

from an inland standpoint? There is already a completed branch to Port Perry at the head of Scugog lake. Pigeon river extends to Omeme, Burnt river to Kinmount, Gull river to Minden, and Holland river to Newmarket. These are branches of the canal which it would be to the advantage of the country to have opened up and which would give cheap transportation to an exceedingly large section. The tonnage carried last year on the Trent canal notwithstanding that it was hemmed in and had no outlet either to the north or to the south, was in the neighbourhood of 150,000 tons. There were upwards of 2,000 lockages made at Young's Point, a point 16 miles north of Peterborough. Were the canal opened up at both ends, there is no doubt that a great local trade would be done on this canal system, apart altogether from the facilities it would afford as a thorough route for grain. I wish to refer to some of the local advantages which would be derived from the construction of this canal. I wish to refer particularly to the city of Peterborough, with the facts and figures concerning which I am more familiar. I refer to this for the reason that I take it that the situation of Peterborough is a clear index of the advantages that would be derived by other towns and villages on the line of the Trent canal. For, whatever benefit it may be to the county of Peterborough, it would be of like benefit to all the counties along the route. Take the item of coal. The consumption of coal in the city of Peterborough last year, was 43,430 tons. The rate on coal from Suspension bridge to Peterborough by rail is \$1.25 a ton. Coal is delivered in Oswego, at 15 cents a ton cheaper than at Suspension bridge. Freight between Oswego and Trenton or Port Hope is 25 cents a ton, and the rate between Port Hope and Peterborough, by rail, though only a distance of 30 miles is 80 cents a ton. On coal alone the freight from Trenton to Peterborough, were the canal completed would not be more than 25 cents per ton. On that basis, there would be a clear saving on coal to Peterborough of 75 cents a ton, or, on the amount consumed last year, a total saving of \$32,500. Now, the Portland cement works at Lakefield, as was stated by Mr. J. M. Kilbourn, the manager of these works when he was one of a deputation that recently interviewed the government on that question, on the basis of 75 cents a ton, would save on coal \$35,000 a year.

Taking the whole county of Peterborough, the saving in coal alone would be upwards of \$90,000 per year. The total imports from foreign countries to the city of Peterborough for the year 1905 amounted to \$2,352,739. A great part of that was iron, steel, fibre, coal and other produce of heavy kinds, the very articles from which return cargoes could be obtained by barges plying between Midland and Montreal, freight of

a kind which would naturally go that way, attracted by cheaper rates. The amount of customs duties collected at Peterborough last year was \$335,597. Taking the cost of construction of this Trent canal at \$5,000,000, the interest on that at 3 per cent would be \$150,000 a year. Therefore we collected last year at the port of Peterborough alone twice as much revenue in customs as would pay the interest upon the entire cost of the construction of the balance of the canal. I find in looking over the trade and navigation returns that there is not kept a record of the amount of goods exported from the city of Peterborough, nor the direction which they take. It is therefore not possible to get exact figures on that point. But I may say generally, that there are millions of dollars worth of grain, flour, cheese, butter and manufactured goods of all kinds that go not only toward Montreal, but also to the west to supply the growing population there. There are also 1,000 barrels of cement per day produced at the village of Lakefield, which is exactly the kind of commodity which slow transportation and cheap freight rates would tend to encourage. It must be apparent that water communication on the Trent canal from a local standpoint, and taking the city of Peterborough as an index, must be of incalculable benefit and advantage to every county along the line of that canal.

Now, I come to the indication of the Commission, that the canal can be used as a route for the carriage of grain from the Northwest, particularly from Midland to Montreal. In the first place, as it was pointed out by the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. Bennett), Midland is a nearer point on the great lakes than either Buffalo or Port Colborne. Vessels can go from Midland to Fort William in about one-third of the time, by reason of the fact that the distance is only about one-third as great, and therefore it naturally follows that boats can economically operate between Fort William and Midland. In addition, the importance of the port of Midland as a point on the Georgian bay is further indicated by the fact that the Grand Trunk propose double tracking their road. The Canadian Pacific Railway also propose building a line either from Victoria harbour or Midland to the city of Peterborough, in order to connect with their main line leading down to Montreal. I may further point out that the Trent canal route for the carriage of grain, taking it from the elevators at Midland, is 250 miles shorter than by way of Port Colborne and the Welland canal. Midland is also 750 miles nearer to Liverpool than by way of the Erie canal and Buffalo and New York. So that taking these advantages into consideration it seems apparent that Midland is the point where grain might be economically brought with a view to taking it to ocean ports, and that the Trent waterway