

having used his influence with the Government in order to obtain information in advance of their plans. He believed this was the proper place and time for him to make, as he did, a distinct denial of this charge, and to inform the House that he had demanded from some of these newspapers a retraction of the accusation they had made against him, and all except one had retracted, and against that one he had brought an action in the courts. He noticed, however, that another newspaper in Quebec had renewed the accusation, and he had finally decided to pursue the same course with regard to it that he had done with regard to the newspaper in Montreal. Some of the Opposition press had stated that this matter would be the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry, as soon as the House would assemble. No motion had yet been offered for such an inquiry, and he now desired to state that he would be very glad if an inquiry was demanded, and he would use whatever influence he might have with the Government to induce them to consent to such inquiry, in order that it might be shown that all these accusations against him were as false as he had always said they were.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said that no such application as was stated had ever been made to the Government to purchase the lands of his hon. friend, or any other lands. No lands were offered and no information was asked for further than this: A map was brought showing lands that these parties had advertised for sale or were about to advertise for sale, and they wished to know whether the Government desired to obtain any land in that quarter, and, if so, whether their sale would interfere with any of the Government's plans. He informed them that the Government had not decided whether to enlarge the canal or make a new canal, and he therefore declined to offer any advice as to whether they should proceed with the sale or not. That was all that took place that he was aware of, and he was quite sure that nothing took place anywhere else than in his own office, so that the hon. gentleman was entirely clear of the remotest suspicion of wrong-doing in this matter.

Item passed.

Mrs. Jelle.

On item 74, for St. Lawrence Canals, \$1,000,000,

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL asked for general explanations with regard to this item.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said with reference to the Welland Canal,—the principal work in many ways because it was the only one which paid a considerable revenue over the amount expended in working it—nearly all the contracts were let providing for the construction of locks 270 feet long, 45 feet wide and having 12 feet of water on the mitre sills. The work was making satisfactory progress and during the coming year a very large portion of it would be completed. On the St. Lawrence proper, between Prescott and Montreal, we have the Williamsburg and Edwardsburg Canal, the Cornwall, the Beauharnois and the Lachine Canals. The Government were still considering what steps they should take in the public interest in regard to several of these works. On the Lachine Canal, the plans and specifications for the work were nearly completed, the report of the engineer having been made some time ago. The contract would be let in accordance with the plan sketched as to the size of the locks and prism of the canal early in the spring. With regard to some of the minor canals, such as that at Williamsburg and Pointe Aux Iroquois, comparatively little expense would be incurred, but the plans were not yet completed. There was one serious difficulty in connection with the depth of water in the river itself. At one place near Prescott there was a very serious shoal in the river which must be cut through to give a channel of fourteen feet. This would be necessary to supply twelve feet of water at all times as the depth was materially affected by the wind. The expenditure at this place would reach \$500,000. The next point, coming downward, where a serious impediment was met in the river was immediately at the upper end of the Beauharnois canal. In order to obtain the necessary depth of water in the channel, an expenditure of over \$500,000 would be required. Expensive dredging would also be necessary between Beauharnois and Lachine, involving an outlay of nearly half a million more. So that in deepening the river itself, apart from any improvements in the canals,