

COPY

December 23, 1922.

The Honourable L.A. Taschereau,
Prime Minister of Quebec,
QUEBEC, Quebec.

Dear Mr. Taschereau:

It is proposed that the International Mathematical Congress meet in Canada in 1924.

Before the war this Congress held its meetings once in four years, the meeting places being the more important university and culture centres in Europe such as Rome, Paris, Cambridge. It has never met in America. Two years ago the Americans invited it to hold its meeting in 1924 on this side of the Atlantic. The precise place of meeting was not specified but it was understood that it would be in New York or vicinity.

After the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto last December the Chairman of the American Committee having the matter in charge wrote me suggesting the possibility of the Congress meeting in Canada in the case we were in a position to handle it. I had an interview with the Honourable W.L. MacKenzie King in regard to the matter and saw a number of the members of his Cabinet including a considerable proportion of the French Canadian members. They were all favourably impressed with the possibilities of the Congress and the Government has promised financial support. During the past summer I visited Europe with a view to seeing what the prospects were for a successful meeting in Canada. I saw a number of the British and Continental mathematicians who promised their support and everything looks most propitious from the European end. All that is necessary to make a success of the Congress is sufficient funds.

The holding of this Congress in Canada would mean a great intellectual stimulus to the country. It would enormously enhance the prestige of Canada in the eyes of intellectual Europe. Delegations might be expected from the several allied countries and from the neutral European countries. Naturally the principal continental delegation would come from France. If we were in a position to properly finance the delegations from continental Europe it is practically certain that the French delegation would be the most distinguished in attendance at the Congress, for while France attaches great prestige to intellectual achievements of all kinds she has herself always taken a particularly high rank in the Mathematical Sciences. Under the circumstances the French Canadians should play a prominent role in connection with the Congress and ways and means to that end should be discussed. It offers also a splendid opportunity for cooperation between the French and English speaking Canadians.

The only centres in Canada which could come under consideration as possible meeting places for the Congress are Montreal