

wick and Quebec and the municipalities immediately interested, to meet the requirements regarding the approaches and the enlargements of the abutments. I hope that the government will give this matter full consideration. It is one of great importance to the district. When the Intercolonial Railway was first built the Matapedia valley was a wilderness, but during the past fifteen years settlements have sprung up all along the line. The parish of St. Alexis, situated near the bridge, has a population of nearly 2,000. The market town for all this Matapedia valley—the lower portion of it—is the town of Campbellton, and this river has to be crossed in order to reach it. As this superstructure is not being used anywhere else on the Intercolonial Railway, it seems almost a pity to demolish the bridge and carry the iron elsewhere, when it could be of such service to the people of that district and a connecting link between Quebec and New Brunswick. The district is not very rich. It is settled largely by pioneer settlers, farmers who have gone in there during the last few years, and who consequently have not the means to erect an interprovincial bridge of their own. If this opportunity be not taken advantage of, we shall probably not see an interprovincial bridge there in our own lifetime. Besides there are precedents for the government coming to our relief in this matter. The Dominion government has already paid money for an interprovincial bridge over the Ottawa river. We are not asking the government to spend anything, but to allow us to use the superstructure on condition that the provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec and the municipalities interested will meet any additional cost required for making this bridge serviceable as a highway.

Mr. BARKER. On the statement of the hon. gentleman, it seems to me that if this bridge cannot be used for railway purposes elsewhere, this might be a fair opportunity to utilize it for the purpose he mentions. I presume that the two provinces and the municipalities would be willing to allow the government the fair value of the superstructure for the purpose for which they need it. Assuming that it cannot be used for any railway purposes, it would possibly have to be converted into scrap or used for the purpose mentioned by the hon. gentleman, and in such case the parties interested would no doubt, pay a reasonable price for it.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). The hon. member for Hamilton has not caught what I intended to convey. If this bridge is demolished and taken away, it will lose all its value. It is twenty-seven years old. If we had to purchase the bridge outright, it would be a very good transaction on the part of the administration of the Intercolonial Railway to sell the bridge, but the dis-

trict is newly settled and I do not believe that I could induce any of the municipalities to pay the amount that would be required to meet the value of this bridge, which, I think, is estimated at some \$40,000. All we ask is to be allowed to use the bridge as a highway and let that be the contribution of the Dominion to the interprovincial bridge, the province of New Brunswick paying the additional cost on the New Brunswick side, and the province of Quebec the additional cost on the Quebec side. The Restigouche is a very difficult river to cross, especially in the spring, when the ice is sometimes twenty feet high at that point. Any bridge with wooden pillars which the municipalities might put up would be swept away. We want to use the large piers, which are sufficiently wide, and ask the Dominion government to allow the old bridge which cannot be used anywhere else, to be used by us. It would be a pity to remove it when, by keeping it in position, it would be of such good service to the district.

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. Could they erect a new railway bridge on the same piers and let the old bridge remain as it is?

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). Yes, by enlarging the abutments, I understand there would be room for both bridges.

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. Is it in a good position for crossing?

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure). The province of Quebec side is all that could be desired, but there would be some difficulty on the New Brunswick side because it is right at the base of a mountain. That difficulty, however, is not insurmountable. For all these reasons I hope that the government will consider our request favourably. The population of Bonaventure has increased 5,000 in the last ten years, which increase is largely due to the opening up of the Matapedia valley. The Dominion government has a direct interest in developing that region. We voted last year and this year certain sums for the purpose of enabling a Montreal colonization society to send settlers into this Matapedia valley. From Matapedia to Ste. Flavie, you have a distance of seventy-five miles, partly not settled at all, and you have a railway running through that district. By encouraging the development of that district, you will furnish the Intercolonial Railway with the means of meeting the expenses incurred in running through this Matapedia valley. All through the valley new settlements are springing up, but these people, if they are going to live along the government line and give it business, must have some encouragement. I would refer the government to what the Canadian Pacific Railway has done in Algoma and Nipissing during the last few years as an example which should be followed. All we ask of the government is to not demolish