

Mr. BLAIN. Is the dredging done by government-owned dredges, or by contract the cheaper to the country?

Mr. PUGSLEY. It depends a good deal on circumstances.

Mr. BLAIN. What are the circumstances?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Suppose the government dredge is at work and it meets with an accident, the machinery breaks down, entailing a good deal of expenditure on repairs, that is charged up to operating during the season. In some cases some contractors do the work at a low price as compared with the price charged by other contractors. It is a matter of comparison. If my hon. friend will take the return of the government dredging in the report, he will find that it costs considerably more in some cases to remove spoil than in others. It is pretty difficult to tell which is the cheaper system, but the department believes that it is cheaper to do the work by government dredges, than by contract.

Mr. BLAIN. What do the employees do in the winter season?

Mr. PUGSLEY. We dispense with their services with the exception of one or two who work about overhauling the plant.

Mr. STAPLES. I am pleased to learn that the Minister of Public Works believes in completing a piece of work which he has begun, because ever since I came to the House and ever since the minister has been in his place, I have been calling his attention to a piece of work undertaken on Lake Manitoba just when the election of 1904 was on. The government jumped in with a great rush and expended some \$15,000 on that work; but once the election was over and they did not get their candidate returned they ceased having any more work done there, and the undertaking remained in an unfinished condition. \$15,000 of the people's money have therefore been put into a wharf which is now of no value because it is not completed and cannot be used. The people of that district asked the department to complete the work in order that the large expenditure made would not be utterly wasted, but so far there has been no appropriation in any of the estimates. I called the minister's attention to this last year and he promised to look into it but so far he has done nothing. Last year he was up in Manitoba and I would like to know whether he then looked into that matter and whether he intends to make any appropriation to complete this work.

Mr. PUGSLEY. When I was up in Manitoba I had a good many representations made to me as to the necessity of certain public works, but I had none made by

Mr. PUGSLEY.

anybody with respect to this particular work to which my hon. friend refers. Nobody suggested that it was necessary to do any more there. On the contrary the officials of my department informed me that the work is completed so far as is necessary in the public interest. My hon. friend would not ask me to uselessly spend the public money because it had been originally contemplated that certain additional work should be done. Except when my hon. friend spoke of it in parliament, I have had no request from anybody to have the work done.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Of what public interest is the work as it stands?

Mr. PUGSLEY. There is a wharf and a landing and some dredging and it gives the public reasonable accommodation. That is the information I have. Would the hon. member for Macdonald (Mr. Staples) tell me what good purposes would be served by doing this additional work.

Mr. STAPLES. The people of that particular locality cannot get to that piece of work until more dredging is done. If they could get to it, they would ship not only fish but wood and agricultural produce from that point. If the minister will look into his department, he will find a petition there asking that the work be completed, so that when he says that there was no request made for its completion he is not stating the facts.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I said during the past year.

Mr. STAPLES. Let me tell the minister that the people in that part of the constituency of Macdonald have faith in my ability to present the facts, and I have presented them every year since the hon. gentleman has been Minister of Public Works. What more does the hon. gentleman want? Does he want a petition from some Liberal organization? If that is what he wants I might be able to secure it for him, but I do not think he should depend entirely upon any Liberal organization such as existed when this work began for reliable facts as to what is necessary to be done. There are \$15,000 of the public money absolutely of no use unless this work be completed.

Mr. BLAIN. I would have expected that the hon. minister, when touring in Manitoba, would have taken some interest in this public work and have called on my hon. friend from Macdonald, or requested him to look over the work.

Mr. PUGSLEY. He did not invite me out.

Mr. BLAIN. My hon. friend from Macdonald (Mr. Staples) has been doing his whole duty in this House. Whenever this