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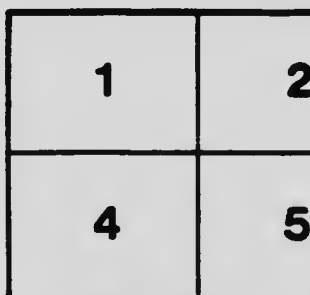
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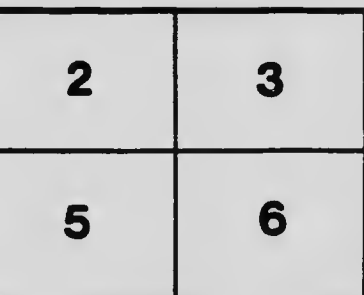
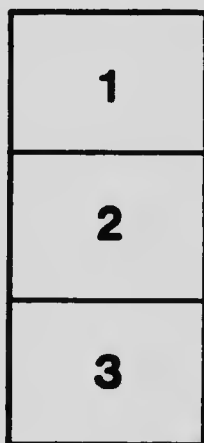
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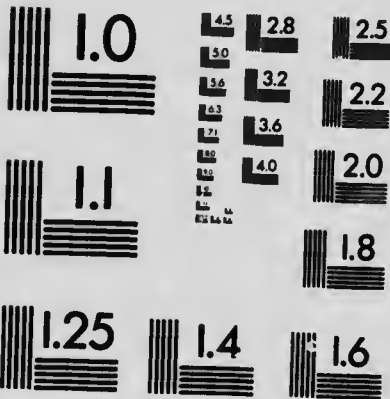
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The National Parliaments Commission

HON. A. TURGEON
IN THE QUEBEC LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
REVIEWS AND EXPLAINS THE
PROGRESS MADE IN
THE WORK

Monument to King Edward VII

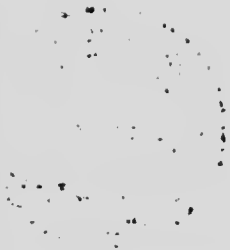


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HON. A. TURGEON
PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC



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The National Battlefields Commission

HON. A. TURGEON
IN THE QUEBEC LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
REVIEWS AND EXPLAINS THE
PROGRESS MADE IN
THE WORK

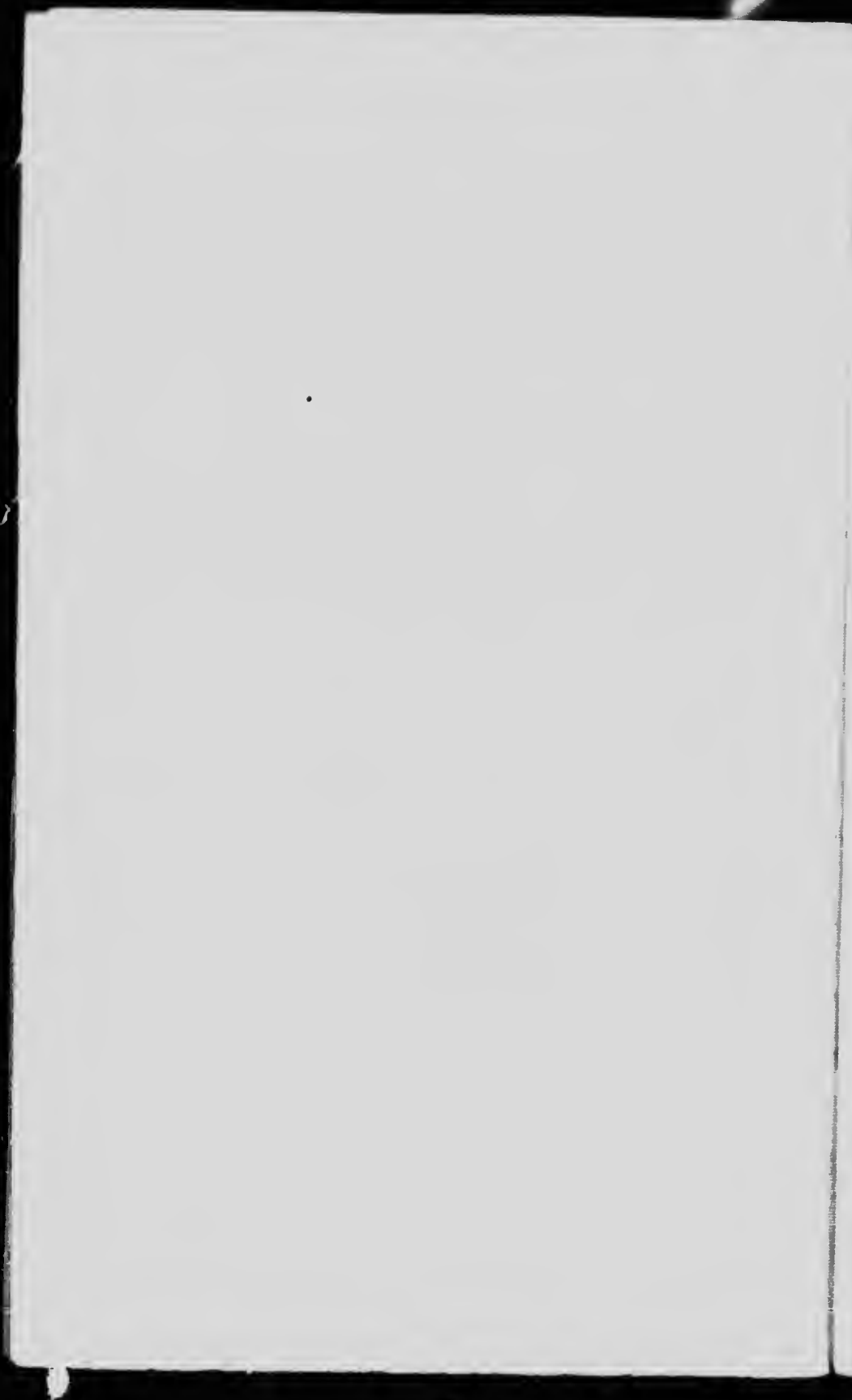
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1911







The National Battlefields Commission



When the Government bill to provide for the transfer of certain property to the National Battlefields Commission and for the creation of a monument to King Edward VII, came up for its second reading in the Quebec Legislative Council on Tuesday, the 14th March, 1911, Hon. A. Turgeon, the President of that House, availed himself of the occasion, to fully explain the progress made in the work of the Commission and to correct any erroneous impressions that might prevail on the subject. He said:

Honorable Gentlemen,

The debate which has taken place on this question in another House demonstrates once more how little the work of the National Battlefields Commission is known and still less appreciated. I avail myself of this occasion to put the facts in their proper light and to correct all false impressions.

Created in 1908 by the Parliament of Canada, the Commission was originally composed of the President, Sir George Garneau, then mayor of Quebec, who is too well known here to render it necessary

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for me to speak in his praise—of Sir George Drummond, of the Bank of Montreal, of Mr. Byron Walker, now Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Bank of Commerce, a man of highly cultivated mind, deeply versed in matters of history and art, of Colonel Denison, magistrate, a distinguished economist and well informed military writer, and of myself. Later the Province of Ontario was represented by Lt.-Col. Hon. Mr. Hendrie, a large manufacturer, of Hamilton, and the Province of Quebec by its excellent and very sympathetic Minister of Public Works, Hon. Mr. Taschereau.

The preamble of the Act (7 and 8 Edward VII, chapter 57) indicates its object.

“WHEREAS it is desirable in the public interest of Canada to acquire and preserve the great historic battlefields at Quebec, restoring as far as possible their principal features, so as to make them a Canadian National Park ; Whereas considerable proportions of these grounds are already vested in His Majesty for the military or other public purposes of Canada ; Whereas it is anticipated that, in addition to the appropriation of public moneys of Canada hereby authorized, the various provincial governments, as well as municipal or other bodies and many private individuals, will contribute generously to the aforesaid project ; And whereas it is expedient to provide for the constitution of a Commission for the acquisition, management and control, subject to the provisions of this Act, of the said battlefields and the moneys contributed for the said purposes ;”

Incidentally the Parliament of Canada entrusted to the Commission the task of organizing the celebration of the Tercentenary of the foundation of Quebec by Champlain, and they, according to the

The National Battlefields Commission

admission of the best judges, acquitted themselves of it with rare success.

Our work therefore is to reconstruct and nationalize the historic battlefields of 1759 and 1760, that of the Plains of Abraham which witnessed the triumph of Wolfe and the British arms and also, by an admirable inspiration suggested by association and reconciliation of the foes of former days now united by a same thought and pursuing the same ideal, that of Ste. Foye, the scene of the last French victory in Canada and of which it may be said that it enwrapped the brow of our race with a halo of glory and that if we were ceded we were not conquered.

For this purpose, we were authorized to collect subscriptions over and above the sum of \$300,000 voted by the Parliament of Canada and to be more particularly applied to the festivities of the Tercentenary. These actually amount to \$488,251, and they have been paid to us by the following among others :—

STATEMENT at top of " G-42 " of the Auditor General's Report for 1908-1909.

DETAILS OF ABOVE RECEIPTS

Subscriptions, including interest (\$466,087.17)

FROM:—

Provinces of the Dominion of Canada:

Ontario	\$100,000 00
Quebec	100,000 00
Nova Scotia	10,000 00
New Brunswick.....	7,500 00
Manitoba	10,000 00
British Columbia.....	10,000 00
Prince Edward Island.....	2,500 00
Alberta	10,000 00
Saskatchewan	10,000 00
	—————\$260,000 00

The National Battlefields Commission

British Colonies:	
New Zealand.....	\$ 4,865 00
Cities, Towns and Counties:	
Montreal, Que.	\$ 10,000 00
Winnipeg, Man.	1,000 00
Brantford, Ont.	500 00
London, Ont.	200 00
Vancouver, B.C.	100 00
Peterborough, Ont.	100 00
Shawinigan Falls, Que.	100 00
Notre-Dame de Grâces, Que.	100 00
Megantic, Que.	50 00
St. Nicholas, Que.	50 00
St. Michel, Que.	50 00
Rosedale, Man.	25 00
St. Lambert, Que.	25 00
St. Bazile, Que.	15 00
Elkhorn, Man.	10 00
L'Assomption, Que.	10 00
Les Ecureuils, Que.	10 00
Bridgeburg (Village)	10 00
Prescott and Russell (Counties).....	200 00
York (Township of), Ont.	100 00
Two Mountains (County of)	100 00
Bruce (County of), Ont.	25 00
Richelieu (County of), Que.	25 00
	\$ 12,805 00
Educational institutions and school children.....	\$ 3,711 09
Literary and Historical Societies.....	393 21
Commercial and financial institutions (including private subscriptions made by parties through Canadian banks)	16,396 52
Clubs (societies and associations)	4,181 05
Military corps	1,243 78
Churches and religious institutions.....	346 36
General subscriptions:	
Canadian subscriptions	\$ 15,223 98
English general subscriptions.....	5,858 45
Anonymous	19,735 83
	\$ 40,317 16
English (special) subscription (1st instalment)	\$ 24,318 75

The National Battlefields Commission

Collections made by Quebec Battlefields Association:

Quebec Branch—Amount collected.....	\$ 6,792 14
Less expenses incurred in connection with the general organization, pre- paration of plans and publication of the "Appeal"	4,221 79
	\$ 2,570 95
Quebec Ladies' Auxiliary.....	4,000 00
Montreal Branch	42,218 10
Toronto Branch	22,788 78
Toronto Daughters of the Empire.....	2,542 55
Ottawa Branch	8,190 17
Hamilton Branch	47 11
Other small collections	2,184 68
	Total.....\$458,059 61
Interest	19,027 56
	Total.....\$466,087 17

DETAILS OF RECEIPTS FOR 1909-1910

Subscriptions 1909-10, with interest added (\$22,164.17)

FROM:—

Cities, Towns and Counties:	
Toronto, Ont.	\$ 5,000 00
Educational Institutions and school children	3 16
General subscriptions:	
Canadian subscriptions	50 00
Anonymous	01
English (special) subscription (final instalment)	10,115 78
Collections made by Quebec Battlefields Association:	
Quebec Branch	10 00
Montreal Branch	21 45
	Total.....\$ 15,200 40
Interest	6,963 77
	Total
	\$ 22,164 17

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I will now reply to the reproaches which I have heard made both inside and outside the legislative precincts. These bear upon many points which I will endeavor to group together under three or four principal heads.

1. The Commission has spent on the Tercentenary celebration the \$300,000 voted by the Parliament of Canada. This is correct—\$298,000 in round figures. Were we legally authorized to do this ?

Section 16 of the Act says :

“ 16. Whereas the present year not only will, it is hoped, mark the setting apart of the battlefields as herein mentioned, but is also the Tercentenary of the founding of the city of Quebec and the establishment of French government and civilization upon the shores of the St. Lawrence by Samuel de Champlain, and it is desirable that these events be appropriately commemorated ; Be it therefore enacted that the Commission may, under the authority and direction of the Governor in Council, arrange for and carry out at a convenient time a celebration in every respect worthy and fit, of the Tercentenary of the founding of Quebec by Champlain, and the dedication of the battlefields to the general public purposes of Canada, as provided by this Act ; and that the Commission may, subject to the sanction and approval of the Governor in Council, expend and lay out, for the purposes of the said celebration, such portion of the sum of three hundred thousand dollars hereinbefore appropriated as is authorized by the Commission subject to such sanction and approval. ”

It is right to add that not a cent was expended without the previous authorization of the Governor in Council and that we are bound to furnish the

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Finance Minister with the vouchers for all our payments. This is what we did as I will show you in an instant. The expenditure, I acknowledge, was considerable, but, by the very text of the law, the grandeur of the events we were called upon to commemorate, and the presence of the Heir to the Throne and of the warships of Great Britain, France and the United States, we had to give to the celebration unusual eclat and magnificence.

The Federal Parliament was not astonished at this. It expected it. It had prepared for it in advance by the most authoritative voices in the House and, if any surprise was felt, it was at the fact that we had not exceeded the appropriation voted by Parliament.

Here is what Sir Wilfrid LaCrier said on the subject :

“ Yes. It is proposed that the sum of \$300,000 should be placed in the hands of a Commission and that other sums which may come from other sources should also be placed in the hands of this Commission. It is proposed that there should be this year in the city of Quebec a grand celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of the city and of other events in the same connection. If these plans are carried out they will necessarily involve the expenditure of a very large amount of money, perhaps the greater part of the appropriation voted by Parliament, perhaps the whole of it. But as to this I have no suggestion to offer. At the present time, however, we propose no more than to create a Commission with certain objects in view and to place in their hands \$300,000, with the object, first, of having a celebration in the city of Quebec :

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and, secondly, to undertake the reclamation of the battlefields on the Plains of Abraham and at Ste. Foy. I may frankly say to the House that if the Commission undertake all the work that has been contemplated, it is likely that the Canadian Parliament will be asked at a future date to contribute more money.

“But at the present time Parliament is committed to nothing more than the expenditure of \$300,000. It may be that the whole of this money may be absorbed by the celebration which is to take place this summer—I hope it will not be, but it may be—but at all events if the whole of the money which is provided were to be absorbed by the celebration this year, it is possible that Parliament will be asked, at no distant day, to provide a further sum to reclaim such land as has to be reclaimed :”

Mr. R. L. Borden said :

“We are committing ourselves to merely an expenditure of \$300,000, a considerable portion of which no doubt will be used in the celebration of the events intended to be commemorated.”

Mr. W. F. Cockshutt, Conservative member for Brantford, said :

“We are called upon to vote \$300,000, but anyone who knows the history of great celebrations will admit that there will be very little left of this amount after the celebration this coming summer. It will take fully that amount to entertain properly the Prince of Wales and the other celebrities who will come there to take part in this very important celebration.”

Hon. Mr. Lougheed, leader of the Conservative party in the Senate, said :

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"The House of Commons has passed upon an estimate of \$300,000 which represents simply an initial expenditure towards the carrying out of this scheme.

The \$300,000 already voted, I understand, is for the purpose practically of contributing to or covering the expense of the Tercentenary celebration to take place next July. That item will undoubtedly be absorbed by the celebration."

2. The Commission has been accused of being unapproachable and that no information could be obtained from it by the public. Nothing could be more unfair than this. The Commission has its offices at No. 2 Cook street, in a well known building, the former Archives office, and the President, Sir George Garneau, who spends three or four hours a day there, has always freely supplied all information sought for. On the other hand, it cannot be reasonably expected that he should of his own accord, make a tour of the newspaper offices. Our services, it should not be forgotten, are gratuitous. Moreover, the press has always means ready to hand to obtain information, in the public documents. We are a Commission appointed by the Parliament of Canada and subject to its control.

Section 12 of the Act reads as follows :

"12. The Commission shall render to the Minister of Finance, on or before the first day of June in each year, detailed statements of all its receipts and expenditures up to the thirty-first day of March in that year ; and copies of such statements shall be laid before Parliament by the Minister of Finance within the first fourteen days of the next following session."

Consequently, what was not my surprise to hear

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it asserted in another Chamber that, since its creation, the National Battlefields Commission had never rendered an account of the moneys in its charge. The member who made this statement was probably in good faith. The evil seed sown by certain newspapers was simply bearing fruit. That was all. The legend had taken root and grown sturdy. Still, if the report of the Auditor-General, Session 1909. (Vol. 1, p. G-42 to G-50) be opened, a detailed statement will be found there of our costs of administration and the expenses for the Tercentenary celebration for the pageants, for the reception of the Prince, officers, soldiers and sailors, for our guests, for the "Don de Dieu," for the "Habitation de Quebec", for the stands, for the military review, for the decorations, fireworks, musical programme, athletic games, trumpeters and heralds-at-arms, placards, etc., etc.

The Auditor-General's report for 1910 (vol 1 p. G-34-G-35) also contains a detailed statement of our expenditure during the past fiscal year.

3. But, of all the accusations, the most damaging and certainly the most exasperating to the citizens of the ancient capital is the one involved in the interrogation hurled at us: What have you done since 1908 except mark time? This reproach is on a par with the others, but needs to be more thoroughly throttled. Honorable gentlemen, if you want to understand exactly the situation that was forced upon us, I cannot too strongly urge you to read the report of the debate in the House of Commons. You will get very clear from it the impression that a certain amount of suspicion existed when the law was voted. The members from Ontario and the West fancied they saw in it some kind of a scheme to expropriate the Ross Rifle factory and to entail

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upon the country an expenditure of perhaps \$2,000,000. This besetting fear crops up ceaselessly in the debate. What was the consequence? To reassure the anxious minds, the Commission was shackled and solidly tied up, so solidly, in fact, that when the time came, it was found that it could not move.

No property can be purchased without the previous assent of the Parliament of Canada. That is the rule and it is a wise one. Once the assent is obtained and the price fixed, the Commission must go back to the Governor-General in Council and obtain his authorization. Here again, in the case of sales by mutual agreements, everything goes well enough. The procedure is slow, but practicable. But, in the case of expropriations, which constitute the majority, it was quickly discovered that our powers for such, under the Railway Act, were worthless. The award of the arbitrators might have been in every case set aside by the courts as being binding only on one of the parties. Finally, during the last session, we agreed upon a new mode of expropriation and the cases will be heard before the Exchequer Court, with right of appeal to the Supreme Court. Armed with this legislation, we resolutely went to work. We have purchased by mutual agreement properties to the extent of \$150,000 in round figures and we are ready to proceed before the Exchequer Court with the others. In any case, we estimate that the balance we have in hand (\$366,000) is sufficient to cover the acquisition of all the lands. The plans have been drawn up by a distinguished landscape architect and in the middle of December last (1910) our reports and our plans were transmitted to the Government who immediately laid them before Parliament.

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If they are approved and if an appropriation be voted in the Estimates, the work of making the park will be commenced on the disappearance of the snow.

As for the bill now before us, it is perhaps time that I should refer to it. I will not detain you long. The Provincial Government could not escape from the moral obligation to transfer the ground in question. It is indispensable to the park and it was understood from the start that it would form part of it. It is a gracious act which will be highly appreciated by the subscribers in the other provinces and the other parts of the Empire who have contributed \$400,000 for the restoration of the battlefields, and the same may be said of the people of this province who cannot remain indifferent to all that affects the embellishment of the ancient capital.

The Government has taken one step more which entitles it to the gratitude of all the elements of our population. I cannot express how happy I feel at the thought that the only French province in the Confederation is the first to take the initiative in erecting a monument to our lamented Sovereign Edward VII. Barely ten months have elapsed since he was taken from the affection of his subjects and the regrets to which his death gave rise have no more weakened yet than is the grief which it provoked tending to disappear. You have heard the expression of these sentiments from all parts of the Empire and the civilized world, but nowhere have they caused greater or more sincere emotion than in the hearts of our fellow-countrymen speaking the French language. Thousands of orators, lay and clerical, writers, publicists, statesmen of the Old and of the New Worlds, have proclaimed his virtues and paid homage to his memory and, in doing so, have borrow-

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ed from the pen all its seductiveness and from the tongue all the brilliancy of its eloquence. And yet if I had to repeat his eulogium, I would have to go out of this Chamber; I would only need to recall the words which fell from the lips of our colleague, the Honorable Councillor for the Laurentides division, words at once so exquisite and so touching, so delicate in analysis and so profound in feeling, a speech which will rank among the classics and which they who will come after us will find enshrined among the masterpieces of eloquence.

You will recall, honorable gentlemen, with what emotion we applauded the words of our colleague, On that day, he was well and truly the interpreter of us all. In presenting this bill, did the Government draw its inspiration from him? In any case, what more beautiful lesson of concord and of conciliation could it give to the two great races who inhabit this country than to raise a monument to one who has been so appropriately called the great Peacemaker, on those same battlefields which were the scenes and the witnesses of the struggles and conflicts of the past. The noble thought, which has animated the Government, will find an echo in this House.

Hon. Mr. Chapais, the leader of the Conservative party in the Council, congratulated Mr. Turgeon upon his able address, and said that his remarks would serve to remove from the minds of many all anxiety as regards what the Battlefields Commission was doing. There had been recriminations regarding the Tercentenary celebration, but he believed that while \$300,000 had been spent by the Commission on the festivities, if four hundred thousand or even half a million dollars had been spent, the amount would not have been excessive, as the occasion was

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one that was noteworthy and warranted proper observance.

Alluding to the amendment placed in the bill before the House regarding the proposed monument to King Edward, Mr. Chapais expressed his full concurrence in it, but thought that, if the sum of twenty thousand dollars was the sole amount to be set apart for the erection of the memorial, it was not sufficient. If there were to be other contributions, Mr. Chapais thought that the sum would be enough, but said if a monument was to be erected there could be nothing too good to mark the memory of a good man such as King Edward was, a ruler who by his actions and life held the esteem and love of not only of his subjects but of the nations of the world. If a monument was to be reared to the memory of a man such as King Edward was, let it be worthy of him. In conclusion, Mr. Chapais expressed himself in full concurrence with the bill.

The bill thereupon passed its second reading and later was put through all its remaining stages and passed.





