

378. Trent River navigation—For the construction of locks and the improvement of navigation b tween Lakefield and Balsam Lake..... \$290,000

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. What is the plan under which the hon. gentleman proposes to improve that navigation, and what is the length of navigation he hopes to get.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman is aware that the subject of the Trent navigation has been engaging the attention of the Government for the past year. A very careful survey was entered upon for the purpose of ascertaining the cost of getting a depth of five feet of water throughout the whole system on the Trent navigation. That survey has been vigorously prosecuted during the past season, but it was, owing to its difficult and extended character, impossible to make such an exact and accurate location survey as to give with anything like accuracy what the cost would be. We shall presently come to an additional item of \$8,000 to prosecute that survey to its completion during the present season. It was found, however, that by the expenditure of the amount proposed in the Estimates we could accomplish a great object in opening up internal water communications in that section of the country. The hon. gentleman knows that at present there is railway communication from Port Hope to Peterborough, and from Lakefield, near Peterborough, by the expenditure proposed at Buckhorn, Burley Rapids and Fenelon Falls, communication can be obtained from the railway at Lakefield to the railway at Coboconk, from which there is railway communication to Toronto. About sixty-five miles of navigation will be opened in this way, and a large section of country will also be opened up by connection with the lateral waters. These works will open up a navigation altogether of some 150 miles.

Sir RICHARD J. CARTWRIGHT. To what point does the hon. Minister hope to extend this system finally.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. That is a question which I would not like to answer, because it will require a survey in order to be in a position to look the question fairly in the face and say what expenditure would be involved in building the line of communication which has been known as the Trent navigation.

Mr. ANGLIN. Nowadays, no one, as a matter of choice, would transfer freight from railways to steamers if railway communication throughout can be had.

Mr. MACKENZIE. I think the hon. gentleman is committing a great mistake in beginning a new canal in the present state of transportation eastward. We have expended about \$12,000,000 on the new Welland Canal, and so far as I know there is only one vessel, and that one on the stocks, at all suitable for the navigation of that canal, showing that progress by rail is reaching a point that sets our canal navigation at defiance. I asked some of the principal shippers how it was that after the Government expended so much money on that work that they did not use it more, and I was told by them that they had great doubts whether it would pay to carry grain by vessels at all or not. At any rate the hon. gentleman should have a completed scheme before Parliament instead of building a canal in the middle of the country, without beginning or end. No man can vote for that intelligently; nobody knows where it is; there is no map before us, no plan, no report of an engineer, nothing on which we can base any argument.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Before Concurrence, I will lay upon the Table of the House the report of the engineer and a map showing what is to be done.

Mr. CAMERON (Victoria). I do not agree with the hon. member for Lambton that the day of canals is past; but I

do not intend to discuss that question to-night. The hon. gentleman says that nobody knows where this proposed canal is to be. It seems very strange that such a remark should come from him, considering that for so many years he held the position of Minister of Public Works, and that a large number of these Trent works were done under his charge, and I suppose that with that devotion to the duties of his office that he always showed, he made himself thoroughly familiar with the position and character of these works. The subject has been discussed in this House on more than one occasion, and I think the members know pretty well where the canal is. I look upon it as a most important work in the general interests of the Dominion, and not only to the locality. This canal, when completed, will afford the shortest route for the transmission of grain from the Georgian Bay by way of the Trent River and the St. Lawrence River to Montreal. Grain can be carried from the whole of the North-West and the Western States, through Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and Lake Huron to the Georgian Bay, where there are excellent harbors, and then transhipped to barges, which will be able to pass through this canal without any change of barge till they reach the ships at Montreal. A great portion of the grain trade now carried to American ports would in that way be carried to Montreal. Therefore I say this is a matter in which the people of the Dominion at large are very much concerned. It would afford a saving of some 400 miles of navigation which is necessitated by the present route through Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and would constitute a far shorter and more valuable route than that now existing by the Welland Canal. With regard to the general policy of building canals, it is to be regretted that the hon. member for Lambton did not long ago come to the conclusion which he has apparently come to now, that all the money that has been expended on the Welland Canal and other canals is thrown away, because if he had acted on that view when he had a large majority at his back in this House he would, if his views are right, have saved to the country the expenditure of a large amount of money. I am glad for one reason that he has expressed himself satisfactorily, because in the newspapers supporting the party to which he belongs in the neighborhood where this canal is proposed to be built, it has been put forward that if the people want that canal built they have to return Mr. Blake and his party to power. For instance, the Peterborough *Examiner*, which is the organ of the party in the county of Peterborough, and which is edited by a man who stands very high in the confidence of the party in that neighborhood, in an article on the subject, after referring to the fact that the Session has nearly closed, winds up by saying:

"If the Government do not build the work at once, Mr. Blake and his party will. We await the issue."

In an article published on the 31st March, 1881, in the same paper, there is this passage:

"We believe we are justified in saying that nothing would more effectually secure the construction of this important work than the placing of Mr. Edward Blake in power."

I am sure the hon. member for Lambton speaks the opinions of the Opposition generally upon this subject, and if he does it is quite evident that this newspaper does not. If the Opposition take the position that the canal is a useless work, that all the money spent upon it will be thrown away, as a matter of course in the event of Mr. Blake and his friends coming into power we cannot hope that a dollar will be spent upon it or that the work will be continued. I am quite prepared, if necessary, to show the great usefulness which this work will be to the country at large as well as to the neighborhood, if completed. The construction of locks at Fenelon Falls was not much, as a lock exists now at Balsam Rapids, and one at Bobcaygeon will open navi-