

read the other day, it will be seen that it will be of immense advantage in the way of the drainage of the locality in which the work is to be constructed, and in the second place—and now I come to the Detroit River—it will avoid all the great obstructions and difficulties in the way of navigation on the route, from the head of the great lakes to the Atlantic Ocean; these are Grosse Point, the Limekiln Crossing, near Amherstburg, Bar Point and Colchester Reef. Mariners will tell you what an immense advantage it is to be able to avoid these difficulties. It will shorten the round trip to Buffalo or Port Colborne by at least 130 miles. Engineer Pinney estimated it at 137 miles; but I call it, in order to be safe, 130 miles, which would be fully one-fifth of the distance, saving from 12 to 20 hours in time according to the speed of the steam-barge. The traffic in 1857, passing between the two lakes, was only 2,500,000 tons; in 1890 it was 22,000,000 tons; and in 1892, 25,000,000 tons. If we divert two-fifths of that, which would be 10,000,000 tons, that, at an estimate of 1½ cents per ton toll, almost a nominal toll, would produce \$150,000 a year. That sum would pay the interest, the cost of maintenance and operation of the canal and the sinking fund. All the advantages, the saving of time and the avoidance of the obstructions I have spoken of, the steam barges would get for nothing, because the fuel, oil and waste on this saving of time would pay all the tolls which would be necessary, supposing we only diverted two-fifths of the traffic. But I believe the advantages of the route would be so great that in a short time it would largely monopolize the traffic, so that in the hands of the Government the tolls could be reduced, I think, after a little while to 1 cent a ton. I have mentioned three advantages that would be gained by this route, and I come now to the greatest advantage of all—I refer to the advantage in a national sense. When we complete the St. Mary's canal, we will have, except this canal I am speaking of, a complete route from the great lakes to the Atlantic ocean through our own territory.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). So we have.

Mr. TISDALE. We have not now, because as I explained the other day, in passing through the St. Clair Flats canal, it is partly in American and partly in Canadian territory. True, it is regulated by treaty; but this will give us a canal altogether through our own territory. We have expended \$100,000,000, and I think wisely, to procure a great transcontinental railroad from ocean to ocean through our own country, and we have the best road on the continent. When the St. Mary's canal is finished, and our canal system deepened to 14 feet to the ocean, as the Minister told us the other day it would be in three years, we will have expended from \$75,000,000 to \$80,000,000, and again I think wisely, on our great canal system. I think I showed

Mr. TISDALE.

to the House the other day by what an uncertain tenure we would hold the right to use the St. Clair Flats canal, if American political exigencies were supposed to require the contrary. I think, therefore, it will pay us to expend a couple of million dollars more to build this great channel of communication entirely through our own territory, especially as I have shown the expense of it would be easily recouped from those using it at a saving to them after such payment. We would then truly be the arbiters of the only great and speedy waterway from the head of the great lakes to the seaboard, without fear of interruption or international complications. I hope and trust that the hon. Minister—as I had not the opportunity of taking the voice of the House upon the resolution—will consider it, and will adopt it, and will give the exploration and survey I asked for, and have an estimate prepared to submit to the House. I hope more than that. I hope that the Government will take up the scheme and complete it. I have such an abiding faith in the limitless possibilities of Canada and the great North-west, that I believe that in the time to come, we will not only need fleets of vessels on this water-way, but we will need to build the Hudson Bay road and to double-track the Canadian Pacific Railway. I believe that the completion of our great waterway, in the manner I have mentioned in the resolution, will not only be a national blessing, and safeguard our commercial independence, but that it will further safeguard the institutions under which we live, and which we love so well; institutions that are unequalled in my opinion on the face of the globe, for the promotion of genuine equality and actual liberty. I hope, Mr. Minister, that you will see your way to do that, and I would like to ask you to express your opinion upon the matter if you feel at liberty to do so.

Mr. MCGREGOR. At this late hour of the night, and at this late stage of the session, I will not detain the House for many moments. The hon. member for South Norfolk (Mr. Tisdale) spoke of this subject very early in the session, and we fully expected to have the matter dealt with before this. But, it being an important scheme, and we being very desirous that the Government should give us a survey at an early date, I think it is but fair that we should lay some statements before the Government to enable them to see the advantages of that great work. In the first place, there would be a saving of 130 miles in one round trip. We would avoid a great difficulty in the waters of our lakes and rivers, because the most intricate passage from Chicago to Buffalo is that portion from Lake St. Clair Flats to Bar Point to the neighbourhood of Colchester Reef. The American Government, seeing the necessity of increasing the depth of the water and the width of the channel, have expended something in the neighbourhood of \$150,000,-