

to prevent an occurrence of that kind? Is it not a fact that we are not taking measures to prevent such a thing? I have no doubt that it is felt throughout the province of Ontario that the waters in the spring of the year come down much more rapidly from the unorganized districts to the lakes, and cause flooding, which would not take place if the forests were maintained. I think there is a lesson here for one of the committees of the House which has to deal with the conservation of our natural resources. I have heard it said, and I presume correctly, that the reasons for the floods in France has been the cutting away of the forest around the sources of the river. If that is the case, I think there is a lesson for us, to take warning, because we might not find France and other countries so willing to come to our aid as we, in our good heart, propose to come to the aid of the people of France.

Prince Edward Island railway—branch line Harmony to Elmira, \$150,000.

Hon. GEO. P. GRAHAM (Minister of Railways). This branch line was undertaken two years ago. It is ten miles in length, and is estimated to cost \$315,000. The House will remember that I gave the estimate off-hand at something like \$400,000.

Mr. CROSBY. Does this complete?

Mr. GRAHAM. No. We have spent on it so far only \$25,000, and we are asking \$150,000 to spend this year.

Mr. CROSBY. What is the gauge?

Mr. GRAHAM. It is a narrow gauge.

Mr. FOSTER. Who has the contract?

Mr. GRAHAM. Whitehead Brothers, the lowest tenderers.

Mr. SPROULE. That would be about \$40,000 a mile for a narrow gauge railway.

Mr. GRAHAM. I always like to be safe. The estimate given by the engineer is \$315,126, considerably less than I mentioned last year. Tenders were asked for in the usual way, and these were received, at these amounts: \$142,911; \$175,219; \$146,036; \$148,811; \$135,835. The latter was received from the Whitehead Brothers, who got the contract. It was awarded on schedule prices. I am giving what they called the quantities moneyed out by the engineer. His estimate was \$315,126.

Mr. FOSTER. Has the minister the estimates of the quantities so far as they have gone?

Mr. GRAHAM. The work is only starting, we have not yet much data of the quantity, and how it will work out.

Mr. HENDERSON.

Mr. FOSTER. The minister might read some of the larger items, showing the rates upon which they moneyed out the different quantities.

Mr. GRAHAM. Common excavation, including material, 17 cents; solid rock, \$1.10; loose rock, 17 cents; foundation excavation in water, 70 cents; foundation in air and water, solid rock, \$1.50.

Mr. FOSTER. That would seem as though it would cost \$135,000 the way they moneyed it out. Where does the minister get the difference between that and his estimate of \$315,000.

Mr. GRAHAM. I am giving the estimate of the engineer on the \$315,000. He makes an estimate as to what it will cost, and that is the engineer's estimate. The contractor comes along, and he makes an estimate of \$135,835, that is, for the quantities only in the contract. The other includes rails, clearing, close cutting and grubbing. \$315,000 includes all these things.

Mr. FOSTER. Will the minister get it down to what is included in the contract or estimated for by the engineer and see how it moneyes out? I want to see how near the engineer came to the contractor's price.

Mr. GRAHAM. The estimate for the items in the contract as made by our own engineer is \$139,506.40 and the tender is \$135,835. The items estimated for the balance amount to \$176,016.

Mr. CROCKET. Progress estimates, I suppose, are paid upon the certificate of the resident engineer?

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes.

Mr. CROCKET. Who is the engineer in charge there?

Mr. GRAHAM. Laurence is his name.

Mr. CROCKET. Is he a Prince Edward Islander?

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes, he is a Prince Edward Island man under Mr. McKenzie at Moncton.

Mr. BARKER. I would like to call the minister's attention to this fact that if, when these tenders had come in he had asked for the estimates in the office, he would not have to make them up here. Does the minister, when he is letting a contract, inquire what the engineer estimates the work to be worth?

Mr. GRAHAM. Every detail is set out in the order in council, and I have it all in my hand.

Mr. FOSTER. Does the contract fix a time for the completion of the work?