

inflammatory articles, it required nothing further to make them determine on a complete rout. When an army is thus dispersed, it is lost, if some energetic man does not come forward promptly to take command and lead it back to camp. Mr. Lacoste understood the danger that his party ran. Taking some friends into his confidence, he represented to them the necessity for instant action and for finding a rallying-point, in order to lead back the dismayed fugitives. The formulation of this scheme was but the work of an evening. He pointed out also, as a solution of the difficulties of the situation, the retirement of Mr. Ouimet, who had for supporters only Messrs. Archambault and Chapleau, Messrs. Robertson, Ross, and Fortin having resigned their portfolios, and Mr. de Boucherville to replace him. This very practical proposition soon got under way and assumed tangible form. Some days later, the de Boucherville cabinet replaced the Ouimet administration. It was a service that sought no recognition, that which Mr. Lacoste had performed, but it was of as great importance to his party as a life-buoy thrown out to a drowning man.

In 1881, he was called by the Chapleau government to the Legislative Council. Upon this, certain friends of his, out of pure good will, no doubt, did so much violence to their feelings as to predict for him complete failure, these worthies, avowing that he was too good a lawyer to be of the stuff out of which politicians are made. His first speech, however, delivered on the occasion of the sale of the North Shore Railway, put these false prophets to confusion. This speech won for him a high place in the Council, and established his influence beyond cavil. He raised himself by the force of argument, the logic of carefully collected facts, to a level with the foremost legislators of our time. This address testified to an extensive knowledge of administrative law, and of those established principles which should inspire our provincial politics.

In 1884, he entered the Senate, where he studied the functions which that assembly ought to fill in our institutions. From his point of view, it ought to widen its sphere of action and give to its operations an importance which should have the effect of silencing its detractors. Why, for instance, should not the Senate bring a keener scrutiny to bear upon the work of the Commons? It is only too true, unfortunately, that in the hurry and press of the work of legislation in the House, the encroachment of the central government