

The Address—Mr. A. Gauthier

the Lake St. John district. You have surely heard also about the excellent people who live there. The term excellent seems quite appropriate, for these people are courageous, industrious, and possess the best civic qualities one could hope to find within a nation. If your numerous occupations have prevented you from visiting that beautiful part of our country, a part which is particularly dear to me, several members of the government, including the Prime Minister, have done so on several occasions. All these gentlemen have been able to appraise the main qualities of those pioneering people, of whom our country has so many reasons to be proud.

Before proceeding further, it is undoubtedly appropriate that I give a brief outline of the geographical position of Lake St. John county. First of all, my constituency is located in the northern part of Quebec, some 320 miles from Montreal. I might add that my county forms a semicircle around that great body of blue water known as lake St. John; the other half of the circle is made up by the constituency of my hon. friend, the Deputy Speaker of the house, the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Dion).

In similar circumstances, in 1947, my hon. friend from Roberval gave the house a rather extensive description of what was then his own constituency.

He told you, for instance, that Father Jean de Quen, a Recollet missionary, had been the first white man to reach the shores of lake St. John, in 1647. He mentioned also that that beautiful region however would have to wait some two hundred years before being settled for good. As a matter of fact, a good parish priest of the village of Kamouraska brought to the region its first settlers, and it was then that Notre Dame d'Hebertville was founded, the oldest of all the parishes in my county, which celebrated its centenary three years ago come July. However, historical truth compels me to add that lumbering was established in the region long before the foundation of Notre Dame d'Hebertville. Therefore we can say that if there were no real settlements at the time, our part of the country was at least inhabited.

It is, of course, a well-known fact that even then the Messrs. Price had begun to work our forests. It is obvious that the great Price Brothers Company, which operates a paper mill a few *arpents* from my own town of St. Joseph d'Alma, has been with us for some time now.

Agriculture was not long in flowering—only a short time after the first attempts at settlement. Tourists are now able to admire more than fifty rich and prosperous agricultural parishes spread out all around the shores of lake St. John. Providence, moreover, has helped out the settlers' tenacity by creating these fertile and productive districts which form the lake St. John basin.

The two main sources of revenue for the farmers of my district are cattle-raising and dairying. Is not lake St. John cheese a delicacy much sought after by Canadian and British consumers? Last year, thanks to the co-operation and goodwill of the Department of Agriculture, the cheese producers were able to export directly to Great Britain without having to resort to a go-between and thus they made an additional profit of \$15,000 per year.

Our farmer is not only skilful, but he is courageous and tenacious; he is endowed with uncommon initiative as may be seen solely by the monument he raised at St. Bruno when he built the magnificent abattoir bearing the name of "Chaine Cooperative du Saguenay." This \$800,000 building required the efforts, the energy and the money of 1,800 members. It is expected that in 1952 more than 50,000 head of hog, steer and sheep will be slaughtered there. This achievement, it is true, was made easier at the beginning by a federal grant of \$115,000, but in fairness to the farmers of my district I must say that they are mainly responsible for the success thus achieved. They gave other Canadians an example of faith in the future of their country, an example of co-operation, of initiative and of foresight.

In the past century, agriculture has been the main source of income for the inhabitants of the lake St. John district, but this region seems to be on the edge of an industrial development.

The Aluminum Company of Canada has done the pioneering work in this field and was the first to realize the tremendous industrial possibilities of this vast basin of 10,000 square miles.

The engineers of the Aluminum Company have explored the entire region and have found that the rivers which flow into the lake as well as the outlet to the sea are capable of producing huge quantities of electric power. First of all, there was the construction, at Isle Maligne, of a powerhouse, with a capacity of 540,000 horsepower, which made possible the building at Riverbend of a paper mill with a daily output of 700 tons of newsprint.