

cost of the dredges of the class that we are now referring to that will be repaired by this vote is \$35 per day.

Mr. REID (Grenville). Is that a dredge of 500 yards capacity, and does it include attendance, scows, and tugs?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. That includes everything.

Mr. TALBOT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to call the attention of the hon. Minister of Public Works to the fact that a dredge is very badly needed to improve the navigation of the lower St. Lawrence from Quebec down. On several occasions the corporation of pilots and the harbour commissioners of Quebec have applied to the Department of Marine and Fisheries to have a certain point of the lower St. Lawrence called Chenal Beaujeu, below Crane island, widened and deepened. There is a pass at that point where at low tide steamers have only twenty-five feet of water, and in cases where they require from twenty-seven to thirty feet of water they are delayed from two to three hours. In every case where a request has been made to have this work done the explanation has been given that the Department of Public Works had no dredges for the work for that particular point, but that all the dredges were occupied between Quebec and Montreal dredging the river. The work to which I refer has not been done and the condition of the river at this point is a great impediment to navigation. The pass is a rather narrow one, being about 800 feet in width and it is curved so that not only has the river at this particular point to be deepened but it has to be widened and straightened. There are also several sand banks formed at a certain distance from the several wharfs which the government own on both sides of the St. Lawrence from Quebec down to Rivière du Loup. The shore ice in the spring of the year will lift large boulders from the two shores of the St. Lawrence and they will be carried down by the stream, the ice will dissolve by the action of the water and by the rising of the temperature and these boulders will be deposited wherever the ice happens to break up. In several instances these sand bars and rock obstructions are formed by the ice dissolving near these wharfs. I know several localities which have applied for relief. In these localities, some thirty or forty years ago, we had at the end of our wharfs, six, eight or ten feet of water while now we have only three, four or five feet of water. I have on previous occasions drawn the attention of the Minister of Public Works to this matter and I know it is no fault of his that it has not been done before this. I believe it would meet with the endorsement of the House and the country if money were appropriated to improve the lower portion of the St. Lawrence, which, after all is the

Hon. Mr. SUTHERLAND.

most important part of that navigation. You talk about dredging the channel between Quebec and Montreal, but to my mind it is a secondary consideration, because all the steamers that go to Montreal have to pass by Quebec, and the port of Quebec is the only port where you have a great depth of water on each side without any dredging being necessary. I appeal to the Minister of Public Works to ask parliament for a certain sum of money in order that we may have a dredge for the lower St. Lawrence. We are told now that the dredges are all occupied between Quebec and Montreal, but we are urgently in need of relief in that part of the St. Lawrence to which I refer. I urge the minister as strongly as I can, to look into this matter carefully and to give prompt relief to the situation.

Mr. McLENNAN. I desire to direct the attention of the Minister of Public Works to the fact, that the county of Inverness, which I have the honour to represent has within its confines three large coal mines now in course of development. One of these is owned by the well known firm of Mackenzie & Mann, and with the assistance of the Dominion and provincial governments and the municipality of Inverness, they have been able to build a railway to facilitate the shipment of their coal. The other two companies are not so fortunate. They are depending on the natural harbours in their vicinity, but their shipping trade is hampered because of the want of a dredge to deepen these harbours. Both American and Canadian capitalists are interested in these mines, and a greater depth of water in two of these harbours is absolutely necessary to the successful pursuit of their undertaking. From this time out it will be absolutely futile for these gentlemen to develop their mines further, unless some assurance is given them by the government that dredges will be sent to work in these harbours. The remarks of my hon. friend (Mr. Talbot) remind me that the coal mines of the county of Inverness are the nearest coal areas to the St. Lawrence. A reference to the map will show that the western coast of Inverness is right opposite the mouth of the St. Lawrence across the gulf. That being so the greater is the pity that accommodation is not afforded to these enterprising people who have taken hold of these mines to take advantage of their geographical position. I have every hope that the Minister of Public Works will see to it that the development of these valuable properties will not be impeded for want of dredging in those harbours. A dredge was employed there before, and I trust that that dredge will be sent back to complete the work so vigorously begun. I leave the matter entirely in the hands of the minister, feeling confident that he will do justice to that important of the country.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I wish to say in reply to my hon. friend