

matter of urgent necessity that this inquiry should be prosecuted to a conclusion at as early a date as possible.

Your committee greatly regret their inability, through lack of time, to proceed further into this inquiry during the present session, and they beg to submit herewith the minutes of their proceedings and of the evidence so far taken by them, and they earnestly recommend that your committee be reappointed at an early period next session with a view of enabling them to carry to completion the inquiry now begun, and of permitting such legislation to be passed as may be necessary to carry into effect any conclusions or recommendations which may be submitted by the committee.

On the assumption that this inquiry will be resumed next session, your committee have asked Dr. Hodgetts of the Commission of Conservation who is about to proceed to England on official business, to make further inquiries as to the latest method of sewage disposal in that country, and the working of the local government board in reference thereto, and to obtain any further information as to water conditions in the United Kingdom as may be useful for the purposes of the inquiry; your committee are also in communication with the proper authorities with a view of having the necessary instructions issued to the topographical surveyors now working in the western provinces to gather all possible information and data regarding the rivers and streams in the said provinces for the purposes of your committee; from these and other sources it is expected that much valuable and useful information will be available for consideration should the inquiry be resumed next session as recommended.

Your committee would specially invite the attention of the House to the following points adduced in the evidence submitted, as in their opinion specially emphasizing the immense importance of an inquiry of this kind, and the paramount necessity, in the interests of public health, of determining as soon as possible the best practical means of effectually preventing the pollution of our navigable waters:—

Mr. JAMES WHITE:

Q. Have you any data or information as to how wide an expanse of water would be necessary to prevent pollution on this side (of the great lakes), or can you rely at all upon the distance?—A. The great lakes undoubtedly act as great sedimentation basins. The public health authorities of Ontario have gone half way across Lake Ontario from Toronto collecting samples of water all the way. They found bacteria right out to the middle of the lake. Of course, we can concede that the chances of the sewage of a city like Rochester infecting the supply of a town like Port Hope or Cobourg are somewhat remote; but you cannot say that it will not. The most important point of all is that the population on the shores of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence is increasing, and, as the population increases, the danger of infection also increases.

Q. What is the distance between Rochester and Cobourg?—A. The distance across the lake is approximatively 40 miles, I should say.

Q. Is that sufficient to purify the water?—A. We have traced the pollution half way across the lake. Of course we assume that the pollution they get in the middle of the lake is Toronto's pollution, because, of course, Toronto is the largest city on the shores of Lake Ontario, and the pollution was found practically opposite that city. They were trying to discover whether by extending their intake pipe out a reasonable distance they would get beyond the polluted area; and they came to the conclusion that they could not.

Q. Is the water from the Great Lakes used for domestic purposes by the city?—A. Yes, that is what the city of Toronto depends upon. They have instituted a very large filtration plant, but other cities along the lakes are using the unfiltered water.

Q. Even though we may not be able to induce the Americans to take the same action as we do, you say that we will be entirely justified in acting without regard to