

M. L'Abbe Maheux.

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French-Canadians Co-operative and Loyal, Says L'Abbe

Light on the viewpoint of the French-Canadians with regard to military service, the plebiscite and their general contribution to the war effort was thrown on by L'Abbe Maheux, professor of history at Laval University, Friday at the luncheon meeting of the Canadian Club.

L'Abbe said that, contrary to popular belief among many people in the rest of Canada, French Canadian youths are volunteering in large numbers.

"They serve in every branch of the army, navy and air force," he said, "but because no poll is taken to determine nationality, and because of the fact that many serve not in strictly French-Canadian units, but in English-speaking regiments, there are no statistics to show their contribution."

He said that statistics which claim to show that out of every 1,000 population in Quebec there are fewer percentage of enlistments than in other provinces, again do not give a fair picture of the situation, because in every 1,000 people in Quebec there are, because of Quebec's larger families, fewer men of military age. The fact that the young French-Canadian marries and has a large family at an earlier age than elsewhere in Canada, is also a factor, he said.

Another was the fact that the young man in Quebec follows a

dangerous occupation, such as mining or lumbering, and that as a consequence many of them die young, or are crippled beyond military acceptance.

With regard to the plebiscite L'Abbe Maheux said that the Quebec "No" vote did not mean that the French-Canadian was averse to enlisting, or having his son enlist in the army (on the contrary they complied freely) but that they were sick of seeing politics played.

"The only interpretation that I can see of such a vote," said L'Abbe, "is that they decided that politicians should either make promises and keep them, or not make them at all."

L'Abbe said that Quebec was making contributions to the war effort in many other ways, such as through income tax, which every citizen paid willingly, through subscribing and over-subscribing every bond issue, through supporting war charities, and through work in essential industries such as mining, lumbering, munitions and aluminum manufacture.

The speaker was thanked by George H. Gowan, club president, who also told of the club's annual meeting Thursday, April 15, at which election of officers will take place and the speaker will be Hon. H. G. T. Perry, Minister of Education, speaking on "Rehabilitation After the War."

French Canada Contributing to All War Needs

Men Serving With All Armed Forces

The fighting spirit of French-Canadians is as strong today as that of their ancestors, who fought for Great Britain against Pontiac, the Americans in 1775 and 1812, the Boers in South Africa, and Germany in the last war, it was stated at the Canadian Club luncheon in the Empress Hotel yesterday by L'Abbe Arthur Maheux, professor of history at Laval University.

"Their philosophy teaches them that when a war is just, they must participate," he said, "and they know this war is just. They were at Hongkong and Dieppe, and are now in England, Africa, and Newfoundland, in all three armed services."

Most of the young men are anxious to become commandos, he said, perhaps because their Norman ancestors were famous fighters, but more likely because they have always lived dangerously in mines and lumber camps. And there are no French-Canadian conscientious objectors, he said.

STATISTICS UNFAIR TO QUEBEC

L'Abbe Maheux presented the opinion that statistics showing recruiting figures for Quebec to be relatively low are unfair. Because of large families, a far greater percentage of the population is under military age, he said, while the custom of marrying young and raising large families has acted as a deterrent to volunteering, but not to answering the call to service.

"A man feels he cannot leave his wife with a large family," he said, "but he obeys the law when ordered to serve."

Another condition not accounted for in statistics, he said, is the fact that many of the men die young, being killed at their work in the mines and forests, and many others are injured and unfit for service. There are more women than men in Quebec, he said.

"When the opportunity was offered to serve in the territorial army," he said, "the number of men registered was double that expected."

The French-Canadians throughout Canada are giving their money, time, and work without grumbling, he said, and both men and women are doing an excellent job in essential industries.

"The negative vote cast in Quebec on the manpower plebiscite could only mean that French-Canadians were fed up with political promises," he said, "because while the voting was being done enlistments maintained their usual volume, and fathers gladly let their sons volunteer for overseas duty."