

before we turn our attention to the alienation of any of the power resources in the parks area it would be as well to take into more serious consideration the development of power from our coal fields. I hope the government will continue its investigation in that direction so that we may be able to develop something similar to what the Ford plant in Ontario has accomplished. I am informed by one hon. member who went through the plant that the Ford people develop their own power from coal dust and claim to be able to do it cheaper than the cost of hydro electric power. Of course, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of all the statements made by those who have visited the plant, but certainly there should be a fair prospect of developing cheap power from our vast coal resources in Alberta, and I think the minister's advice might well be taken into consideration and the development of this Spray lake project deferred until it really becomes necessary.

Item agreed to.

To cover professional assistance engaged by the Governor in Council to assist the departmental officers who are advising re international and boundary waterway questions, \$8,000.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): In addition to paying for professional legal services, we are paying a portion of this amount for inspectional work at the Norman dam this year.

Item agreed to.

Allowances to W. J. Stewart, Chief Hydrographer, and to J. T. Johnston, of the Dominion Water Power and Reclamation Service, of \$1,000 each, for services in relation to questions under consideration by the International Joint Commission during the year 1925-1926, \$2,000.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I desire to move that this item be reduced by \$1,666.68, so that the amount to be voted will be \$333.32.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

Grant to Western Canada Irrigation Association, \$1,000.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): What has the minister been able to do with respect to the Western Canada Land and Irrigation Company?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Owing to the serious condition this project got into last year we have to expend \$20,000 this year in connection with it. I was not able to get any information from the liquidator that would lead me to believe that he would be financially able to carry on the enterprise this year. He had hopes of selling it, and he had

various schemes in that respect, but I pointed out to him that under the Irrigation Act we would have to see that persons who purchased land under that project were protected. I was able to make an arrangement with him for one year. I got him to appoint the Minister of the Interior as agent for the receiver. We will have to furnish in the neighbourhood of \$100,000, but we have all the powers that are conferred on the receiver for carrying on the project during the year. We will have to carry out some improvements upon the main ditch and upon the bridges crossing the ditch, but only necessary improvements, of course, of that character will be made. We will deliver water to water users and to the New West Irrigation District, which is a subsidiary and receives its water supply from the Canada Land and Irrigation Company's ditch. Mr. McLane has been appointed as representative of the company. We have appointed Mr. D. W. Hays as manager. Most of the western members will know Mr. Hays very well; he has had long experience in irrigation work and in addition is a good engineer. One of our own men has been sent to Medicine Hat to take charge of the office and to protect us in every way, to see that the accounting is properly done, and so on. So that for this year we will carry on in that way, in the hope that the receiver will be able to sell the enterprise or to make some arrangement under which it will be operated on the resources of some new company or even financed by the old company itself.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Knowing the conditions down there as he probably does, the minister must realize the desperate position in which these people find themselves, and merely making this arrangement for a year will not solve the problem. If he is simply going to permit the sale of the whole property to some other interests I am satisfied he will never get the money out of it. I doubt if anybody else will buy it unless they can keep on taxing the present contract holders. I am not sure what the minister has in mind with respect to that. I have had many communications from these people and they point out that there is one thing they require definitely to know if they are to continue operating on farms down there, and that is whether the contracts of sale are going to be modified. They want, in the first place, reduced valuation; secondly, they want some measures under which they will be able to get the water when they need it; thirdly, they suggest that the federal government should make some definite steps in this direction.