

against dollars and cents. The greatest asset we have in Canada is a strong, robust, virile people, and the health and lives of our people have been neglected too long. We seem to forget that one of the greatest privileges as well as duties we have in this House is to legislate to enhance the happiness of the people and protect their lives and health, and I think the time has come when the Canadian Parliament should take drastic measures towards that end. In the city of Winnipeg in my own province much the same conditions prevail. The Red river and the Assiniboine join at the city of Winnipeg; the Assiniboine comes from the west, carrying all the sewage from Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and the various municipalities on its banks, into the Red river which flows north to lake Winnipeg, where it pours all that contamination into the lake. Four or five years ago the federal Government built a dam at St. Andrew's rapids some twelve miles below the city of Winnipeg, and in building that dam they raised the water twenty-one feet at the dam. Previous to the building of that dam there was a fairly swift current running all the time in the Red river which carried the sewage into the lake and although the river was seriously contaminated the nuisance was carried away. But to-day we have a large basin twelve miles long and about a hundred yards wide where all this sewage from the cities of Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and the great city of Winnipeg with its abattoirs and stockyards and manufactories, is deposited. That river is in a terrible condition to-day. Flowing past my own town, Selkirk, twenty miles below, the water is unfit even to give to animals to drink and the farmers have stopped taking their cattle to it to water. This contamination flows down the river into lake Winnipeg which is contaminated for a distance of from eight to ten miles out, and every year we have had serious outbreaks of typhoid fever among the men working on the dredges. If I am right in saying that the authorities of the city of Ottawa and the authorities of other great cities have neglected their duty to protect the lives of their people and purify the water supply, what am I going to say about the neglect of the Parliament of Canada? We have been legislating here to develop this great country, but we have neglected to place legislation on the statute-books to protect the health of the people living along the rivers and lakes and to prevent the pollution of our waterways. This neglect of ours has resulted in serious loss of life, and in suffering to hundreds of thousands of our people. This is a serious condition of affairs and calls for immediate action. I have one or two letters here which I wish to place on record. Dr. McCullough, the chief medical health officer of Ontario, writes:

Toronto, November 26th, 1912.

Sir,—I note with satisfaction that you have introduced a Bill in the House of Commons with a view of preventing pollution of the waters of the Dominion.

I am sending you under separate cover copy of the Public Health Act of Ontario passed during the present year, which will indicate (section 91) the attitude of the legislature of this province upon the question. I have asked Dr. Charles A. Hodgetts, medical adviser to the Commission of Conservation, to hand you copies of evidence upon this subject given at a recent meeting of the International Joint High Commission.

I can only add that the pollution of the waters in this province is becoming a very serious problem. For some weeks I have had the engineer of this board making a sanitary survey of the St. Clair river and lake and the Detroit river. In a word, he says of these waters that they are totally unfit for human consumption, and the typhoid rates in all the towns on the Canadian side and upon the boats is extremely high.

When we recollect that the tonnage of the boats passing upon these two streams is larger than that of the Suez canal, and that at least ten million people pass up and down this route every year, it becomes a very important matter that the purity of these waters should be preserved.

We have certain evidence that the water of lake Ontario at Toronto is polluted to the distance of fifteen miles from that city, and it is quite reasonable to assume that the sewage of Buffalo and other communities along the Niagara river may be carried to an equal distance.

If you succeed in having this Bill passed by the federal authorities, you will have accomplished a very valuable service in the interest of public health.

Very truly yours,

John W. McCullough,  
Chief Officer of Health.

George Bradbury, Esq., M.P.,  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa.

The following is a letter from the department of health, written by Charles J. Hastings, the president of the International Pure Water Association, and vice-president of the Canadian Public Health Association. These letters indicate how these authorities feel regarding this question:

Department of Health,  
City Municipal Buildings,  
Toronto, April 5, 1913.

Geo. Bradbury, Esq., M.P.,  
House Post Office,  
House of Commons, Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Bradbury,—I have just received a communication from Mr. Geo. H. Matland, associate editor of the Star, enclosing a copy of your Bill re the Pollution of Navigable Waters.

It is quite beyond my conception how anyone in Ottawa, even though there for a short time, in view of the past and present history, could raise any objection to a Bill for the Non-pollution of Navigable Waters, or of Waters Flowing into the Navigable Waters.

I most heartily endorse any movement to prevent the pollution of the waters from