

Last year we had our own dredge there and we purpose continuing the dredging this year. The present vote is for the purpose of building and driving a row of piles around the wharf so as to enable dredging to be done close up to the wharf for the accommodation of the mail steamers.

Rivière Bonaventure training pier, \$9,000.

Mr. AMES. This is an extremely absurd expenditure. There are many other ways in which we could invest that money better than by building a wharf at the Bonaventure river which cannot be reached by any steamer. There is not water enough at the far end, it is only used by four or five fishing boats, and the cost is entirely out of proportion to any benefit derived from it.

Mr. TAYLOR. Why is it called a training pier?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Because it gives direction to the current so as to preserve navigation.

Mr. AMES. It cannot be reached by any steamer. The farmers do not use it for taking out material and the railway runs right through the town. We have already spent \$24,000, and are now going to spend \$9,000 more on this useless wharf.

Mr. PUGSLEY. This is to pay for the completion of the work. I must confess that I am not sufficiently familiar with the locality to give very accurate information as to the necessity for the work. I find however, that the rivière Bonaventure was represented to the department as one of the largest streams in the Baie des Chaleurs district and that the harbour at the mouth is the most important lumbering point in Bonaventure county. The channel which leads to the inner harbour was being constantly filled in with sand and the building of this training pier will give a certain direction to the current which will scour out the channel and prevent the necessity of expensive dredging from year to year.

Mr. GEO. TAYLOR. If there is no shipping what is the use of it?

Mr. PUGSLEY. There is very considerable shipping done.

Mr. AMES. If the minister investigates, he will find that it is a very much less important than a good many other items he struck out of his estimates.

Mr. PUGSLEY. This was under contract and I have to pay for it.

River Richelieu improvements, \$60,000.

Mr. AMES. We shall want very full details in connection with that expenditure.

Mr. PUGSLEY. The matter was brought to my notice shortly after I became minister and I found it had been under con-

Mr. PUGSLEY.

sideration a considerable time before that. It appears that in the season of floods the Richelieu river overflows its banks with the result that about 30,000 acres of what would otherwise be most valuable farming land is annually flooded. The hon. gentleman can see that land situated as this is in a well settled district would be of very considerable value if it could be saved from this great damage occurring yearly. The object sought to be obtained by the improvements to the river is to give such vent to it during the season of flooding that this overflow will be prevented. Upon the recommendation of the engineers of the department the government have asked parliament for the authority to enter upon this work. As a result we have had the plans prepared, and we are engaged in doing what may be called dredging work—removing boulders and rocks from the bed of the river at the point where the obstruction exists. We propose following that up with the construction of a movable dam in the river, and we believe that the effect will be to somewhat improve the navigation of the river for some distance above the obstruction, and also to somewhat improve the navigation of the Chambly canal, and be of enormous benefit to the people living on either side of the Richelieu river. The cost is estimated at \$185,000. We are asking this year for \$60,000. We did a good deal of work last year. We first ask for tenders, but when these came in we thought they were too high. After careful consideration and consultation between the resident engineer, Mr. Michaud, who is a very competent man, a man of experience and of excellent judgment, and the chief engineer of the department, it was decided that we could get the work done cheaper by providing a dredge and doing the work with our own plant. I am happy to say that we have saved a considerable amount of money, because we get the work done more cheaply than if we had accepted the lowest tender. I believe that the contractors felt that there was considerable risk in connection with the piers of the bridge, and they did not tender at the price that we can do the work for. The whole country is interested in this work, and the people there believe that the results we hope or will be obtained, and their opinion is fortified by the opinion of engineering experts.

Mr. JOS. DEMERS (St. John and Iberville). (Translation.) Mr. Chairman, as this vote interests particularly my county, I desire to say a few words on this important subject. I am somewhat surprised to see that we have yet to discuss this item to-night, an item which is not new to this House. During the years 1907 and 1908, this parliament voted different sums of money to improve the situation of the farmers of