

wards the defences of the Western Coast of the Dominion, and is it the intention of the Government to commence operations this year on the said defences?

He said:—Some time ago I moved for papers in connection with the coast defences of British Columbia, and the reply of the Government was that there were no papers on file. I see, however, in the report of the Commission sent out to British Columbia that last year reference is made to some papers, and there must be some correspondence somewhere, and it is to know what is going to be done in the matter that I placed this notice on the paper.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—In answer to my hon. friend, I may say that there has been a proposal made by the Imperial Government to furnish an armament at a cost of £25,000 upon Canada providing the works &c. An officer has been sent out by the Imperial Government to examine the ground and to prepare plans and report, and his report is understood to be before the Imperial Government but it has not been received here, and until then no further steps can be taken.

## NAVIGATION OF THE FRASER RIVER.

### INQUIRY.

HON. MR. MCINNES (B. C.) inquired—

Is it the intention of the Government to allow the Snagboat "Sampson" to be used—for a few days each winter—in keeping the first twenty-five miles of the Fraser River free from floating ice.

He said:—Some four years ago a snag boat was built for the special purpose of removing obstructions, especially snags or large trees, which frequently grounded in the shallower portions of the Fraser River. Those trees, some of them over 200 feet in length, with huge roots, once they grounded soon formed sandbars and even islands, which not only impede the navigation, but prove highly dangerous to steamers and other crafts plying up and down that noble river, especially at night. This boat was built of the best quality of Douglas pine, which wood is equal in strength to the best

Canadian oak and is exceptionally strong. Two years ago she was plated with half inch iron along her water-line, and, in my opinion, she is well suited to break up any ice that ever formed in the lower Fraser. In February, 1886, and also last winter, the Board of Trade of the City of New Westminster, and the City Council also, applied to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries for the use of this snagboat for the purpose of plying up and down from New Westminster to the mouth of the Fraser in order to break up the ice floes that formed in the interior and were carried down with the current. The people of New Westminster are of opinion, and I confidently endorse their opinion, that if this steamer made a trip to the Sandheads and back each day during our coldest weather—which never lasts more than a week or two—this magnificent river—second only to the St. Lawrence in the Dominion—would be kept open for navigation every day and hour in the year. The substance of the reply received from the Minister was that the request could not be granted, for if they granted it in this case, similar demands would be made by people living on other navigable streams similarly situated. The reply was not a satisfactory one, inasmuch as there is not to my knowledge a river in the Dominion where it is possible to keep the navigation open during the whole year, except the Fraser. Last year the people and City Council of New Westminster subscribed on and expended \$300 or \$400 to cutting up the ice to enable vessels to reach our city and these were successful; but we think as we have a vessel lying idle there during the winter months, fully manned and with all the machinery and appliances for this kind of work, at a trifling cost, this grievance would be effectually removed and a great boon conferred on the city and district of New Westminster. I hope that the Government will see their way towards placing this snag boat in charge of Mr. Ackman, Dominion Land agent at New Westminster, and that she will be used for the purpose I have mentioned next season, or whenever necessity demands.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—I would ask my hon. friend if there is any traffic