

in the service of the government for, I suppose, forty years, and I presume the government felt that the men who were underneath him were to blame. The minister asks why did they not dismiss Mr. Rubidge.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I am not complaining.

Mr. REID (Grenville). I would like the minister to be fair. Mr. Rubidge was the engineer in charge of canals on the river from Montreal to Trenton. He had under him several contracts; he had two at Cornwall, one at Farran's Point, one at Morrisburg and a couple at Cardinal. On each of these contracts he had an engineering staff, that is, an engineer and two assistants. When this matter was brought up and my charge was proved, proved to the entire satisfaction of the minister, the hon. gentleman the Finance Minister asks why they did not dismiss Mr. Rubidge. Simply because the then minister brought Mr. Rubidge before him, and Mr. Rubidge threw up his hands and said: These men underneath me were doing the work; I had to depend on them, my work is from Cornwall to Belleville. But the engineers who were in charge of that work were promptly dismissed by the minister.

Mr. FRASER. They did not dismiss the right person, they should have dismissed Mr. Rubidge.

Mr. REID (Grenville). Mr. Rubidge was travelling and superintending the whole of them. But the other engineers in charge of the work, the men that should take the soundings, made reports to Mr. Rubidge from time to time, on which he acted. The only trouble was where Mr. Rubidge made an examination afterwards, that is where he was to blame and liable to censure. But the other engineers were promptly dismissed, and the work was promptly stopped. Now there is one great question about this work going on. There is a general complaint that if that work is proceeded with and more cuttings done there, it is going to lower the St. Lawrence above. Now there was a judgment of the Exchequer Court for \$173,000. This firm sued the government for what they claimed was below grade. The government had paid and settled up with them in full for making seventeen feet of water, but in order to get seventeen feet they claimed that the dredge had to go a little below seventeen feet, and it was for this extra below grade that they were paid \$173,000. They then assured the court and the government that there was not only seventeen feet but more than seventeen feet of water because they had to go below seventeen feet to get the required seventeen feet. Notwithstanding all that, it was found out afterwards that they had left a space of 10½ feet. The original contract was for 200 feet, and any person would reasonably sup-

Mr. REID (Grenville).

pose that a vessel would go through a channel 200 feet wide when the vessel itself was only thirty-five feet wide. But I wish to state to the minister, knowing the place thoroughly as I do, living on the spot, and being around these rapids all my life-time, that it is really an impossibility, and will be, no matter what we do, for these large vessels, to go down that channel. I meet at least every week men interested in the marine business, and there is not one of them that will admit to me that they will ever go down these rapids and take the chances, with a vessel of any size or with a load.

At the present time only small vessels are running down this channel. In fact, vessels go by way of the old channel just as much as they do by this one. I know exactly how this thing is brought about. These people have sufficient influence to get the government to give them something to do, and in making this expenditure the government are not only giving rise to a scandal but they are injuring navigation above that point. If they put that through it will lower the level of the water in the north channel, and they will have to have Cleveland's channel, which is a very good channel, deepened. It would be a very good channel to-day if they only made it 17 feet in depth, but by making another cut through the rapids it will result in increasing the flow and giving a lower depth of water in the northern channel. If any person will go through the Cleveland channel into the canal and then through the lock, he will see that there could be nothing more suitable to navigation than that. I sincerely hope that the government will consider the matter and not go on with the work, but in the meantime, knowing that the Exchequer Court has settled up this claim in full, and after hearing the statement of the minister last year that the amount was only required to pay the drawback, I insist that these people are not entitled to this \$25,000, and therefore I have no hesitation in moving that the item be struck out.

Mr. TAYLOR. There is one question that has not been fully answered by the hon. Minister of Finance. The hon. member for Grenville (Mr. Reid) makes a statement that this money is being expended in the United States. He lives on the ground, and if that is correct I think the hon. minister should stay his hand until he is perfectly assured that no part of this money is being spent in American territory.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I am so assured. There are two or three different works going on in that neighbourhood. There is a dam being constructed in connection with the work in that vicinity, and one end of it is upon an American island, and possibly this has led to some confusion. At all events, I am advised that there is no part of this work being done in Ameri-