

Subject..... Opening of Mount Royal Hotel.....

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MOUNT ROYAL HOTEL OPENED LAST NIGHT WITH BIG GATHERING

**Banquet And Dance Drew About 1,300 To Palatial New
Hostelry—Prime Minister Spoke On Early Days Here
When Twenty Slept In One Room—Sir Lomer Gives
His Best Wishes—**

One of the most brilliant and historic occasions of a social kind ever to be staged in this city was the dinner and dance last evening which formally opened the new Mount Royal Hotel and gathered about 1,300 people in the dining rooms, lobby and the ball room on the ninth floor. The hotel interior which a few hours before was still in an unfinished, chaotic state, was suddenly transformed into a palace of the most sumptuous order with the most luxurious appointments and a wealth of gorgeous blooms rarely approached in this city.

The dinner was presided over by William M. Birks, with whom at the head of the table were a number of distinguished Montrealers and others. Order was maintained in the movements of the big throng by a trumpeter resplendent in uniform, whose calls to attention could be heard at the uttermost ends of the hotel.

After Mr. Birks expressed his congratulations to the citizens for this latest acquisition and to the management of the hotel's company for their success in planting so fine a hostelry in one of the choicest sites in Montreal, he called upon the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Premier of Canada, to the toast of "Our Guest."

In the course of his address, in which he had spoken of the early beginnings of the hotel business in this city, the Premier said: "A glance, however, into the past may be sufficient to reveal that in celebrating the opening of the Mount Royal Hotel tonight, we are the participators of a function which serves to unite the beginnings of our country's history with all that represents the highest development of our present day commercial, industrial and social life.

"From one point of view it is possible to trace the history of our country's social, commercial and industrial development from the story of its leading hotels. In the history of Canada the name Mount Royal, in its identification with the well-being of travellers and great social gatherings, holds the first place, not only in time, but in magnitude of hospitality."

A Backward Glance

The Premier then said that he had been looking into the archives at Ottawa in order to ascertain the conditions of hotel life in our early past in Montreal, and in doing so he came upon a number of evidences of the crudity of our past hostelry, as, for example, the hotel known as "The Two Galloping Horses," situated (in 1776) at the eastern side of Place D'Armes, of which a traveller in that year wrote: "The dinners are excellent, but the accommodation is abominable. Fifteen or twenty sleep in one room, a yard apart. Let me assure you, I have not enjoyed a good night's repose since I have been here, from the generous music I am surrounded with arising from that most universal of wind instruments, the nose."

The Premier then, referring to the number of visitors from the United States coming to this city, many of whom were present at the function in question, spoke with pleasure of the amity which exists between the two races and pleaded earnestly for a continuation of "national unity and international good will."

Sir Lomer Gouin, who followed, said that he had been keenly interested in the Premier's account of the growth of this metropolis as seen in its hotels.

"There has been a continuous movement of progress," he said, "with the help of God, the bounty of Nature,

backed up by the initiative of the men and women of this province, the result being that it had come to be the metropolis of the Dominion, reaching almost to a population of a million. Through that initiative and hard work the port of Montreal had attained the second place on this North American continent in maritime affairs."

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

Speeches-1922 - 1932

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