

course a trade that will amply repay any expenditure we may make. The engineers tell us something further, which I do not want to advance as the sole reason for the building of the Georgian Bay canal, and that is that you will be able to develop 3,000,000 horse-power which would be equal to the power requirements of mining 40,000,000 tons of coal annually. That is certainly an important commercial consideration. But the great consideration is the bringing of the trade through channels from east to west. Perhaps I may be permitted, although considerable reference has been made to it this afternoon, to point out that there is a greatly mistaken idea about this canal. The distance is 440 miles. A great many people think that that means canalling the greater part of the 440 miles. As a matter of fact 420 out of 440 miles follow the course of lakes and rivers; 346 miles require absolutely no improvements and 28 miles of canal alone are to be built which is one mile more than the Welland canal and 44 miles less than the Welland-St. Lawrence Canal system. In the report of the engineers, Messrs. Lafleur and others in 1908, we find that there are 28 miles of canal excavation, 66 miles of canal dredging and 356 miles of river and lake with a width of 300 feet up to half a mile.

There is perhaps a greater movement at the present time in favour of the construction of this canal than ever before. There is more interest being taken in the question than ever before. No doubt hon. members of this House generally have been receiving resolutions passed by the different chambers of commerce, by the association of retail merchants of Canada and by other bodies, urging them to support this project. I did not feel that I would want the occasion to pass without adding a word once more in favour of this great work. I feel that we have reached a time in Canada when the Government may begin the work. The road is made very easy for them. My right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition invites the Government to undertake the work and hon. gentlemen upon this side of the House promise the Government earnest support. There is no anxiety on this side of the House to make of this a political question. We do not want to wait until after the next general election, when we will be back to power, in order to do the work ourselves—not a bit of it. We are anxious to see the work begun at once by hon. gentlemen opposite and to give them the full credit for having begun the

[Mr. Devlin.]

work. I think I am speaking for the majority of the members upon this side of the House when I say that they will support this work; my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition spoke for them all this afternoon. Why not build it? There has to be a beginning of the work and the sooner it is begun the better for the trade, the prosperity, and the general advantage of Canada. I resume my seat fully satisfied that if the Government of the day will listen to the appeals which are made to them from both sides of this House they will not have any reason to further delay the work of construction of what has been known as the Ottawa and Georgian Bay canal but what is in reality the improvement of the waterway system between the Great Lakes and the ocean ports.

Hon. ROBERT ROGERS (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, in common with all other hon. members of the House, I have listened with a great deal of pleasure, and indeed with a great deal of interest, to the manner in which this question has been approached, first of all by my right hon. friend who leads the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), and by the gentlemen who have followed him. It is indeed a source of pleasure for me to feel and to realize that we can take up a great and important question such as this in a spirit of calm and careful consideration, apart from any question of political advantages or disadvantages to either of the two political parties to which we belong.

I am sure that we have listened with particular interest to the speech of my hon. friend from Nicolet (Mr. Lamarche), who has evidently given a great deal of time and study to this important subject. We appreciate the manner in which he has not only presented his views, but intimated that we are to be presented in the near future with the views of such a large and respectable number of our commercial and municipal bodies in various parts of the country.

I well remember having had the pleasure during the last session of Parliament, of listening to my hon. friend the member for North Renfrew (Mr. White). If there is one man in this Parliament who has given greater study to this question than has any other, it is undoubtedly the hon. member for North Renfrew. On the occasion to which I refer, the hon. gentleman presented not only his own views, but facts and figures as well, which, I am free to acknowledge, made me feel that he had placed a large and heavy responsibility