it!

[24] We are grateful to the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, Geographical Services, Toponymy Section, for giving us English equivalents. Working upstream, as the canoe crew are doing as the story progresses, the Rocher à la Cuisse is three miles above the Rapides Manigance, and this is probably the location of the "rapides de la Cuisse"; the rapids are not marked on the map, but Father Caron speaks of them (p.30), and we assume they occur where the rock constricts the river. The Rivière aux Bêtes-Puantes is so marked on the Canada survey map; the Toponymy Section has "des" for "aux". There is no Mont à l'Oiseau on the map, but Father Caron attests that name also, as we have seen. These places are within a dozen miles of each other, beginning about halfway between Trois-Rivières and the Rivière aux Rats (the Toponymy Section calls it the Ruisseau aux Rats); the Rapides Manigance are about forty miles from Trois Rivières as the crow flies, but of course it is a good deal further by river.

[25] Cf. p.8 and p.46 respectively.

[26]We hold to this interpretation even though CJV has "une boufresse" and, according to G, that can be said "en bonne ou en mauvaise part" (s.v. boufre). The Contes, like CJV, has "le boufre" at p.165 l.8 where no pejorative meaning is intended, so there seems to be a distinction in the Contes between boufre and bougre.

[27]Von Wartburg also gives the dialectal meaning "repas de fête des domestiques, fait jadis le premier dimanche de Carême." Since Fréchette writes "une fricassée de mardi-gras", he may have known, and intended to evoke, this meaning also.

[28]These terms denote the basic opposition of possible translation methods proposed by Newmark.

[29]Huguet is the standard dictionary of sixteenth-century French, and von Wartburg is the standard dictionary which list all forms of all French words, historically from their Latin or Germanic origin to the present day, with all attested dialectal forms. Both works are cited in our bibliography.

[30]This is our rendering of "c'est pas beau", a literal translation of which would also be unsatisfactory.

[31]This expression occurs in D. D. Calvin's A Saga of the St. Lawrence, Timber and Shipping through Three Generations (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1945), p.40.

[32]Clément Legaré, "Morphologie et sémantique du sacre québécois," Le Journal Canadien de Recherche Sémiotique, Vol.6, 1-2, p.127-46, at p.131. Thus:

sacre (Legaré) = juron (Pichette);

juron (Legaré) = juron profane (Pichette).

[33]But not all such objects, as Guy Robert notes ("Le sacre dans le parler québécois", Aspects de la littérature québécoise, Montréal:

Beauchemin, 1970, p.59-69, at p.62): "manipule", "aube", "patène" and "croix" are exempt from such use. In so far as the words used for le sacrage are learned in church schools and catechism classes, as Pichette points out, one supposes the exempt objects are seldom mentioned there.

[34]Pichette p.28; Gilles Charest, Le livre des sacres et blasphèmes québécois (Montréal: Editions de l'Aurore, 1974), p.17-18. Ludmila Bovet ("Le vocabulaire du défoulement, ou petite enquête sur les sacres et les jurons", Travaux du département de langues et linguistique, Univ. Laval, No. 3 (1977) p.27-46) states (p.39) that les sacres have lost their religious content. One therefore needs to use a blasphème in order to launch "une attaque délibérée contre Dieu, le Christ, les saints et les objets de la religion, que l'on maudit ou que l'on salit."

[35]In John D. Robins' Logging with Paul Bunyan (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1957) we meet an old French Canadian called Louis Muffraw, who has a particularly fine command of bad language. He undoubtedly gets his name from Joe Muffraw, the anglicized version of the name of Joseph Montferrand, who led the French lumberjacks against their Irish rivals in a vicious feud in Bytown in the 1820's. We read in MacKay (p.39) that Joe Muffraw was known as far afield as northern Ontario, Michigan and Wisconsin. (Robins was from Sault Ste. Marie).

[36]The sacreur, in any group in which le sacrage is practised, is looked up to for his skill and daring. It is this general fact which leads Pichette to conclude (p.86) that Jos' characterization of Tipite as "un sacreur numéro un" refers to his winning the swearing contest. In this case, however, the expression would have a laudatory meaning, whereas it is surely pejorative.

[37]Pichette (p.33) speaks of "camoufler un juron"; Charest (p.35) speaks of "le sacre déguisé."

[38]Pichette p.89. His chapter on why people use les jurons is on p.89-93.

[39]Charest p.61. The word "dominait" is curious. If any power dominated the French-Canadians, it was anglophone economic power. Perhaps Charest is thinking of the belief that the Church preferred to see its faithful dominated by anglophones rather than rebellious in matters of faith.

[40]Both Pichette and Legaré seem somewhat self-contradictory on this question of the causes of le sacrage. Pichette's study abounds in historical evidence as to why French Canada was such a fertile ground for swearing, yet he concludes his discussion of the causes (p.89-93) by invoking more general reasons which apply equally in all societies: ignorance of the resources of one's own language, the example of one's milieu, the desire to be accepted into a prestigious group of one's own peers. Only the latter seems relevant to the phenomenon of swearing among lumberjacks. (One does indeed swear within one's own group and not in front of others, such as women, children - and people in authority).

Legaré (p.140-141) also invokes ignorance of the resources of one's own language as a cause of the multiplicity of les sacres, yet he maintains that in order to understand the phenomenon, "il faut connaître le phénomène de parole de la société particulière qui l'utilise," i.e. of Quebec society. Three pages later he reverses himself and declares that today the young Québécois does not swear in order to prove he is a Québécois; rather he thus performs "une sorte de rite de passage rappelant les sociétés archaïques." (p.144) Alternatively, this social declaration by choice of style is confined to "un groupe militant de Montréal", and in any case les sacres are only part of what they have in fact adopted as a distinguishing mark, namely le joual.

Our own experience, for what it is worth, is that the person who swears because of ignorance of the resources of his or her own language uses only one or two swear words, and those about every other word. The sheer exuberance of Quebec swearing points rather to intelligence at work. Indeed, Pichette considers that the countless euphemistic oaths are the creation of a fairly well-educated middle class. (p.90) Thus he further contradicts himself.

[41]There were no missionaries to the logging camps on the St. Maurice until 1854 (Caron p.148).

[42]Cf. our introduction.

[43]E.g., for fous-moi la paix, "can't you leave me alone" and "bugger off!"

[44]Thus the 1980 edition. Previously the classifications we are concerned with were even more laconic: "familiar", "popular, slang", and "vulgar".

[45]We looked up crisse because, as we shall see infra p.56, it is the translation or equivalent of this word that we need to put where Tipite Vallerand uses crimes.

[46]Especially since, as Charest rightly reminds us (p.33), frequent use of a sacre weakens it.

[47]On the authorial intrusion constituted by the final -s of sacres, which is a mistake, cf. infra p.67.

[48]Its mildness is demonstrated by the fact that, after Tipite has given up swearing, he cannot bear to hear anyone say even something as mild as that.

[49]On the other hand, "Mes serpents verts!" (Contes Vol.I p.164), a modified sacre, is rendered as "By damnation!" (Christmas p.237), which is stronger than the original. Commonly, we may add, Fréchette makes the swearing more acceptable by adding narratorial expressions of disapproval

(e.g. "and the reprobate went on with the devilish imprecation") which are not in the original and which falsify the original tone of both "Tom Caribou" and "Titange", namely amusement. This procedure is of a piece with Fréchette's addition of explanations of things French-Canadian: both serve to make the story less strange and more acceptable to anglophones.

[50]Pierre Guiraud, Le français populaire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, Que Sais-Je? series, 1969), p.48-50, 72-73. The quotation at the end of the paragraph is from p.50.

[51]The choice of the passé simple as narrative tense, however, is not literary, but an older usage, still - to judge by student s'choices - quite alive today among French-speaking Canadians.

[52]Ermanno Olmi's 1978 film L'Albero degli Zoccoli (The Tree of Wooden Clogs), set in the Bergamo region about 1900, used peasants from that region as its actors. They made a great contribution to its authenticity by "their own experience, their lived reality" (Sight and Sound, Vol. 47 (1978), p.210-15, at p.211).

[53]Tom Caribou, in the story which bears his name, is also a man given to swearing. Jos Violon reports that "Il inventait la vitupération des principes, comme dit M. le curé" (Contes Vol.I p.147).

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