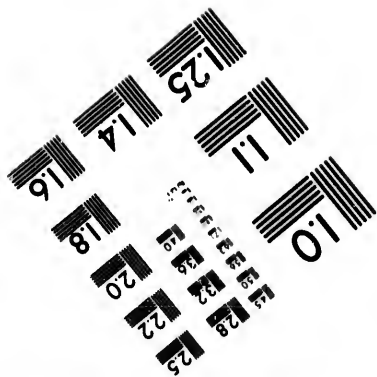
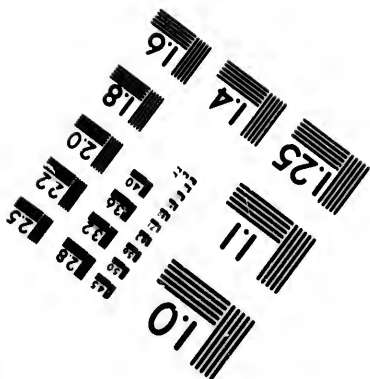
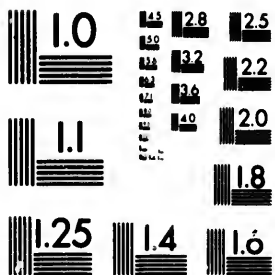


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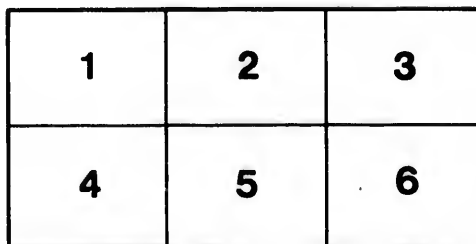
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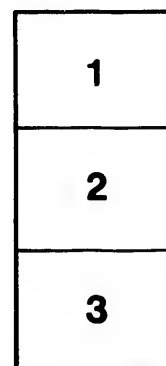
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THE
GASPÉ DISTRICT

ITS CASE STATED

BY ITS

TWO MEMBERS

ITS GRIEVANCES, OPPRESSORS, NATURAL RICHES AND BEAUTIES



QUEBEC:

Printed by BELLEAU & Co

1890







Honore' Muiich

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GASPÉ DISTRICT

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p 21

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(79)

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Among all our public men, there is none whose career presents such an example of energetic, arduous and constant work, as Mr. Mercier's, since 1883. In these eight years, he has overturned the Mousseau and Ross Administrations, formed the National party, brought that party into power, and effected the complete political and administrative renovation of the province.

What an amount of desperate struggle, activity and exertion the accomplishment of this task cost him, only those are aware who were Mr. Mercier's intimate associates in the work, who saw him constantly engaged in it, toiling day and night, directing the controversy in the newspapers, the fight in the House and the battle on the hustings, travelling over the province, disregarding his own comfort and invariably taking charge of the most dangerous posts.

During the famous campaign of 1886, the Gaspé district was the only one that he did not thus visit. But a concurrence of, so to say, providential circumstances led to his spending his first holidays there after his advent to office as Premier of the Government.

The herculean work which he had been performing for some years had begun to affect his robust constitution to such an extent that his friends, in serious alarm about the state of his health, joined in pressing upon him the necessity of taking a few weeks' rest. He finally yielded to their representations and it was agreed that he should spend some weeks at Carleton, in the Bay des Chaleurs.

On his arrival at Carleton, Mr. Mercier received a genuine ovation. The mayor, Mr. Nicolas Arseneau, presented him with an address and bade him welcome, in the name of the inhabitants. In replying to this address, the Premier declared that he would hold himself at the disposal of all who had business with him, and he further invited the inhabitants to call and lay before him the wants of the locality and even of the county.

This cordial and kindly invitation was a genuine surprise to the good people of Bonaventure county, who, until then, had been treated as pariahs by the petty tyrants who had lorded it over them with all the insolent snobbery of the *parvenu*. A handful of these *parvenus* were complete masters of the situation

and did pretty much as they pleased, blowing hot and cold according to their caprices, controlling everything, monopolizing everything, and, if any one dared to protest against this reign of terror, the act was his ruin. Every legitimate and illegitimate means were taken to persecute those who dared to raise their voice against the misdeeds of the pigmy potentates, whose whole tactic consisted in keeping a worthy population in the background and in a state of isolation in order to domineer over them and the better to make use of them for their own purposes.

The Prime Minister's generous invitation was eagerly accepted and every day worthy inhabitants of the locality called upon him to expose their grievances or their hardships. They even consulted him about their private affairs and, when the task of replying to all was too much for him, the assistance of Mr. Fontaine, of St. Hyacinthe, or of Mr. Charles Langelier, who were spending their vacation with him, was called in by Mr. Mercier.

Delighted with what he had seen at Carleton, and especially with the beauty of the scenery and natural riches of the country, Mr. Mercier resolved to take advantage of his holiday to make a personal study of the whole of the southern section of the Gaspé district. For this purpose, he proceeded to Gaspé Basin by steamer and returned by land, stopping from place to place, accosting all the people he met with the sincerest cordiality, conversing with them and questioning them in order to post himself even upon the smallest details bearing on that important part of the province. In Gaspé, he was accompanied by Mr. Achille Carrier, who had already gone through two campaigns in that electoral division.

The people, who are never wanting in gratefulness to those who take their interests sincerely to heart, rose *en masse* to welcome Mr. Mercier and the friends who accompanied him. In every parish through which he passed, addresses were presented to him, and he was conducted in triumphal procession from parish to parish. Never before had such joyous demonstrations been witnessed along the Bay des Chaleurs. Roads were lined with trees, houses were decked with flags, triumphal arches were erected, and processions were formed, frequently containing nearly a hundred vehicles in line. The only interruptions to this triumphal march were at a couple of places, where, desiring to ascertain by personal observation the hardships of the fishermen's arduous calling, the Premier, even in bad weather, continued his journey by boat.

After this tour, accepting the generous invitation of His Excellency the Governor General, Mr. Mercier went on a fishing excursion to the Grand Cascapédia river, which he ascended in a

canoe for thirty miles from the sea, killing two splendid salmon within an hour after his arrival at the principal station and sending them the same evening to Carleton. On this excursion, he had an opportunity of contemplating the scenic beauties of the interior of the Gaspé district, which he has since described in vivid terms in several of his speeches and notably in the one accompanying this sketch.

Before leaving for Quebec, the Prime Minister, anxious to meet in a social and home-like way the brave population of Carleton and surroundings, caused a festivity to be organized, to which all were invited and which had its brilliancy enhanced by a splendid display of fireworks.

Mr. Mercier returned from the Bay des Chaleurs with an exceedingly favorable opinion of the population and the natural wealth of that beautiful region, but, above all, with a firm determination to make it a sharer in the general progress of the country. With his usual foresight, he saw that he could count on the patriotic cooperation of the devoted clergy of the district in carrying out the work of rehabilitation and material advancement which he desired to accomplish, and that the success of that work was certain with the powerful assistance of such men as the good parish priests of Port Daniel, Paspébiac, Bonaventure, Caspédia, Maria, Carleton, Cross-Point and St. Alexis.

He first of all placed the colonization work of the district on a proper basis. Instead of degrading it to an affair of party, of plunder, as under previous Administrations, he made it an affair of progress and of equity. Formerly, to keep the favorites in good humor and to carry on the hunt for votes, it was the practice, under the pretence of colonization, to spend all the money on the old seaboard roads, along which the lands have been opened up and cleared for fifty years. Instead of squandering it in this way, Mr. Mercier set the road to the interior going with it, a great artery intended to push settlement into the heart of the forest and to afford access to splendid lands ready to receive, accommodate and maintain a much larger population than that of the old parishes. Other roads will connect the old settlements with this new field of colonization. To start this great work and to give it a practical and vigorous direction, the Premier, acting in concert with the parish priests and the principal inhabitants, also organized the colonization society of the county of Bonaventure.

Nor was agriculture forgotten. The Government has given grants to aid the establishment of two or three cheese factories, and the one opened at New Richmond and now in operation, has already yielded splendid results. It will succeed still better when the farmers get to more fully understand and

appreciate the advantages of this manufacture and, in a few years, the county of Bonaventure, one of the finest grazing regions imaginable, will take a foremost rank in the dairy industry.

Under the old regime, Mr. Mercier had asked the Government to aid the establishment of a starch factory at Maria. He has not lost sight of this excellent project, as evidenced by the fact that he had \$6,000 voted for the purpose this year. This assures the success of the undertaking, and hereafter the Bonaventure farmers will have on the spot a market for the sale of the potatoes which they raise with so much skill and in such abundance. The establishment of this industry represents the expenditure in the county, every fall, of \$25,000 to \$30,000 of ready money for the purchase of potatoes.

In 1887, during the very first session after his advent to power, Mr. Mercier had taken steps to assure the completion of the Bay des Chaleurs Railway, by doubling the subsidy for the section of the road from Cross Point to Paspébiac. The enterprise was in the hands of political adversaries and, under the old regime, this would have been a reason to boycott it and to refuse it the slightest measure of aid. But Mr. Mercier's nature and policy do not stoop to such meanness and, as soon as he became convinced that the completion of the road would be advantageous to the people and conduce to the material advancement of the county, he made it a duty to grant the \$280,000.00 asked for in addition to the subsidy of \$350,000.00 already accorded, but on the condition that the works should be pushed vigorously and every one paid regularly.

He was odiously deceived. Instead of applying this money to the purposes for which it had been given by the Government, this company or its representatives pocketed it, with the result that the contractors and sub-contractors were left unable to pay their workmen, materials and board accounts. Needless to say that this entailed distress, hardship and even disturbance in the county: the workmen, who had not been paid for months, went on strike and took forcible possession of the rolling stock used for the traffic of the road.

This was in the fall of the year and the fast-approaching winter held out the most alarming outlook to the poor workmen. To earn a little money on the railway, some of the local farmers had neglected their crops and other works, and accordingly found themselves without means to lay in their provisions for the winter. Mr. Mercier at once appointed a commission to enquire into their situation, and, on the preliminary report of the commissioner, lost no time in distributing among the claimants the balance of the subsidy for the first sixty miles remaining in the hands of the Government. Those, who

had worked on K section, between the two Cascapedia rivers had not been any better paid than the others and they also asked for the Government's intervention. It was very difficult for the Government to help them under the circumstances, as, the road not being finished, the law was against the payment of the subsidy for the ten miles in question. Nevertheless, Mr. Mercier found means to overcome the difficulty, by asking authority from the House to pay an amount on account of this subsidy, and, in April, \$20,000 were paid to the workmen.

A considerable amount still remains to be paid on the claims which were not settled, either because they were not filed before the commissioner or because they were not admitted by the debtors. Mr. Mercier has just taken the requisite steps to assure the payment of all these claims and before the end of January, the whole of them will be paid off and the enterprise of the Bay des Chaleurs Railway will be in the hands of men able to push it through vigorously and even to build the road to the port of Gaspé.

We cannot here avoid making a contrast between the former and the present representatives of the Gaspé district.

Clause 19, of the contract between the Bay des Chaleurs Railway company and its contractor, contains the following stipulation :

"Should the contractor at any time fail, refuse or neglect to pay any sum due for work done, supplies furnished or for any other matter connected with this contract, the company may pay any of such claims, so far as they can be ascertained, and charge them as a payment on account of this contract."

The company could therefore pay, if it liked, the moment it knew that its contractors were not paying, and it could easily have done so, for, as shown by Mr. Carrier, it drew from the two Governments nearly all of the subsidies, which amounted to a total of \$845,129.00. And it is impossible for it to plead ignorance of the fact that its contractors were not paying, since its managing director, Mr. Riopel, was constantly on the spot and thoroughly posted in all that was passing. But that would have disturbed the little arrangements of those gentlemen and, as they had never regarded the people of Bonaventure otherwise than as serfs to be worked and fleeced without pity, they did not hesitate for an instant to sacrifice them for the benefit of certain contractors, who, like the abyss, swallowed up everything and gave back nothing.

Mr. Mercier carried out this stipulation of the contract; he did what the company had neglected or refused to do in favor of the poor people of the county and paid the money to the workmen and the furnishers of materials, instead of paying it to the contractors who would have kept it. He thus saved for these

unfortunate people some fifty thousand dollars, which they would otherwise have hopelessly lost, without his intervention.

Mr. Carrier, member for Gaspé, also deserves the gratitude of the population of the Gaspé district for the part he has taken in the matter. The speech, reported and printed further in this pamphlet, contributed in a marked degree to the adoption of the measures destined to transfer the enterprise of the Bay des Chaleurs Railway to the hands of men able to pay for the works and to complete them promptly. Naturally anxious for the interests of his county, he wants the railway to be pushed through to Gaspé Basin. This is why he asked for the production of the necessary information to post himself on the affairs of the company and its contractors and proposed the taking away of its charter, in the event of its not being in a position to carry out its undertaking.

The two following speeches will show that the counties of Gaspé and Bonaventure are now represented by men who have at heart the interests of their constituents and who miss no occasion of advocating and defending them.



THE BAIE-DES-CHALEURS RAILWAY.

On the 20th November, 1890, Mr. Carrier, member for Gaspé, moved, in the Quebec House of Assembly: That an Address be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, praying His Honor to cause to be laid before the House copies of all orders in Council, correspondence and other documents relating to the Baie-des-Chaleurs Railway Company, to the claims filed against the said company and to the payments made by the Government, together with a complete statement of all said claims and payments, &c. In support, he said:

MR. SPEAKER,

My object in asking for these papers is, in the first place, to enlighten myself, and, secondly, to enlighten the House and the public in regard to the actual position of the Baie-des-Chaleurs Railway, an undertaking of the utmost importance to the constituency which I have the honor to represent.

On reference to the statute books, I see that the first company to build this road was chartered in 1872 and that a large subsidy was granted to it, which it forfeited by reason of its failure to raise the necessary means to carry out the work. In 1882, the same parties had the present company incorporated, but it did not begin work until 1886. On the 9th June, 1886, it entered into a contract with Mr. Charles Newhouse Armstrong, railway contractor, of Montreal and Sorel, to construct 100 miles of the road between Matapedia and Paspébiac.

On the 8th June, 1888, Mr. Armstrong transferred his contract to Mr. Henry MacFarlane, of Toronto, for the 60 miles terminating at the Grand Cascapédiac river. Mr. MacFarlane went to work and pushed the undertaking with great vigor for upwards of a year, but, unfortunately, not having been paid himself for the work he had done, he was unable to pay his men, who finally went on strike, simultaneously with Mr. Armstrong's men on section K, to the east of the Cascapédiac river.

To put an end to the disturbances and obviate the grave consequences threatening to arise therefrom, the Government instructed the present Honorable Provincial Secretary to make an enquiry, which he began on the 23rd October, 1889. A large number of claims were filed with him by workmen, boarding-

house keepers and furnishers of materials ; but many others, through carelessness or owing to other reasons, neglected to present their accounts.

Shortly after the Commissioner's return, the Government sent Mr. J. C. Langelier to pay off the claims filed at the enquiry against Messrs MacFarlane & Son., sub-contractors for the first sixty miles.

In the month of April, Mr. Langelier was again sent down to pay off the claims against section K. On these two trips, Mr. Langelier collected a host of claims that had not been presented to the Commissioner charged with the enquiry, and I am informed that since then the Government has settled a good part of these claims.

The chief object of the papers I am now asking for is to show what has been paid and what still remains to be paid.

As regards the still unsettled claims, I trust that the Government will make it a duty to pay them off without further delay. The neglect of the company and its contractors in this respect has spread ruin throughout the region concerned and I have it on good authority, that, if the claims still due are not shortly paid, a multitude of people inhabiting the districts traversed by this railway will be forced to emigrate to the United States. This is a misfortune which, I am sure, the Government will feel bound to do all in its power to prevent.

I will, doubtless, be told that it is the company which should see to all this, and pay for the works done for its benefit.

This would be very true, if the company had the means to carry out its undertaking ; but it seems manifest enough that it does not possess the necessary resources for the purpose.

Here is what I find on the subject in the report of the Commissioner, the present Honorable Provincial Secretary :

“ From all this, it is clear that all the trouble, which occurred respecting this undertaking, is the outcome of the company's want of capital. They had relied entirely on the money to be obtained from the Government and the municipal corporations to carry out their enterprise. And if the debates which took place in the House of Commons in 1885 are to be relied on, not only did the company not put a cent of its money into the undertaking, but it even obliged its contractor, Mr. Armstrong, to pay quite a heavy percentage on the subsidies granted by the Governments to pay for the building of its railway. It is evident that the company has not a cent at its disposal besides Government subsidies, to pay the additional costs arising from the changes made in the plans and specifications, and it seems evident to me that the enterprise can hardly be continued if it does not pass into other hands, that is, into the hands of persons possessing the means necessary to do the work and finish the

road. This is also Mr. Leduc's opinion expressed with sufficient clearness in this part of his evidence :

Q. " According to your knowledge of the present state of the enterprise do you believe that it can be continued and finished by those who have it in hand at present and why ?"

A. " Probably they may succeed in building the road ; but it will take much time and by other means than they can dispose of at the present time."

The foregoing will be found in the sessional papers of last session, No. 226, pages 13 and 14.

Now, if the company has not a cent of means, apart from the Government subsidies, it is perfectly clear that it is unable to pay off the claims against the first 60 miles, inasmuch as all the subsidies relating to that part of the road have been already paid, with the exception of a trifle retained by the Federal Government for reasons to it best known.

For the 100 miles of the railway from Matapedia to Paspébiac, the company has drawn from the Governments of Ottawa and Quebec the following subsidies :

From the Federal Government	\$620,000
From the Quebec Government	630,000
	<hr/>
	\$1,250,000

Or an average of \$12,500 per mile.

By means of the transfers conceded by the two Governments, the money subsidies for the different sections of these 100 miles were apportioned as follows :

For the 20 miles starting from Metapedia, the Federal subsidy amounted on the average to \$15,000 per mile, while that of Quebec was equivalent to \$3,500, making in all \$18,500 per mile and \$370,000 for the 20 miles.

For the next 50 miles, the Federal subsidy amounted to \$6,400 per mile and the local subsidy to \$7,000, making \$13,400 per mile or \$670,000 in all.

For the remaining 30 miles, the only subsidy was that from the Quebec Government, amounting to \$7,000 per mile and forming in all \$210,000 for these 30 miles.

On account of the subsidies for the first 60 miles, the company received \$524,175 from the Federal and \$320,954 from the Quebec Government, making in all \$845,129, or an average of \$16,085 per mile; but, in spite of this, it has failed to meet its engagements and is actually sued by the sub-contractor, MacFarlane, for \$416,000, in addition to what it will cost to complete these 60 miles.

Owing to this litigation between the company and its contractors, the works have been suspended and cannot be resumed

as long as this law-suit remains unsettled, unless the Government steps in to remedy the unfortunate state of things which has lasted for over a year.

The best way to do so and to start the enterprise going once more, would undoubtedly be to wipe out the present company and transfer the execution of the undertaking to another company offering the desired guarantees, and, unless this decisive measure be taken for the suppression of this company of straw, Heaven only knows when the road will be finished.

In all railway charters, there is a clause which provides that the works must be begun and completed within a certain time, and, in the absence of this clause in a special act, paragraph 3 of article 5176 of the Revised Statutes, which declares that the company ceases to exist if it has not expended 10 per cent of its capital within three years from the date of the granting of its charter, applies. As these enactments, which are a guarantee for the public, might, however, have somewhat hampered the operations of these gentlemen, they took care to provide an escape from them by sections 21 and 25 of their act of incorporation—45 Victoria, chapter 53—so that, if it pleases them to do so, they need not prosecute their works for fifty years. They are restricted to no limit of time; their privileges are eternal, and, on the same principle, the carrying out of the undertaking threatens to become eternal also.

It suffices to point out such a state of things to show the necessity for wiping out this company which has not yet put a single cent of its own money into the enterprise.

It is said that several parties, representing wealthy capitalists, have offered to take over the Baie-des-Chaleurs Railway, to build it in short order to Gaspé and to pay off at once all the outstanding claims, on the condition that the present company disappears and that the Legislature votes a reasonable measure of aid. If there is any truth in these reports, I trust that the Government will make it a point to give effect to such proposals for upon their action in the matter hangs the fate of the Gaspé district.

In granting these additional subsidies, provision might be made for the construction of a bridge over the Grand Cascape-diac river, between Maria and New Richmond, that might be used both by railway trains and by horse vehicles.

The subsidies, which, I hope, will be granted, should also be large enough to assure the building of the road to Gaspé Basin, which is one of the finest sea-ports imaginable and a winter port into the bargain. By means of this railway and the port at Gaspé, the merchants of Quebec might easily capture the Newfoundland trade, and, from this standpoint alone, it may be claimed that the Baie-des-Chaleurs railway is an enterprise of

general interest to the province of Quebec and the whole western section of Canada.

For all these reasons, I ask the Government to take immediate steps to pay off the claims still outstanding and to replace the present company, whose impotence is notorious, by another company able to carry through the undertaking promptly and successfully.

It is not an exercise of arbitrary power that we call for, Mr. Speaker, but an act of justice and of public interest. As long as this company continues to exist and hold its present charter, so long will the future of that important section of the province be at the mercy of the caprice of a few individuals who have taken upon themselves obligations that they cannot fulfill. Will it be permitted to do so?

The Gaspé district, Mr. Speaker, is one of the finest and richest in the Province, and its population are honest, intelligent and industrious. But what they have hitherto lacked is easy communication with the rest of the country to become a source of considerable wealth to the latter. Have they not furnished their share to all the great enterprises which to-day constitute the glory and prosperity of the province? It seems to me that it is time that they, in return, should get their share of the public moneys, especially when the whole province will benefit by the expenditure.

Well, if the Government will take the trouble to seriously look into the question—and I am satisfied that they will do so—they cannot avoid coming to this conclusion: That it would be a crying injustice to the inhabitants of the Gaspé district to maintain the present Baie-des-Chaleurs Railway Company and its exorbitant privileges; privileges which enable it, without building the road itself, to prevent others from doing so.

The Government should not—in fact, they cannot in justice—allow this intolerable state of things to continue. To do so would be to jeopardize the gravest interests of an entire population and to place them at the mercy of people interested in keeping them in the state of poverty in which they actually are. Mr. Speaker, I grasp the full meaning of my words and I willingly assume all the responsibility for them. There exists in the Gaspé district a class of men, few in number, but powerful and whose interests are in direct opposition to the interests of the remainder of the population. As long as there are no railways there, these men will continue to monopolize the working of the fisheries. The absence of all means of transport will force the local population to submit to their terms. Consequently, these gentry are now seeking, and will always seek, to perpetuate a state of things which enriches them, regardless

of the fact that, in doing so, it also impoverishes and paralyzes the energies of an entire region.

I have been sent here, Mr. Speaker, to labor for the suppression of a system by which the few are living at the expense of the many ; by which a few selfish egotists are keeping a whole public in bondage and I intend to use all the energy God has given me and all the perseverance I am capable of for the purpose, in the hope that, with the help of the Government, who have already given proof of their spirit of justice and their devotion to popular interests, I shall succeed in the end. But, for this, the Gaspé district must have an outlet for its products, and this outlet can only be supplied by a railway, which cannot be built as long as the present company, in its powerlessness or bad faith, does not step down and out to make room for another whose interests will not clash with those of the people.

In the Gaspé district, Mr. Speaker, there is a fertile soil for agriculture, not to speak of mineral resources, which are daily astonishing its explorers. But what is the use of all these riches, if the population are powerless to develop them? I therefore, Sir, make an earnest appeal to the Government and I rely on its being heard. These injustices must be put an end to. I know that there is enough of patriotism in this House to put aside all party spirit where a national cause is at stake, and, as the cause I am pleading here to-day is not only one of equity, but of public interest! I trust that my honorable colleagues will lend me their aid in securing its triumph. (Applause.)



The Premier's Speech.

Honorable Mr. MERCIER, whose remarks created a profound impression, followed the member for Gaspé, saying :

There cannot be the slightest objection on the part of the Government to lay before the House the papers asked for. We shall bring them down in as complete a condition as possible, and I may state that it will not take much time to do so either, as the question has long occupied my attention, which has necessitated special researches on my part to thoroughly master the situation of the intelligent population of the Gaspé district.

The statement of facts just made by the gentleman who has preceded me is unfortunately only too true. The little time I have had to study the question and to make the acquaintance of the district and its people has, nevertheless, sufficed to prove to me that we are in the presence of one of the most crying injustices ever committed in any civilized country.

You have in the Gaspé district an excellent population from every point of view. Descended, generally speaking, from the old Acadians, the most part of the ancestors of the present inhabitants were forced to quit Acadia in its evil days, when the English Government deemed it advisable to perpetrate the most tyrannical act that could be perpetrated by a Government, that is to say, to expel the population ; to force them on board of ships ; separating the husband from the wife, the father and mother from the children ; and to drive them to seek a new country and new homes, with the grace of God.

Some of those Acadians found shelter in that part of this province now called the Gaspé district, and old registers are still existing, noting the presence of a large number of citizens, aged men especially, who only arrived to start again—for the next world. There are old cemeteries, which should be preserved, as they contain the bones of many of these old people, who only arrived to die. If you look near Carleton, in the immense *barachois*, as they term it, that is to say, an arm of the sea formed by a point of gravel and stones on which trees formerly grew and houses stood, but which is now bare and arid, you will see a small island, on which the remains of these old people were interred. If you enter the old church of Carleton, to consult the registers, you will find written records which stretch back into the past for over 200 years. When you address the venerable parish priest, the Revd. Mr. Blouin, Vicar-General of the diocese and a child of old Quebec, one of the most distinguished members of the Canadian clergy, who will receive you

with true French courtesy, he will show you these records, and, while bowing before the aged priest who receives you, you will bow perhaps still more profoundly before the relics which he shows you.

Continue : go deeper into the Gaspé district. Follow that Canadian Mediterranean, which goes by the name of the Bay des Chaleurs. Go as far as Maria. There again you will find records of the venerable past. If you return on your route, pass by the Bay of Maquasha, by Nouvelle, stop at Ristigouche, and you can see more records there. You will also find all that remains of the aboriginal Micmac population. You can assist, if you like at a religious service, during which you will hear the hymns sung in the Indian tongue, in the language of the Micmac Indians, who, down to the present day, under the intelligent and devoted direction of Mgr Guay, have preserved not only the traditions of their tribe, for that venerable prelate has found means to open schools for them and to teach French to their children, but also the religious memories of their fore-fathers and to so decorate their humble chapel as to show that even the zeal of the Indian can enhance the splendor of Catholic worship.

If you enter this chapel, you will also find many precious relics of the past. Step into the presbytery, built through the devotion and generosity of a missionary, and in which you will find two large apartments set apart as a hospital for the sick of the tribe, and you will bow down, both before this ancient tribe and before the intelligent and patriotic zeal of Mgr Guay. (applause.). As for the present population, it is no exaggeration, Mr. Speaker, to say that they are intelligent. You have schools in all the parishes, almost in all the ranges. What shall I say of the intelligent and patriotic clergy, who preside over that population? Let me simply name priests so zealous and and so distinguished as Canon Thivierge, who is known all over the country, the Curé Gagné, of Maria, the Curé Gagnon, of Port Daniel, the Curé Larivée and many other holy priests who patriotically devote themselves to the good of that interesting population.

Follow the Baie-des-Chaleurs from Matapediac, I might say, from St Alexis, down the Ristigouche, past Cross Point, as far as Gaspé Basin, and what do you find along this immense distance? You find an intelligent and vigorous population; young people who ask no better than to remain there and to cultivate the immense territory at their command. You will find old people attached to the soil, who ask, for the love of God, to be supplied with means to escape from their present condition of misery and hardship, an artificial and not a natural condition, for Providence has given them wealth, but circumstances and politics have forced them into an artificial misery.

That intelligent and vigorous population is also industrious. As soon as the men have committed the seed, in the spring, to the bosom of the earth and prayed the Almighty to bless their labors, they put out to sea and spend a part of the summer fishing, returning shoreward with their catch to support their families and make a little money.

How beautiful it is, too, to see the flotilla of these toilers of the sea putting out to sea at four o'clock in the morning! (Applause) exposing themselves to storms and to all the hardships of their rough calling! And to see them returning at four o'clock in the evening—for that is the traditional hour—and the women and children waiting for them on the shore and applauding when they recognize the little craft, which bears the head of the family! (Applause.)

And how happy all are, when the catch has been abundant and when the father throws on the shore and displays to his family the riches he has collected from the depths of the sea! For they say to themselves at the sight that hardship will vanish. Alas! the joy does not last long. These riches are lost. Apart from the family consumption, no benefit whatever is derived from them. All this wealth is lost. There is no outlet for it. Vessels large enough to go to Boston or New York are unprocurable. The only thing to be done is to salt the surplus fish, which greatly reduces its value, while, with a railway to put this important and naturally rich section of the country in communication with the great markets, within the space of 24 hours, wealth and fortune would pour into the laps of these desolate families (applause) and these toilers would reap their reward.

How many tears would be dried? How much sunshine would be infused into those humble homes and how much happiness would be assured in the future to all who toil and labor so painfully on the coast of the Gaspé district? (Applause).

Apart from the workers, you have the professional men, distinguished men, in that part of the country; you have intelligent and patriotic merchants like Mr. Fauvel and others, who have earned for themselves an enviable commercial position. There is no question that all these would find their lots improved in a very short time, if they had a way to utilize the products of their industry.

But, Mr. Speaker, if this population deserve our attention and our esteem, what should I say of the country itself? Follow it from Matapediac, pass by way of Dalhousie, in New Brunswick and go down as far as Gaspé Basin and you will find your path crossed every moment by streams, by rivers, I should say, descending from the mountains, rapid rivers, swarming

with fish, filled with minerals and all other kinds of wealth, and flowing towards the Bay des Chaleurs. Ascend these rivers and you will find the most beautiful scenery, the highest mountains, the richest valleys and here and there, Mr. Speaker, elegant houses, cottages clinging to the hill-sides, valleys containing not only pretty dwellings and tasteful buildings, but all that goes to make up model farms. Penetrate further into the interior, and for sixty miles you will still meet human dwellings, and all the elements of beauty and wealth. On the summit, you will find a valley or plateau, twenty leagues wide, connecting the watershed of the Gaspé district with that of the St. Lawrence and separating the precipices which we call the Bay des Chaleurs on the one hand and the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the other. Here alone you have an immense region capable of furnishing homes to thousands of inhabitants and striking all travellers with its beauty and richness.

How comes it that all our English Governors,—I mean the Governors of Ottawa,—men whose fortunes permit them to enjoy life in England, to spend the summer in the Highlands of Scotland and to fish in the Scotch lakes and rivers, how comes it,—I say—that, on their arrival in this country, they invariably lay out a large portion of their wealth in order that they may pass a few months in the Gaspé district? How comes it that the millionaires of New-York, of Boston, of Philadelphia, and of Chicago go there also and pay lavish sums for land to build summer cottages and to enjoy the fishing sports of the locality?

How comes it that our present Governor, Lord Stanley, on arriving in this country, applied to us for the favor that has always been extended to our English Governors,—to be allowed to fish the Cascapédiac river—a privilege which we granted to him on one condition, namely, that he should not pay the \$800 rent previously charged for it? For when a province like the Province of Quebec deems it advisable to do a generous act, it does it gratuitously. (Applause.)

Consequently, look at the crowd of persons whom the presence of the Governor General attracts every summer to the locality, a crowd including all that is richest and most important among the English population! To prove his gratitude, His Excellency has built a superb *château* at New-Richmond. And every summer there is reason to look for the expenditure there of large sums by the wealthy, not only among the Americans, but among our own English population, who covet the pleasure of spending the fine season there.

I invite those who have a little time and money to spare to go and see those rivers. Take the Ristigouche, the Nouvelle, the Grand Cascapédiac, the Little Cascapédiac, the Bonaventure and the other rivers crossed on the way downward and you will

find, as I have already said, all that is richest and most attractive in the line of fish. At the invitation of His Excellency Lord Stanley, I myself, with my children and a few friends, had the pleasure of enjoying His Excellency's hospitality and spending a few days, in 1888, at his cottage, in the upper part of the Grand Cascapedia and I must avow that I was astonished at the richness of that river. Picture to yourselves a very broad river coming down from the mountains. Its waters are swift, clear and limpid and at the bottom, five or six feet below—for that is the depth of water—you can see the rocks of all imaginable colors. You cannot row up this river, because it is too rapid. You must have persons accustomed to the work to pole you up and, when you come down again, you have the pleasure as complete as possible of doing so with a single man steering with a paddle at the stern. There is no need of exertion; the current carries you onward; but the finest thing of all is when you come upon one of the pools, in which hundreds of salmon are sporting and when you have succeeded, not in hooking—for that is easy enough,—but in killing a beautiful forty-five pounds fish, you then consider yourself the happiest man on earth and you hasten to leave in the Governor's cottage or any other residence, whose hospitality you have enjoyed, the pattern of the fish, with a record of its length and weight and your name, in order to let all future anglers know that there have been some more unlucky than you have been.

Now, leaving the poetic side of the question, let me turn to its practical aspect.

It is perfectly useless to try to deceive ourselves. The country is beautiful; it is rich and only needs the aid of the province to develop its resources and render its population happy.

Every one will remember the sympathetic unanimity with which the House, last session, authorized the Government to pay a sum of \$20,000 to the poor workmen who had not been paid on the railway. I wish that every member had the time to read the sad story which will be laid before the House. The narrative is made up of the most lamentable facts. It tells the story of poor day-laborers, depending on the work of their hands for their livelihood, who in the month of May last had not yet received their wages for the previous ten months, the only resource on which they relied to support themselves and their families. The money that had been paid by the province in the expectation that it would be used to pay off the legitimate, and privileged debts had gone into the pockets of speculators. Worse than that, the farmers through whose lands the road runs had not been paid for the right of way and the only answer they got to applications for their money was to be shown out of the door of the company's office. I remember one case in particular:

A poor fisherman, who had only a small lot, nearly the whole of which had been taken by the railway and who found it impossible to work to any advantage the small strip of land left him, called upon me and said : " Here is my position : I had a small piece of land from which I raised potatoes &c., for my own use. In addition, I earned my living by fishing. The railway has taken most of my land. I cannot cultivate the rest and yet I have not received a cent from the company."

I sent for the company's special agent (I am referring now to 1888, when I spent some days in that part of the country) and I enquired why he had not settled with this poor man? His answer was : " I could not pay him because the company did not give me the money." " Then why, I asked, did you take possession of the land without paying for it ? " " Because the company promised to send the money at once to pay the stipulated price." " You then have urged them to do so?" " Yes, at least twice a month in writing, but I do not even get an answer ; I cannot pay this poor man a debt which we perfectly acknowledge to be due him, and, for a good reason, because those who are the head of the company make it their business to capture the money and never to pay any of it out. That is the position."

How many cases are there not like this one ! Take, for instance, the poor workmen, who, during the winter, made ties for the road. They toiled throughout the whole winter and they brought the products of their labors down the rivers in the spring amid the greatest possible hardship. They delivered them to the company and, down to the hour when we intervened, three fourths of these poor people had not been paid. They had given their timber and their time ; they had spent the winter in the woods to earn a little money, and they had contributed by their work to the building of the road. Their timber had been used, but they were not paid for it and the result was misery.

Ask the poor people who during long months boarded the workmen employed on the road and furnished them with provisions ? Ask the poor storekeepers along the coast, who supplied these provisions for the men ? You will hear the same pitiable story from all : " We have not been paid." And at the present moment, although we have paid out \$50,000—\$28,000 remaining of the money due to the Company and \$20,000 authorized by the House,—there still remains about \$50,000 worth of privileged debts still outstanding.

The situation has already been explained to you. There are 60 miles of the road out of 100 partly built ; and 40 miles from Cascapédiac to Gaspé Basin, upon which not an inch of work has been yet done. From Cascapédiac upwards, you have nearly

60 miles partly constructed ; but there are no bridges. When you reach the Grand Casapediac river, a bridge is needed, which will cost alone over \$150,000. There has been nothing done there either. At certain seasons of the year, in the spring and fall, it is physically impossible to cross this river. And yet it is the great artery of communication of the Gaspé district. All who want to come up and take the cars at Campbelton must pass that way. I tell those who do me the honor of listening to me, I tell the members of the Legislature of this country who possess intelligence and heart: "There is a population there counting on you."

When the question was to help the inhabitants of the Lake St. John region, we did not hesitate; we doubled the subsidy, because we saw that it was impossible for the company to finish the railway which was to bring hither the wealth of that fine region and at the same time to promote its prosperity. What we did for the Lake St. John, we ask you now to do for the Bay des Chaleurs.

When the railway in question is built to Campbelton, it will connect with the Intercolonial and with Quebec; and then you will bring to the latter an abundance of natural products which will add to the wealth and prosperity of the province. On the other hand you will give to the inhabitants of the Gaspé district, fortune in the shape of products of the sales and the purchases which you will make and you will thereby establish at the same time the great railway system which must be completed in that direction.

When this has been done, your work will still not be finished. On the other side, on the south shore, traversing the immense and rich counties of Levis as far as Rimouski, along the frontier, you have extensive, rich and fertile lands. You must also build a railway there, which will be the true short line. Instead of passing on foreign lands to bring our people to the capital and the metropolis, you will remain within your own country. You will convey the wealth of these lands to your doors and you will encourage the intelligent population, who only seek an opportunity to draw benefit from the fertility of the soil which God has given them. And then, when you shall have accomplished all these great works within the five years of the honorable trust which has been committed to us, we may, perhaps, rest from our labors and tell those who come after us: "Continue our work; we have given you the Lake St. John region; we have given your the Bay des Chaleurs region; we have given you those immense Southern counties..... our task is ended. Now, do yours and develop the riches of the province of Quebec. (Prolonged applause.)"

The motion then passed unanimously.

