

he said that notwithstanding the great improvements which had been effected in the port of Montreal, that harbour was still in a state of inferiority as compared with the port of New York and others.

Mr. MONK. I never said that; I said that although it had been much improved, still a great many other improvements needed to be made.

Mr. PUGSLEY. The hon. gentleman said it was much inferior to New York.

Mr. MONK. I do not think I said that. I said the Americans were ahead of us in respect to port facilities. The gravamen of my charge was this, that the suggestion of a free national port had not been carried out by the government.

Mr. RIVET. I deny altogether that today the port of Montreal is in a state of inferiority as compared with the port of New York. Why, Sir, it is only recently that the citizens of Canada read in some of the leading organs of the United States, such as the New York 'Herald' and the New York 'Sun,' admissions that the port of Montreal had become a formidable rival to the port of New York and other American ports, not only because of its geographical position, but mainly on account of the permanent works of improvement which had been effected during the last few years.

Mr. MONK. May I ask my hon. friend if he has read Major Stephen's report since his visit to Europe?

Mr. RIVET. I have read every thing that Major Stephens has written, every report concerning the port of Montreal, and every statement that has been published in the Canadian press.

Mr. MONK. Then my hon. friend must admit that his suggestions are numerous enough to show that there is still room for improvement.

Mr. RIVET. If my hon. friend will have a little patience I will show him that notwithstanding the fact that the port of New York may be in a better position, and though there are still many improvements required at the port of Montreal, it is not because of the inferiority of the port, but in order to ensure the supremacy of Canadian trade. Any one who goes to the trouble to read the reports published by the American press will come to the conclusion that because of the improvements carried on at the port of Montreal the American business men have become alarmed, and it is this situation that has prompted them to expend large sums of money upon the extension and deepening of the Erie canal in the hope that we shall never succeed in diverting from their

channels the trade which is destined to follow our Canadian route.

Mr. MONK. Why have we not a free port?

Mr. RIVET. I am coming to that if my hon. friend will have a little patience. I am sure he is not referring only to the port of Montreal, because notwithstanding the fact that the port of Montreal is admittedly the most important port in Canada from the strategical and national standpoint, there are other ports which require consideration and which have to be dealt with on the same footing and with the same measure of justice.

Mr. MONK. They are indicated in the report.

Mr. RIVET. Did my hon. friend ever dream of the expenditure which would be entailed if this government undertook to follow the policy laid down by the members of the Transportation Commission and to declare that all our ports, at least all of the ports mentioned in the report, should be immediately made free and national?

Mr. MONK. Hear, hear.

Mr. RIVET. Does the hon. gentleman realize what it would cost this country?

Mr. MONK. Yes.

Mr. RIVET. I am prepared to say immediately that I am an advocate of the nationalization of our ports. I think that is the policy of the future. If we want to place these ports on the best footing possible and secure the supremacy of our national system of transportation, as soon as the resources of this country will permit, we are in duty bound to carry into practice the conclusions of the Transportation Commission. But the hon. gentleman must remember that Rome was not built in a day, that it is utterly impossible, with the best will in the world, to carry into practice every good policy which may be initiated by this government or it may be—because some good sometimes comes from the other side—by the loyal opposition of His Majesty. I say it is utterly impossible to carry into practice these conclusions all at the same time. But, we have started to do something. What about the big dredging works that are now being performed in the ports of the Georgian bay and Lake Huron? What about the dredging work that is being carried on at Halifax, St. John and other ports?

Mr. MONK. Batscan.

Mr. RIVET. Even Batscan. What about the River Jesus? If I am not mistaken, in the county of Jacques Cartier?

Mr. MONK. They are making islands there.