

*Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe*

exposed. The great concourse of people we saw at his funeral was a most eloquent reply to his bitter though not numerous critics.

Through their deep sorrow, commensurate with the position that Lapointe occupied in our national life, the people recognize the ties that united them to him, and the tragic loss caused by his demise.

As Reverend Father Gaudreault has so aptly said: "When the tragic event became known, it was as if a bolt from the blue had uprooted an oak. And the gap still remains. An oak-tree cannot be replaced in a few days!"

After the eloquent words we have heard, the stirring tributes from the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works, there is little more about Lapointe's career to be said that has not yet been stressed or remains unknown.

Everyone will admit that Lapointe, of all the parliamentarians, was the most conversant with the rules and customs of the house, the most able to authoritatively point out a precedent to justify an interpretation of the complex procedure. The political life of our country since 1904, was his own life; he knew all the details and this familiarity with the present, was supplemented by a thorough knowledge of Canadian history from the union until the present days.

In the house, he was a redoubtable adversary, first for his ready intelligence and wit, but above all for his historical erudition, his reliable memory and his assiduousness to the meetings of the house during his entire parliamentary career. However, everyone has noticed that, in spite of his eagerness in the fight, in the course of the debate, he had a method of attack all his own which, although very effective, did not leave room for any rancour, but kept the adversary his friend outside of this house.

As for his accomplishments, it would be too much of a task even to outline them, but I would like the members to make it their personal duty to "honour his memory in following the ideals to which he had dedicated his best endeavours."

The utterances, writings, acts, undertakings of Mr. Lapointe, everything that goes to make up his works, must stand as a beacon to guide those who attempt to speak in the name of the French-Canadian race.

(Text) My only excuse for taking a few more minutes of the time of this house is that, over a period of thirty-five years, in fact since my early childhood, I have known the Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe intimately, and that I have been privileged to serve him in the capacity of private secretary during two periods of five years each, from 1925 to 1930 and from

[Mr. Picard.]

1935 to 1940. Over that time there grew on my part for him not only admiration but devotion and affection, and I would have considered it amiss of these sentiments not to rise to-day, no matter how sad a task it is for me to speak in the past tense of a man who two months ago was yet in this house and who seemed destined to carry on in the line of duty for many years to come.

Upon Ernest Lapointe's first election in Quebec East, in 1919, Toronto *Saturday Night* stated:

The province of Quebec has never had a stronger champion—save Sir Wilfrid himself—on the floor of parliament than Mr. Lapointe. He possesses the passionate love of his native race which marks so many of his compatriots. He is, however, essentially a Canadian, and not merely a French-Canadian. For that reason, he has the confidence and esteem of his fellow countrymen as a whole.

This was true, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Lapointe's nationalism was broader than that of the pseudo-nationalist element of his province, one which saw beyond the borders of Quebec and embraced Canadian citizenship with full equal rights and full equal opportunities for all. It was the nationalism of Laurier blossoming forth in harmony with the evolution of the country from colonial-dominion status to that of equal partner with the mother country.

Ernest Lapointe remained true to his racial group, but, as in the case of Laurier, endeavoured to promote their interests by bringing them to the full benefits of a closer association with the rest of Canada on a footing of complete equality. He went far to reach his aim in that he obtained better understanding within his party, and, I may say, even in this house, between the two races, better cooperation amongst the duly elected representatives of the people. Unfortunately, his life's work, like that of most great men, was not yet completed; it was even in certain parts menaced, when he had to lay down the sword, and much remains to be done to ensure the realization of Laurier's and Lapointe's dreams of a country united by the fraternal spirit of cordial understanding and friendly sharing of our natural inheritance.

I have said before in this house, and I wish to repeat it to-day: There can be no true Canadian sentiment when English-Canadian citizens think in terms of empire and Britain and when French-Canadians consider their province and not Canada as their country. I might also add: There can be no real and effective cooperation as long as the majority keep all the benefits for themselves and give their minority partners the crumbs from the table, the dribbling drops from an overfull