

and let the transport of grain go entirely to the railways. The government seriously studied the question, and after a most thorough inquiry on the matter, came to the conclusion, after consultation with engineers, that transport by water was still more advantageous. The rapids between the counties of Beauharnois and Soulanges were the last obstacles to be removed. The works were pushed with a vigour without parallel in the history of public works in this country, and under the able direction of that eminent engineer, Mr. Thomas Munro, the Soulanges Canal was opened last year for navigation. The engineer supplemented the work of nature, and from these inland seas which we call the great lakes, ships drawing fourteen feet of water are able to carry to the shores of the Atlantic the wheat grown on the immense plains of the west. With the deepening of Port Colborne opposite the city of Buffalo, and the carrying out of modern improvements at the port of Montreal, the national port of Canada, not only shall we transport our own Canadian wheat, of which the greater part at present takes the United States route, but we shall secure a large portion of the traffic from the western states. At the present hour, while I am addressing the hon. gentlemen of this Chamber, a syndicate is at work in the port of Montreal which has undertaken to transport as much grain as the total export of that port last year.

Hon. gentlemen of the Senate, I approve entirely of the sending of the Canadian contingents to Africa by the present government. For more than sixty years Canada has enjoyed profound peace. I have searched in vain in the pages of history down to the most recent times without finding in any part of the world another people of four or five millions who wished to develop its resources, which has become wealthy and powerful, without having to pay in money or in men for the protection or defence of its territory. Under the democratic institutions which have been given us, and which England has confirmed to us, we have enjoyed every constitutional liberty. Every creed and nationality has stood on an equal footing and enjoyed equal liberty on Canadian soil. We are all proud of possessing equal rights. We collect our own revenues

and the people, at their free will, expend them through their representatives in the House of Commons. The gracious sovereign through whose royal munificence we have received all these benefits has incontestable claims upon our gratitude. So when the hour of danger sounded, when her territory was invaded, in all the provinces of the confederation, hundreds and thousands of men volunteered to sacrifice their lives on the battle field of Africa in defence of the empire. In the presence of that grand manifestation of patriotism the course of the government was plainly traced. Ignoring for the moment the letter of the constitution, and listening only to the voice of gratitude and the dictates of the heart, the ministry entered upon a new policy without assembling the representatives of the people and spent the public money anticipating the approval of the Commons. I do not believe, hon. gentlemen, that the government will be condemned for that action by Her Majesty's loyal Canadian subjects. In addition to these two contingents, the High Commissioner of Canada in London, Lord Strathcona, with the munificence of which he has given proofs on so many occasions in Canada—witness his donation of nearly a million dollars to the Royal Victoria Hospital and his endowment of over two millions to McGill University—has undertaken at his own expense to equip a contingent of five hundred men furnishing them with arms and mounts complete. He is sending them to South Africa in steamships expressly fitted for that purpose, transforming them into veritable military transports. I hope that the government of this country, with the entire population, on the approaching return of Lord Strathcona to Canada will testify to him by an immense demonstration their appreciation of his generosity, which surpasses aught that has ever been done in the United Kingdom by any one citizen whether noble or plebeian. The ministers themselves have paid their tribute in blood, and the sons of three of them are now facing the enemy on the soil of South Africa. The only son of the Speaker of this House, Col. Oscar Pelletier, parting from his wife and children, bidding adieu to the banks of the St. Lawrence, confiding to the care of his country all that is most dear to him in the world, is now opposing his breast to the