

the interview with the hon. Minister of Public Works, when, on the 15th of December last, the subject was clearly explained and all due and careful consideration was promised. I thank the Minister of Public Works for the kindly interest he has expressed in this matter.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). Mr. Speaker, I merely wish to add a word or two to this interesting debate. I think the House is very much indebted to the hon. member for Renfrew (Mr. G. V. White) for having given such an extensive review of all that has been already said and adding to it what has lately been done in respect to this great national work. Of course we, down in the district of Montreal, are extremely interested in the prompt execution of this work, but although we are greatly interested, although that intended canal, whatever route may be adopted, passes through my own constituency, which will no doubt derive some benefit from it, still it is a work of such nature that I am more disposed to look at it as a general national work destined to benefit the whole country than to take the view which my hon. friend who has just taken his seat (Mr. C. A. Wilson) has taken of that work. He seems to consider it more as a local work.

Mr. C. A. WILSON. Does my hon. friend remember that when a delegation was received by the Minister of Public Works he was present for a few moments, although he was busy in a committee, and that he did not object to the work that was to be done in that part of the country, on the other hand the work would have his best support.

Mr. MONK. I attended that delegation, and I am greatly in favour of the performance of that particular work of cleaning up the river and deepening its navigation. I attended that delegation and I entirely supported my hon. friend in respect to that particular work. Although I was placed under the disadvantage, of addressing the Minister of Public Works in French, I was pleased to perceive that he thoroughly understood me, and I even noticed from certain signs that he made that he approved of my remarks and that the work should be done at once. But I am now referring to the whole gigantic project of the Georgian Bay canal. We have had debates of this very instructive character almost every session since I have had a seat in the House. In fact, I think the public discussion of the project of the Georgian Bay canal began in some legislature, which I could not at the present moment properly designate, in 1832, and has been continued almost every year since then, and has invariably ended with an assurance by the then government that the work was one of public interest, that its utility was incon-

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trovertible, and that the government would take up the matter with the least possible delay. It seems to me that if I had any fault, and I have no fault indeed, to find with the form of the motion of my hon. friend (Mr. G. V. White) it is that it does not conclude sufficiently towards an immediate beginning of this work. We have had before us, since 1832, what has already been designated in this House much less happily as mountains of information, and the government since I came into this House to find myself on your left, has invariably endeavoured to delay the beginning of this work which is now recognized as one absolutely necessary. I once heard our colleague of that day (Mr. Poupore), who then represented Pontiac and who was well informed on this question, fully explain to the House the necessity of the immediate execution of this work, and I heard the government at that time say that they were on the point of putting that project into execution. Later when the late Mr. Tarte sat in this House he became extremely interested in the question of transportation, and at times he caused his colleagues on the treasury benches considerable embarrassment about the subject, and in the year 1903 the government, in order to shelve the question at least for some time, decided to name a commission to study this question of transportation about which Mr. Tarte was then causing the government trouble and embarrassment which, with other causes, ended in his having to leave the government. The government named a commission, and I am bound to say they could not possibly in the estimation of everybody have chosen better men. At first, Sir William Van Horne was named, but he was unable to act and Mr. Bertram took the presidency. He died in the midst of his work and finally the presidency fell to Mr. Robert Reford of Montreal, a great authority on matters of transportation, and he sat with Mr. Ashdown of Winnipeg, representing the west, and Mr. Fry of Quebec representing the Quebec district. I have no hesitation in saying that that report in my humble estimation covers the whole ground of transportation. It was an admirable report and the work of the commission was done largely through a pure spirit of patriotism, because they were very busy men and the expense incurred was extremely small. They went fully into the question of transportation from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and made their report in December, 1905, but since that time that report has remained absolutely, to my mind, a dead letter. None of their suggestions were ever heard of since. It becomes a difficult matter to get hold of that report, and it has never been referred to, to my knowledge, by any member of the present administration.