

hands were kept unemployed. A good deal of expense was incurred, and, as a result, a claim was preferred by him against the department for a very large sum, as damages resulting from the stoppage of the work. That claim was looked into by the chief engineer very closely. I think the gross amount of the claim which he preferred, was \$51,000. He gave items showing upon what he based this claim. After a careful investigation of the different items, it was ultimately decided that he could properly ask for \$17,345 as the loss which he personally sustained resulting from the stoppage of the work during this period. The matter was referred to the Governor in Council, a report of all the circumstances of the case was presented to Council, who concluded upon recommending that this sum be paid to him.

Mr. HAGGART. I have no doubt that the claim is a just one. The question arose when I was Minister of Railways, as to whether the stone was suitable for the work or not. The engineer in charge of the work objected to the stone. I told the deputy of my department, the chief engineer, to inquire into it particularly. He got an expert from the Intercolonial Railway, a man who had been a bridge builder for a number of years on the Intercolonial Railway, and several other parties, to inquire as to the character of the stone. They also got a technical report, either furnished by the contractor himself, or furnished directly by an expert in McGill College, where the stone was tested. The consensus of opinion was, that the stone was of an excellent quality and fit for the work. I know the engineer in charge of the work objected to it, but he had not sufficient reason for objecting to it. I think the Minister was perfectly right in his course, and the application is a just one. I think the stone is probably as good as can be found in Canada for that work. But what I object to is, that an officer in charge of an important work, like the Soulanges Canal, when the stone was cut under his direction, where he had a report of every day's stone cutting, although he objected to the quality of the stone in the first instance, he never made any objection afterwards; and that, on account of the crassness of this gentleman, the country is put to an expense of over \$17,000, by reason of delay caused the contractor in putting into his work material which was as good as could be furnished, perhaps, in Canada.

Mr. LISTER. I do not think the engineer should be condemned in the language that my hon. friend has used. He must not forget that other men, experts in that sort of thing, examined this stone and condemned it.

Mr. HAGGART. I do not know who they are.

Mr. LISTER. Men who have been working in stone for years and years; and there

is still grave doubt, after all the examination, whether the stone being put into that canal is proper for the purpose.

Trent Canal—Construction..... \$250,000

Mr. BENNETT. The importance of this undertaking must be my excuse for addressing to the House a few remarks at this late hour and at this late stage of the session, on this question. I do not propose to go into the Trent Valley work as a whole, it has been so often dealt with in this House. But I do complain that the Minister has not dealt with the construction of the work in that generous spirit, in that fair spirit, that we, who reside along this route, hoped and desired he would do. Now, of this work, as I understand it, two sections are under contract. There is, first, the section between Lakefield and Peterborough; then, going west, there is the section between Balsalm Lake and Lake Simcoe. Last fall, when the Minister pursued the very commendable course of going over the route and seeing it for himself, I will not say that he led those who heard him in the town of Peterborough, at the banquet given in his honour, to believe that the section between Kirkfield and Lake Simcoe would be proceeded with at once. But I rather think that the statement which was made on that occasion inclined people to the belief that that would be undertaken this year. Now the position of the matter is this. To-day there is an uninterrupted water communication from a point about fifteen miles from Lake Ontario to the town of Peterborough. After leaving Peterborough there is this section of nine miles under contract, and part of the amount of \$650,000 which is placed in the Estimates for this year is to be applied to the final completion of that section. From there to Balsam Lake there is an uninterrupted water communication and under the contract which was let in that vicinity by the late Government there is water communication to within six miles of Lake Simcoe. That is when this Kirkfield section shall have been completed. I think the Minister of Railways and Canals fairly led those people who heard him last year to believe that the construction would be completed to Lake Simcoe from Kirkfield. There is water communication from within fifteen miles of Lake Ontario clear through to Lake Simcoe, and yet there remains seven miles of that uncompleted, and we are disappointed to find it that the Minister is not asking that the remaining portion should be placed under contract this year. I think in view of the large grants that are being made from one end of the Dominion to the other that the Liberal members who have constituencies along the route of this canal, and who are deeply anxious to have this work completed, should have pressed upon the Government the necessity of providing for the completion of the work between Kirkfield and Lake Simcoe. There are along