

"I am expressing these sentiments in that beautiful language which, in so many countries and during so many centuries, was considered as the prototype of a clear and concise expression of man's feelings and the best interpreter of human thought.

"The whole world, when it makes use of it, remembers as you do that it is the language which, in the Church, was used with eloquence by Saint Bernard and Bossuet and that it was used on the battlefield by Saint Louis, Du Guesclin and the Maid of Orleans.

Lord Tweedsmuir, at Quebec, speaking to the Congrès de la langue française in June 1937, declared in French:

"Canada has been fortunate to inherit two great European traditions: the French and the English. You have retained your language, your laws, your religion and your culture, so rich in history and so precious for the whole of Canada. Your language especially is a priceless gift, for French language and literature constitute a wealth not only for French-speaking Canada but for English-speaking Canada as well."

Still speaking in French, he added:

"Your poetry, which expresses the soul of a people so well, has deeply impressed me. French Canada is only just starting on its literary career. It combines all the elements of a great literature -- a people whose history is one of the most romantic to be found, and a peasantry which has fortunately remained in close contact with the soil and preserved its ancient traditions. I foresee French Canada taking part and distinguishing itself in those achievements of the mind which will always constitute the basis of true civilization, for it shares two great traditions, the French and the English."

Such testimonies show that Canada has long been a centre of French culture. In time, it will become, I have no doubt, truly a genuine source of this culture and will thus make an essential contribution to the development and to the heritage of French genius.

### French Pathfinders

Why should Canada have a special affection for France? In the first place, because it was the French who founded Canada; their presence is felt everywhere. Their roots are thrust deep in the earth. The first to leave their imprint were the martyrs, the discoverers, the settlers. These pioneers not only penetrated Canada but the United States also. You know enough of your history that I need not recall for you the explorations of: Champlain to Georgian Bay, 1615; Brulé, Sault Ste. Marie, 1620; Jean Nicolet to Lake Michigan, 1634; Radisson and Groseillers, to Hudson Bay, 1662; Albanel to Hudson Bay, 1672; Louis Jolliet and Père Marquette to the Mississippi, 1673; LaSalle, the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, 1682; LaVérendrye and his two sons to the South Saskatchewan River by way of Lake Superior, 1731, and on to the foothills of the Rockies in 1743. In this common thought I associate with these Frenchmen such men as Hudson, Kelsey, Mackenzie, Fraser, Thompson, Hearne, and all those who contributed to the exploration of Canada.