

mence operations, no more privileged trading companies, no more such settlements, and no more lost children, sacrificed upon the outskirts of civilization. What we want now is to occupy territory by utilizing modern science; to sound the rivers and launch steam-boats upon them, and to join the landmarks of nature by the iron rails. Inspired by this idea, the Europeans have done wonders these ten or twelve years past; they have discovered, studied and published the knowledge of a quarter of the African continent. It now but remains to send dry goods out there—a matter that should be hastened. The negroes are yearning for the civilization of calico and cheap looking-glasses.

By us, who are at once a young people, and one blest with rich resources, all that cannot be looked upon with indifferent gaze. We are better off than Europe; our manufactures are not yet numerous, and no useless class, like the *proletariat* of Europe, exists among us; like Europe, we have need of an outlet for the products of our industries in the measure of their development; unlike her, in place of sending afar off to find a market for our merchandise, we have it at our doors. The North-west awaits us.

But who, to-day, knows anything of the North-west? Almost no one. The old memories of it are lost. For the last twenty years, a letter coming from Red River would have been looked upon as coming from China, or thereabouts. At any rate, the prairies visited by our fathers and where so many Canadians settled, no longer appealed to our imagination. Ten years ago, under the pressure of political events, a sort of awakening took place. Public attention was drawn to the Red River colony, to the extent even of giving it a constitution, which erected it into a Federal Province, and that was all. People no longer cared to know anything about it. They were quite indifferent regarding the immense territories to the west of Manitoba, as well as the belt of land to be taken possession of, which stretches away to the North, between Hudson's Bay and the St. Lawrence. Here we are; the owners, the *seigneurs*, the administrators, paying the expenses of these new countries, while knowing so little of them, failing to comprehend that their future is relatively to us as that of Africa and Australia to Europe.

Around the simple questions of geography, then, other great branches of study gather. In truth, geography, in this order of ideas—ideas springing from modern requirements—is the pivot upon which at this moment turn the destinies of races. I will dare even to say that Canada is more than any other nation in danger of perishing if she fails to take account of passing events,

and if she does not look to take her share of action in the general movement which, by thirty years hence, perhaps, will have changed the face of all that remains under the sun of colonizable country. Needless, I think, to insist upon this; nevertheless, if any one doubt me, one simple question will decide it: Where are the men who thoroughly understand our marine, our fisheries, the steps necessary to improve the St. Lawrence Gulf and create industries upon its shores—where are they who know the northern parts of Ontario and Quebec—where the writers, the orators who can popularize the knowledge of our North-west? Doubtless there are some, but isolated, unknown, unable to make themselves heard except by accident, or as a momentary novelty—like the speaking machine and learned dogs. This does not prevent our paying, however, for the placing of our name upon those great spaces, from which, even now, we ought to be deriving some profit. Of course, we want the Newfoundland and other fisheries, we want the Hudson's Bay, we want the Saskatchewan, *but what do we know about them all?* About as much as we know about the moon. Then why not want the moon as well? This reminds me of that famous cry of the French Chambers before 1870: "We must have the Rhine!" An impatient member brusquely put the question: "Do you know what this Rhine is, or where it's to be found?" We need be at no greater loss than that at any rate.

Let us look at things carefully. What the countries of Europe lack we have at our doors; territory, room, the resources of a fertile soil. It remains for us to define its "geography," in all the points of view embraced by, or in any way related to that science, history, agriculture, mines, lines of communication, climate, &c. That is a good deal. Yes, it is indeed a good deal when one thinks that it has been found necessary to expend four millions of dollars to trace upon the map the route which a railway may take from Old Canada to the Rocky Mountains; and there has not been found in Parliament a man able to light the snuff of a candle—to show even a taper's light of his own, to illumine the Ministers of two Administrations in their labors amidst this darkness! And so we remain in our shell, and comprehend not what is this country called Canada. Our voyageurs of the past were truly greater *savants* than that! They could have drawn for us, from memory, the chart of the Confederation from ocean to ocean, without omitting that which our engineers are at such pains to re-discover to-day. Surely I had reason, in speaking of our French-Canadian ancestors, to take for the title of my lecture: "From Newfoundland to the Rocky Mountains!"