

repair, and on that account no one can use it.

Mr. BARKER. Nobody wants to use it, I suppose.

Mr. FISHER. That is another thing.

Mr. McLENNAN. A very nice harbour can be made of it if it is properly handled.

Mr. BLAIN. This is the result of having these estimates passed while the work is allowed to remain in that condition. When this matter was up in 1905, the minister made the bald statement to the committee that not a dollar of this money would be expended for the property, but that it would all go for the construction of the work. Evidently now, from the statement of the hon. gentleman representing the county, here is a wharf owned by a coal company which has allowed it to get into bad repair, and now that it is of no use they propose to sell it to the government.

Mr. McLENNAN. Would the hon. gentleman have it left to the company?

Mr. BLAIN. What I say is that it looks to me as if the coal company were anxious now to sell it to the government.

Mr. FISHER. They have been so little desirous of doing so that we have not been able to get them to do it for over a year.

Mr. BLAIN. The same statement was made a year ago. I think these matters should be looked into a little more closely.

Mr. BARKER. Has the government an item in the estimates for the \$3,500 which they propose to pay for that harbour work?

Mr. FISHER. It is included in this vote of \$10,000.

Mr. BARKER. The hon. gentleman does not tell us so. This is an estimate of \$10,000 for harbour improvements, and he is going to purchase a harbour with it.

Mr. BLAIN. When the item was before the committee in June, 1905, this is what was said:

Mr. BRODEUR. The committee may be sure that no money will be spent unless a transfer is made to the government.

Mr. BARKER. That is, all the money is to be spent on the work?

Mr. BRODEUR. Yes.

Mr. BARKER. There are no payments for property?

Mr. BRODEUR. No.

Mr. McLENNAN. Will the hon. gentleman be pleased to hear that not one dollar of that vote was expended in any way whatever, for the reason that the conditions expected by the minister did not prevail?

Mr. BLAIN. I understand that quite well. The vote was passed in 1905 and repeated in 1906. It was passed first with a distinct understanding that not one dollar would be spent for the property itself.

Mr. McLENNAN. It was not spent. Is the hon. gentleman satisfied?

Mr. BLAIN. No, I am not, for the reason that there is now a change of front on the part of the government, and they say that out of the \$40,000 which we are revoting, \$3,500 will be paid to this company for a property which is of no value, which the hon. gentleman representing the county says is of no service to anybody.

Mr. FISHER. I do not think that is a fair statement of the case. Here is a property which is out of repair, which, however, when constructed cost a considerable amount of money. The hon. gentleman quotes Mr. Brodeur, though I do not know why Mr. Brodeur was dealing with the matter, because he was not Minister of Public Works. But the government having failed to get the property for nothing, the question is whether they will take it over and turn it into a useful harbour. \$10,000 is asked for that purpose. Negotiations are now going on. If the property is not acquired by the government, the money will not be spent; if the government gets the property for \$3,500, which I understand is the amount nearly agreed upon, they can with the balance, \$6,500, make a useful and effective harbour for the people. The government think that is worth while. They are not buying a useless thing. On the contrary, they buy a work which has cost a considerable amount of money, and which can be made useful with a little repair. In the hands of a private corporation it would be of no use to the public, while in our hands, with the expenditure of \$3,500 for the property and \$6,500 for putting it in repair, it would be made available and useful to the public. That is the whole state of the case.

Mr. FOWLER. All this difficulty is due to the fact that we have so often an acting Minister of Public Works. Since the Hon. Mr. Tarte left that office, with the exception of a few months, we have always had an acting Minister of Public Works. We had first Mr. Sutherland as acting minister, then for a little while as minister, and then he went away for his health. Then we had Mr. Hyman as acting Minister of Public Works, then as minister for a little while, and then he too left for his health. Then we had Mr. Brodeur acting minister, and now we have the Minister of Agriculture. Hence all this confusion and difficulty. I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Agriculture if he expects to expend these votes? There is a rumour about the country that the hon. gentleman is to be translated from the position of Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. FISHER. Do not believe rumours. They are very insidious and untrustworthy.

Mr. FOWLER. Sometimes there is a foundation for them, and this rumour says