

*The Address—Mr. Villeneuve*

phenomena observers, it is the country of northern lights; for the epicure, it is the country where one finds the tastiest blueberries in the world; the architects know that here is found the best granite in the world, while those who take an interest in economic development consider that district to be the district of progress and of the future.

The county bears the name of the town which is its chief town, namely Roberval. The first settlements in this section of the district called the Lake St. John district were at Roberval; it is an administrative, cultural and commercial centre, which will celebrate its centenary in 1954. Among the pioneers of Roberval was, I am proud to say, my great-grandfather who became a settler there about 1856.

I commend those valiant pioneers, who, with their axes, opened up the wealthy districts framed by the Laurentians and lake St. John, and, who made, through their courage and self-denial, this magnificent development possible.

Because of its geographical position, the county of Roberval has access to the mining area of Chibougamau by a road branching off at St. Felicien, and passing through Notre Dame de la Dore ends at the mining village of Chibougamau. This Chibougamau district has a great mining wealth, which is being developed at an increasing pace, and will soon be connected by an electrical network fed by the power plant of Chute Savane, in the county of my friend, the member for Lake St. John (Mr. Gauthier). The county of Roberval, and the district of which it is a part by reason of its agricultural and commercial development, of its hydroelectric power, of its access to the sea through the Saguenay, and of its deep water ports, seems to be best suited as a terminal for the proposed railway that is to connect Chibougamau to the important economic centres. Such a project would, according to experienced economists, mean more than a safe investment, it would be a realistic way for the province of Quebec to preserve its resources and have its population benefit therefrom.

Historically, Chibougamau has always been connected with the lake St. John district, and the first prospectors, among whom was McKenzie, in 1902, followed even then a path along the river Ashuapmuchuan to get to Chibougamau. It may be recalled that in 1927 a company had been formed under the name of "Chibougamau Railway" and had begun the construction of a railroad starting from the lake St. John district

and extending towards Chibougamau. The depression undermined this undertaking. In March of this year, a local organization, the Conseil d'Orientation Economique du Saguenay, submitted an eloquent and well-founded brief in favour of the construction of a railway connecting Chibougamau to lake St. John, to five members of the cabinet, including the Prime Minister. As I happened to be among the delegates, I remember the kind reception that was extended to us, and avail myself of this opportunity to thank those who were responsible for it.

Since then a group of Canadian National Railways engineers have been planning a route between St. Felicien, La Dore and Chibougamau. I trust, with all the people of the area concerned, that their studies will bring results so that in the near future we will get this railway which will supplement the economy of that district, the closest and the easiest of access for the people of Chibougamau.

The people of Roberval county depend mostly on agriculture and lumbering. There are in the district very good lands, which generally are well cultivated, industrious farmers, well equipped farms as well as model farming communities like Chambord, St. Prime, St. Felicien, La Dore, Normandin, St. Edmond Les Plaines and Albanel, to name only a few. I was born on a farm in St. Prime, where my grandfather was a pioneer. In almost every agricultural community of that county there is to be found a co-operative union of farmers which, combined with the U.C.C. and J.A.C. movements, leads the farming population towards professional organization. The main difficulty in the field of agriculture in that county springs from its remoteness from the markets and consequently lower prices for our farmers who, wishing to correct the situation, have set up an organization called "La chaîne coopérative du Saguenay"—the Saguenay Co-operative Chain.

The mining region of Chibougamau would find in Roberval county, among others, a logical source of agricultural supplies if a railroad was built to link the two regions.

As is the case with any young county, that of Roberval includes a great many farms in the process of changing from the settling stage to the agricultural stage; such a period of organization always requires heavy expenditures on the part of the farmers. It would be advisable to get the Canadian farm loan board to pay more attention to that class of farmers and, in view of the needs of the county, to name a resident assessor.