

it forms a considerable sandbar. The same condition prevails around the Point, so that two great sandbars exist, one to the south of the Island and the other to the south of the Point.

These bars contain millions of yards of the very best sand and gravel, washed and ready for use, that can be found anywhere. These two deposits of sand and gravel have attracted the eyes of speculators for years back, with the result that leases and patents have been granted to certain parties, both Canadians and Americans. At the present time all the leases have been cancelled, but there are two patents still in force. They are for water lots on the two bars I have mentioned, which are the keys to the natural protection of both the island and the point. One of these patents is controlled by an American company and the other by a Canadian company. As a consequence millions of cubic yards of sand and gravel, during the last ten years, have been exported to the United States without this country receiving anything in return.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What part does the American company control?

Mr. BRIEN: The American company controls the sandbar off the Island and the Canadian company the sandbar off the Point. The method in operation is to use large steam barges, equipped with sand-sucking apparatus, which have a capacity of from 500 to 800 cubic yards, and can be loaded in two hours. This sand and gravel is carried to the ports of Detroit, Toledo, Sandusky and Cleveland, in the United States and Windsor, Ontario. The cost of operation is about 27 cents a cubic yard and I believe the material is selling at the present time, and has been for some years, at the ports mentioned, for \$1.50 to \$1.80 per cubic yard.

When we consider that millions of yards are carried away every year, some little idea can be gained of how profitable a business it is. They begin their operations at the earliest date that navigation opens and continue until the latest date in the fall. They work night and day, Sundays included. I refer now to the American companies; the Canadians are not allowed to work on Sundays. The profit from the business in which these sandsuckers, as they are commonly known down there, are engaged is about 600 per cent on the actual cost. And, let me repeat, this country is getting nothing in return.

The result is that the sandbar to the south of the Island has almost vanished. From a

[Mr. Brien.]

quarter of a mile to half a mile of the southern part of the Island has disappeared, and the sloping breakwaters that protected both the Island and the Point at all times have also disappeared, and to-day in many places the sand embankments have given way and the water has swept in on the reclaimed lands; also the greater part of the sandbar to the south of Point Pelee and at least a quarter of a mile of the Point itself, which was originally well timbered, have been carried away.

On April 28 last I received a telegram from Mr. F. C. Barnes, a member of the Municipal Council of Pelee Island, as follows:

Lake has broken into marsh in several places through loss of natural protection by the removal of sand and gravel.

On May 6 I received the following letter from him:

Received your letter in reply to telegram that I sent you and am pleased to see that you are taking much interest in our troubles. Mr. Brien, if something is not done, and done quick, our island will be gone, as the sand and natural protections are mostly all gone and the waves are cutting the shores all to pieces and breaking through in several places to which we have to put logs, stones and anything we can get to save the marsh lands from flooding, and if said lands flood, the island is surely gone, as you understand the value of our rich fertile soil in the marsh which is about one-half of the island. Now, Mr. Brien, I feel assured, and I am satisfied that the rest of the council do, that you are doing all you can in our behalf. But have we got to be wiped off the map simply to fill some American people's pockets? Are we not British subjects and our island British territory? I feel assured that there is a way. If the Government will not stop it outright, why cannot there be an export duty put on so high that it will be impossible for them to take it away? As it is, our island is going and no one, not even the Government, is receiving anything except the American people. How long would Canadians go into American waters and take sand and gravel? Might also say that the United States Government will not allow sand and gravel to be taken only in harbours and such places, which saves dredging operation for their Government. If our Government could only see and understand things as we do and as they really are, surely they would stop operations at once, as there are about 800 good British subjects on this island that must sooner or later lose their homes and all. It is a very serious matter. As to operations on Fishing Point, they have been busy night and day since about March 28th, and also Sundays. This is another matter that should be taken up, this Sunday work. Our Canadian boats cannot load or unload on Sunday, but those sandsuckers have been working every Sunday as much as week days. Will you kindly let us know if they can operate on the Sabbath day?

At six o'clock the House took recess.