

that something is done to prevent the great damage which must otherwise accrue to the shore. The county of Halton has already spent, I think, \$500 or \$600 to build the pier I have spoken of. It was recommended that they extend the pier 25 feet further, which would probably cost another \$150 or \$200. But there ought to be at that point three or four or five piers to prevent the rapid washing away of the land. The erosion is gradually encroaching on the roadway, and will compel the municipality of the township to buy another roadway to take the place of what has been in use probably 75 or 100 years. My argument is that it is the navigable waters which are under the control of this government that are doing this damage, and I appeal to the Minister of Public Works to take some steps to prevent it. I think I am making an appeal for an appropriation of public money which can be justified. In many parts of the country public money has been expended in less advantageous ways. A year or two ago a British Columbia municipality, I believe, spent money on protection works on the Fraser river, and I find in the estimates of the present year an item which reads thus:

Fraser river—to refund to the municipality of Delta one-half their expense of constructing emergency works to protect the south bank of the river near Ladner's Landing, on condition that the government of British Columbia will refund the other half.

I understand that this municipality went to the expense of building a groin or piers, and the government now proposes to refund to that municipality the amount of money they expended. I have no authority to speak directly for the county of Halton on this question, but I know what the county have done and what they are willing to do. They have not asked, and I do not think they are going to ask, the government to do the whole thing. They have done something themselves to meet an emergency, and I think the government can well afford in this case to help people who are trying to help themselves. If the county is willing to spend a certain amount of money on this understanding, I think the government can well afford to come to the rescue and assist them. I may be told that this point, 2½ miles from Burlington, is not a harbour, and that, therefore, there is no just claim on the government to assist in this work on the ground that it is their duty to look after the harbours of the country. But in the village of Burlington, where there is a harbour, damage of this kind is going on every day, and it is becoming there a very serious question. The erosion is now very close to the highway, on the other side of which stands

Mr. HENDERSON.

the drill hall, and I would not be surprised if in the course of 10 or 12 years the Minister of Militia were obliged to have his drill hall removed to another site. I was pleased to know that the minister went so far as to send an engineer to examine the location of this erosion in Burlington, and if he inquires of his engineer at Toronto, I am sure that he will get information in regard to the erosion 2½ miles to the east of Burlington to which I have made reference. I do trust that the minister will do something to assist these people who are willing to help themselves. I ask him to give me a promise to that effect, and I will be very happy to convey it to the people of the county.

Mr. PUGSLEY. If it were possible to give my hon. friend a very satisfactory promise, I should be glad to do so, because he always presents his requests in a very reasonable and fair manner; but I find very great difficulty in making a promise to my hon. friend. This question of protecting the shores of navigable waters, whether upon the ocean or upon the lakes or upon navigable rivers, is one which has given me a good deal of concern since I have been minister, and has caused me a good deal of difficulty. When I became minister, I found that there were certain protection works going on in different sections of the country, more especially in the province of British Columbia, where the government had been paying one-half the cost of protecting the banks of certain rivers. The soil of the banks of those rivers, such as the Fraser and the Columbia and some others is of an alluvial character, and in many cases the banks are being eaten away, very much to the injury of people owning land along those banks. In several cases the Dominion government contributed one-half the cost of the protection works and the British Columbia government the other half. I had applications from many other localities—from Fort McLeod, from the city of Edmonton and from a point on the St. Lawrence, where a portion of the bank had fallen, or gave signs of falling, into the river unless it were protected, and in case it did, would cause damage to an important village. Some protection work has been done in the maritime provinces, but I came to the conclusion that if this government were to admit its responsibility in a general way, there would be no end to the liability we would be called on to assume. I have taken a course somewhat at variance with that taken by some of my predecessors, and which they took only to a limited extent. Lately we have declined to contribute one-half of the cost of protection works in British Columbia; we have also declined to engage in protection work on the Macleod river, and we have de-