

Hon. Mr. CLEWOW—This debate has been protracted to such a length that I do not intend to speak at any length. The leader of the opposition the other day alluded to some measures which he thought ought to be introduced in the speech from the throne. I wish to supplement those mentioned by the leader of the opposition with two other measures which I think are of vital importance, and of such interest to the country that they might have merited a place in the speech delivered from the throne by His Excellency. The first to which I shall refer is the Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal. This project has been before the country for upwards of fifty years; the work on this proposed canal was commenced on the route between the two lakes above the city of Ottawa. Owing to the difficulty experienced at that time in blasting the stone in that locality, it was found impossible to continue the excavation. At that time, as you all know, we had not the explosives that are now used, and the work was abandoned. Since that time, although it has agitated the public mind to a certain extent, it has been regarded as merely a local project emanating from the city of Ottawa, and, as you all know, the counties on the St. Lawrence, and in west Ontario were not in favour of it. We had not sufficient influence to carry out this work. The public works constructed about that time, and which have been in progress up to the present time, were of such magnitude that the various governments of Canada have not been in a position to prosecute this very great undertaking. Since that time I am glad to say there is a general feeling prevailing throughout the country that this is a work of vital importance, both commercially and nationally, and now I believe there is a feeling that this canal should be constructed. The benefit to the Dominion arising from its construction would be so great that I believe when the country becomes possessed of the facts they will unanimously agree that the government ought to undertake this work, particularly when such a favourable arrangement can be made as I believe can be made under existing circumstances. The boards of trade of this country have unanimously agreed that this work will benefit the country and will overshadow in this direction any previous undertaking. It is true that the public mind now is very much agitated about the waterways and the canals of this country. We are pro-

secuting a very serious undertaking in deepening the canals, and enlarging the locks so as to accommodate a larger class of vessels. That can be accomplished. There is no doubt with money and with the ingenuity that men possess at the present time almost any engineering feat can be accomplished, but there are two disadvantages with regard to the existing route, one is the proximity of the St. Lawrence canals to the frontier, and the other is the greater distance from the upper lakes to the sea-board by that route as compared with the Ottawa route. These disadvantages cannot be overcome, and therefore, it is of vital importance that the whole subject should be taken into consideration by the people, with a view to deciding whether it will be in the interests of the whole country to have this work begun at an early date. The great North-west, as you all know, is developing rapidly and before very long it will furnish such a volume of trade as will necessitate better means of transportation than we possess at the present time. I am glad to inform you that this subject is now attracting a great deal of attention in Great Britain. Last year it was brought before the business men of England and the newspapers, the *Times* and other papers have commented upon it very favourably, and they entertain the opinion that it is a work that will benefit the empire to a very great extent. As a work for defence, it must be conceded that it will afford a route for naval purposes that cannot be obtained in any other way. Some seventy or eighty years ago the canals on the lower Ottawa between Montreal and Ottawa and the Rideau Canal between Ottawa and Kingston were constructed with a view to defence of the character that was required in those primitive days, but how much greater is that required at the present time.

We all know we may have advanced and that the people in England now are looking forward to having some defences in this country, and there is no way by which it can be better accomplished than by the construction of this canal. All the engineers and scientific men who have given this matter any thought or consideration have come to the conclusion that there is no route so short and so favourably situated as this one for the purpose of transporting the products of the North-west to the sea-shore. Under these circumstances, I think it is a matter which might well have been considered by