

trade, in order to be able to use the very last inch available. All the lake ships have been unable to carry a full load for the last ten years or so. They have lost, as I have stated, about 400 tons, which is a large amount, as everyone will understand. Furthermore, as the channels have all been built for a draught of 20 feet, including the Poe Lock and the Canadian Lock, etc., this has been the cause of grounding of I do not know how many ships. In the case of an obstruction to a river, the Federal Government here or the Federal Government of the United States may intervene, because no one has a right to cause an obstruction. It is quite apparent to anyone that a river would be obstructed, if, for instance, a bridge were too low and ships could not pass under it, because the ship would strike the bridge. But you create just as bad an obstruction if the water is lowered so that the ship touches the bottom. In the eye of the law an obstruction is created in that way just as if the ship were obstructed by a bridge, and it must be remedied. The Federal Government of the United States declare that you cannot impair the navigable capacity of any river in the United States. It is stated by Mr. R. J. Maclean, who is Secretary of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Detroit for Inland Waterways—these are not my words—that the diversion of water there is a diabolical scheme, impairing the navigable capacity of the whole river St. Lawrence and of all the Great Lakes. Honourable gentlemen, the St. Lawrence River is our greatest inheritance. It is the birthright of all Canadians, and it is being endangered by a mighty foreign power. It is the artery of our commercial life, and it is being bled by the Chicago Sanitary District for the benefit of the navigable capacity of the Mississippi.

There was one great Canadian who went to the United States and became famous—James J. Hill. Mr. Hill at one time talked about waterways because it was the popular thing to do. There have been spasms about the waterways of this country, and every other country too. My honourable friend next to me, who is asleep, perhaps—

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT: I have not slept a second.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: I beg the honourable gentleman's pardon. His eyes were closed.

The members who were in this House 15 years ago will remember all the excitement and all the speeches made about the Georgian Bay canal. Everybody was for the Georgian Bay canal with the exception of one man in

this House who had the courage to get up and say what he thought. That was the late W. C. Edwards, who said the Georgian Bay canal was no good. Everybody frowned on him and thought he was a kicker, but as a matter of fact he was the one who was right. I was one of the guilty ones; I made long speeches in favour of the canal right in this House. I think the honourable member from Mille Lacs (Hon. Mr. David) will remember that in the name of a friend of his he asked me to start a discussion in this Chamber, and I did; and I devoted hours of study to the question, and I think I made as good a speech as any of the others. But I admit to-day that the information that we had was not as good as I think it should have been, because large ships cannot be economically operated in these restricted channels. Therefore, if the Georgian Bay canal had been built, the ships, as Senator Edwards said, would take less time in going around than in going through the canal.

In the United States they have had the same thing. They have been talking, and in 1907 Mr. Hill said that the business of the United States had increased tenfold while the railways had increased only about two or threefold; therefore the railways could no longer do the business, and that the only thing was to have a canal from the lakes to the south, a distance of 1,610 miles, with a depth of 20 feet, so that ocean ships could come into the Gulf of Mexico and sail right up to Chicago, and that the flags of all nations would fly in the roadstead of Chicago. Mr. Hill was a very acute politician, and acute politicians always have their fingers on the pulse of the public. If they find the public want something they decide that is what they have been wanting all the time, and they commence to make speeches about it. Then the effusion for oratory spreads, and for notoriety some of the newspapers take it up. The other newspapers, if they are recalcitrant, are spoken to. The contractors think they will be permitted to build the work; the real estate agents and all those who have industries along the line take it up. At that time Mr. Hill was afraid of restrictive legislation in regard to the railways, so he went to Chicago and made a speech about this canal. But the same Mr. Hill a few years ago said that if they wanted to navigate through the Mississippi they would have to lath and plaster the sides and bottom first. Then it was found out that if a ship tried to come up the Mississippi 1,600 miles and down again, it would take 45 days to make the trip. But the excitement continued, and in 1907 Theodore Roosevelt floated down the