

*The Address—Mr. Bourgeois*

by encouraging our farmers that we must begin our economic restoration. As Theodore Roosevelt stated:

The only effective way to help any man is to help him to help himself and the worst lesson to teach him is that he can be permanently helped at the expense of someone else.

In a splendid novel which had a remarkable success in France and which was exceptionally well translated in English by our fellow-citizen, Sir Andrew MacPhail—I refer to "Maria Chapdelaine"—Louis Hémon drew the exquisite portrait of the young French Canadian girl, daughter of pioneers and future mother of forest settlers, an ever present picture, but, in many ways, this portrait is also that of many other young Canadian girls, whether they be from English, Scotch or Irish descent. However, "Maria Chapdelaine" must, to preserve her high ideals and physical beauty, her charm and smile, remain in the country and continue to live the ancestral life. The atmosphere of cities to her is unhealthy, she wastes away, and the same may be said of her cousins, the English, Scotch, Irish, or the French Canadians whom city life unnerves and weakens when it does not contaminate them physically or infect their minds with socialism or even worse, communism. Let us rest assured, there is no Hercules, no adversity capable of laying low the Canadian people, if following the example of Antaeus, their feet stick to the soil, their foster-mother.

I now broach the important question of our railways. One must be blind or in bad faith not to acknowledge that at present their condition is far from being satisfactory. By degrees, our three transcontinental railways were built across Canada: the Canadian Pacific, the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific. Did legitimate hopes justify the building and the completing of these three great railway systems? In a speech delivered at the Sphinx Club, in London, the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, an ex-Speaker of this house, after mentioning the existence in Canada of these three great transcontinental railways, predicted that it would soon be necessary to construct the Hudson Bay railway and, he further added:

Yes, we are proud of our system of transportation, and only yesterday the Governor of Canada, one of the best men that the English aristocracy has ever given to Canada, Earl Grey, rediscovered the Hudson Bay which was known to the old traders of the Hudson Bay Company two hundred years ago, the Hudson Bay through which our own Commissioner in London, Lord Strathcona, came nearly eighty years ago. When I was a lad, he left Scotland to serve Canada and to serve the Empire. Yes, Hudson Bay has been rediscovered. To show you the importance of the country, the importance of the foreign

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interest in Canada, the three transcontinentals will not be sufficient to give an outlet for transportation of our grain, but we shall require, in the near future, the shorter route of the Hudson Bay. All this will benefit Canada, but above all it will benefit the British Empire.

But these four railways—for the Hudson Bay railway of which the Hon. Mr. Lemieux proclaimed the necessity, has also been built—are almost all in a deplorable financial state. Does this, however, justify charging this government with a want of foresight or with negligence. No. These conditions of which we deplore the existence, arise from numerous causes. First, we must mention the world-wide disturbance brought on by the war of 1914. We must further take into account the closing of our country to immigrants from Europe and, on the other hand, take into consideration that these European countries and the Argentine republic as well, have been within these last years, growing wheat on a large scale. The consequence, therefore, was that on both these scores our railways were the losers. Less immigrants to transport to the west and less wheat to carry to our Atlantic ports. Add to these causes the competition of motor trucks.

Must we for all that throw up the sponge and allow our railways, especially those that have become state lines, to extricate themselves as best they can? I feel certain that the house holds different views, that it approves the policy of the present government which is to help our railways, and especially those which form part of our national inheritance. However, before further steps are taken, the government has decided to inquire into the conditions prevailing in these extensive systems, in order to remedy their defects, and that is why a commission of inquiry, presided over by Hon. Justice Duff, has been appointed. It is only reasonable to expect that this inquiry will bring to light the shortcomings of our railway systems and point out the retrenchments to be made in their management.

This house learns that our government has entered into negotiations with the United States of America for the purpose of carrying out the St. Lawrence deep waterway. I am not acquainted with the plans prepared in this connection by the engineers to whom the study of this colossal project has been entrusted. All I know is what has been disclosed to the public by the Canadian press. This deep waterway would be undertaken in that part of our great river comprised between Prescott and Cornwall known as the international section, and our rich neighbours, the United States, would contribute largely to this gigantic enterprise. The house feels confident