

*The Address—Mr. Y. Leduc*

of my hon. colleague and friend, the member for Chambly-Rouville (Mr. Pinard) who, last summer, became a member of Her Majesty's privy council and Secretary of State. At the Montreal University law school, I had the opportunity to appreciate his good humour, his intellectual inquisitiveness, his zeal for work, his marked taste for arts and literature, his thirst for justice, and numerous other qualities. His great culture was soon to find expression in an eloquence not unworthy of Clemenceau himself. His oratorical triumphs are well known to all. Already officially recognized by Washington, they have just been acknowledged by Canada. I pray my hon. friend to accept anew our congratulations and wishes for a successful career.

Finally, the house is proud to welcome the new Minister of Transport (Mr. Marler). His long career as a notary and his concurrent participation in the administration of public affairs, as a member of the Montreal municipal council as well as of the Quebec legislative assembly, of which he was long a member and during the past few years leader of the opposition, have endowed him with the necessary experience, which augurs well for the Canadian nation. An untiring worker, whose courtesy has never defaulted, whose competence has often been hailed even by political opponents, in spite of their complex of superiority, the hon. member for St. Antoine-Westmount deserves our sincere congratulations and our warmest wishes for success on the federal scene.

In fact, I have today a unique occasion of drawing a parallel which may help foster Canadian unity. The province of Quebec has now the privilege of having in the federal parliament two political figures—and I shall not name any other—of different racial origins, well versed in law and having a wide experience in public administration, one of French origin, the right hon. the Prime Minister, and the other of English origin, the hon. Minister of Transport. Both of them speak with equal fluency the language of "fair France" and of "proud Albion". They have revealed themselves magnificent logicians, combining French dash and British coolness, both traits drawn at the very source of that duality of language and of different civilizations implanted in our country, and which constitute for the Canadian citizen a priceless asset, and, for our country, in the eyes of other international powers, an example likely to increase the power, prestige and cultural as well as economic maturity of the most beautiful country and the one which enjoys the greatest measure of freedom, our Canada.

May the example set by these two outstanding figures in this native land of ours be followed in all spheres of national activity.

The constituency of Verdun, which I have the honour to represent in this house and which I am required, by tradition, to extol, has a population of over 80,000 people, of which 47 per cent are of French origin and 47 per cent of English origin or, at least, English-speaking, the remaining six per cent belonging to various other racial groups.

The name Verdun comes from a part of France called the Ariège, and dates back to 1671, at least. Monsieur de Maisonneuve, before the arrival of the regiment of Carignan, had originally distributed lands in this district to eight freeholders, called by him Argoulets, who were, as a matter of fact, harquebusiers, musketeers, fusiliers, carbiniers used as light infantry in fighting the Iroquois. In 1841 the Côte des Argoulets was called Rivière Saint-Pierre at times, and Verdun at others. With the adoption of its incorporating statutes it gradually and definitely became Verdun.

From a geographical point of view Verdun is bounded on the north and west by Montreal, on the south by Ville Lasalle and on the east by the St. Lawrence river, whose beauty is enhanced at that point by St. Paul island.

This electoral district, because of its proximity to the metropolis of Canada, is, on the whole, residential, commercial and industrial. There are, in Verdun, more than 1,200 corporations or private companies. Moreover, it has two hospitals, one Catholic, the other Protestant; it is sprinkled with beautiful churches most of which are under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, and with spacious, modern schools which are still insufficient to fill the educational needs of the school-age population.

What gives Verdun its charm, besides the moral and civic qualities of its citizens and the perfect understanding between the various language groups making up its population, are its parks, its playgrounds, its fine auditorium, its promenade of more than five miles along the river. I must not forget to mention its outdoor swimming pool, which is highly appreciated by the youth of Verdun and of the whole neighbourhood. This swimming pool is so modern that inter-provincial or international swimming and diving competitions are held there annually and there is such a heavy attendance during the hot summer week ends that the courteous and civic-minded people of Verdun are satisfied with merely admiring a part of the population of Montreal.