

*Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe*

government of this nation and such a place of honour in the mind of the Prime Minister of Canada. In the political field as in other fields he practically always met with personal success, and while other statesmen have had at one time or another in their lives to face defeat, he was spared that trial to a great extent. But success and glory never made him look or feel otherwise than modest in his nobility and valour. Successive personal victories did not alter his kind and sensitive heart. During his public career there came from the press of this land, from the press of other countries, from his political foes as well as from his political friends, such praises concerning him as might have made others think that the summit was attained. But such infatuation was unknown to Ernest Lapointe; he simply went his way looking up and looking ahead as though guided simply by the word "Excelsior."

It is my belief that the remembrance of his humble beginnings in life caused him always to prefer simple testimonies of confidence to admiration expressed with a flourish. In reality have not all great men such kind dispositions? In support of this belief may I tell this house of an incident which took place in 1935 when the Right Hon. Mr. Lapointe came to my city of Cap de la Madeleine to address a meeting on my behalf during the election that was then taking place. It was his first appearance in my city. He addressed an immense meeting. In fact, whenever and wherever he was to speak, the crowd always had the aspect, in numbers and enthusiasm, not of a local, but I might rather say, of a regional or provincial gathering. Before the meeting, while I was accompanying him to the platform through the dense crowd, an elderly and dignified lady managed to get near us and said to me, "I wish I could say a word to, or even touch the minister"; whereupon I told Mr. Lapointe what she had said and he stopped, shook hands with her and spoke to her, ending with these words, which were said with emotion as I saw his lips quiver: "Madame, vous me faites penser à ma mère. Merci." "Madam, you make me think of my mother. Thank you."

A noble heart, a noble thought! And when the greatest of all the great men of the day, the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, lately having set foot in the United States, saw with his own eyes and felt in his own heart that the whole American continent was thrilled by his presence, when he became aware of the majesty of the reception tendered him he also thought of the one who had given him life, and said, "I wish my mother could have seen this." There was another nobleman, but one who had the same noble thought.

[Mr. Brunelle.]

The testimony of confidence by the old lady, to which I have just referred, made a deep impression on the mind of the late Minister of Justice. He did not forget it, although he must have forgotten many other expressions of veneration. He told it to his friends and to some of his colleagues. He told it in my presence. On several occasions afterward, when during sessions I happened to meet him he would ask me in his pleasant way if my people were always of the same faith. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, they were.

May I say in conclusion that the people in my constituency, the people in the province from which I come—yes, the people throughout the whole of Canada, had faith in Ernest Lapointe. On November 26 last, when his death-knell was ringing in the air, making the fatal announcement that that most sympathetic of public figures would no more be seen alive, a cruel chill ran down the backs of thousands and thousands of Canadians who realized that a noble but humble soul had departed. They realized that an honest and ardent apostle of good-will and tolerance had just closed his eyes to the land he served so well, to the people he liked—people who so much needed men such as the late minister and his worthy friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), two real Canadians, loyal and true to each other who, like Baldwin and Lafontaine, gave us a most admirable example of a united Canada.

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Témiscouata) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with deep emotion to the speeches delivered by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), the hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) and others of our colleagues in commemoration of the great man recently deceased, the late Minister of Justice. All these eulogies were eloquently uttered, but they would be but idle words if we failed to piously observe his memory.

Mr. Lapointe was first my friend, then my chief, but he remained my friend after becoming my chief. He did me the honour of often thinking as I did. I could not always think as he did, because the opinions he expressed were not always only his own, but also those of his colleagues.

I tender my heartfelt sympathy to my chief, the Prime Minister of Canada, in the heavy loss he has just sustained. It is sufficient to glance at the newspapers of August, 1919, to see how important a role the regretted Mr. Lapointe played at the Liberal convention held in the city of Ottawa to select a successor to our deceased leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Certain candidates put forward by the financiers