

navigable river for the purpose of utilizing its water-power? That river is navigable from Lake Superior to Lake Nipigon, and I remember that the hon. gentleman himself had a measure before us the object of which was to navigate that river and in connection with a rail haul to carry freight for the building of the Transcontinental Railway. I asked the hon. gentleman did he ask for powers of expropriation and he expressed much surprise that I should ask such a question. I ventured mildly to say that we were not in the habit of giving expropriation powers to private companies and he retorted that I ought to know better. I can tell him that we never do give such powers to any company that is not declared to be for the general advantage of Canada.

Mr. CONMEE. This Bill declares that it is for the general advantage of Canada.

Mr. JOHN HAGGART. If it does, then that is still more objectionable. If by merely declaring a work for the general advantage of Canada that is all that is necessary to give a private company power to utilize the waters of a boundary river and to expropriate property belonging to the Crown in Ontario, it is time there was an end put to that kind of thing. These local companies with local objects should go to the provinces for their power. Why, if all you have to do is to say in a Bill that it is for the general advantage of Canada, you might over-ride every provincial right. Surely some reason must be given to show that such a work is for the general benefit of Canada beyond our mere ipse dixit in an Act of this parliament.

Mr. C. A. MAGRATH (Medicine Hat). As one of the young members of this House, I find it somewhat difficult to follow the legislation which is brought before us. This Bill has only come to my attention within the last few moments, and while I shall not refer now to the interference with provincial rights which may be involved, yet I see another principle incorporated in this Bill which as a young Canadian I strongly object to. My objection is not so much to what this Bill says as to what it does not say. I hold the belief, Sir, that the water system of this country is the most valuable asset we have, and I assume that the water-power which this Bill seeks to monopolize belongs to the people of Canada. We had a gentleman of some eminence in this city a few days ago and he told us that the future of the American continent was dependent upon its water-powers, and to that question I shall briefly allude now. Section 13 of this Bill provides that this company shall at all times be prepared to furnish for use in Canada one-half the water-power it develops. Here we are, a people of about 7,000,000 adjoining a nation of nearly 100,000,000 with immense means to develop in-

ternational waters for power purposes, while we are not in a position at present to keep pace with them in that respect. I object to the principle of allowing power to be sent out of this country to develop another country, until at all events we know that we have power sufficient for the purposes of Canada for all time to come. If hon. gentlemen opposite can assure me of that, then I would not be selfish about it, but I do not want to see this country put in the position that in the future we will have fifty per cent of our power exported to the United States, while lacking sufficient for our own purposes. Vested interests will be created on the other side and trouble will come if, once having allowed its export, we should attempt to keep our own power in our own country for our own development. I feel strongly about this matter and I regret that I had not the opportunity to go more fully into the Bill. But I thought I should present these views so that I might ask the House to proceed cautiously with legislation of this character.

Mr. GEORGE H. PERLEY (Argenteuil). I entirely support what has been said by my hon. friend from Medicine Hat (Mr. Magrath). The hon. member for Rainy River (Mr. Conmee) has made out a very good case why this Bill should be thrown out. Something may be said to support the contention that the Pigeon river is an international river, but any gentleman who will stand up in this House and in cold blood argue that the Nipigon river is an international stream ought to be laughed out of court. The Nipigon river is entirely within the province of Ontario, and whether it is a navigable stream or not is another question, but for the hon. gentleman (Mr. Conmee) to ask us to declare that the Nipigon river is an international river is asking us to swallow too much. The hon. member (Mr. Conmee) has told us that we have in this parliament passed many charters similar to the one he now asks for, but surely we ought to learn wisdom as the years go by, and if we have passed legislation containing any improvident provisions, that is no reason why we should continue in our wrong-doing. We are only now beginning to learn the real value of our water-powers in Canada; we are told that water is to be our coal in the future, and that being so we should safeguard this natural asset in every way. To pass a Bill with such sweeping provisions as this, allowing these private individuals to expropriate property from the province of Ontario and to control the water in two of the great streams of that province, would be a huge mistake.

This Bill was thrown out in the Senate last year, and I assume that there was good reason for that. At all events, it seems to me that we ought not to give it even a