

and further irrigation of a million acres of land has been developed. In Western Canada a similar programme is desperately needed. Irrigation schemes have been surveyed and thought feasible; the water is available and some progress has been made in setting them up. One which is close to my heart, the Red-cliff Ronalane scheme, was started with private capital. Sir Ronald Lane and his associates invested many millions of dollars in it. At Vauxhall there is an area of 42,000 acres that has been producing splendid crops for a number of years. That scheme could be extended to irrigate another 150,000 acres, at the very low price of \$20.00 an acre. A considerable number of surveys have been made, and a great many ditches and reservoirs are already in existence. Additional land could be irrigated without enlarging the main canals. That would bring prosperity to a large area. It would employ 500 men for the next three years and make permanent homes for many people.

Another district is the St. Mary Milk River area, in Southern Alberta. This area has been surveyed and it has been declared that 345,000 acres could be irrigated at an estimated cost of \$43.99 per acre. That project would bring great prosperity to the people who, year after year, have met with disaster. The reason why it should be undertaken at once is that the international streams must be made use of. By a treaty between Great Britain and the United States made in 1909, it was agreed that if one country did not make beneficial and productive use of those streams the other country could do so. We have not built structures, as the United States have done, to look after our share of the international waters. The American structures are large enough to make use of our share of water as well as their own. The Spring Coulee dam, the key structure in that big irrigation scheme, should be built. The Meak Commission in a recent survey suggested that the Dominion Government should build large dams, construct reservoirs, build connecting canals and provide sufficient storage for Canada's full share of the water; also, that the province should build the lateral canals and set up irrigation districts. This would mean that each government would spend between seven and eight million dollars. The contribution by the province would be in some measure recoverable by water rentals.

It is the opinion of all engineers, and men who have lived in the locality for many years, that those streams of water should be put on the dry, barren areas and should not be allowed to run off to Hudson's Bay. By doing something to make that land productive we

would add to the richness of human life in that area. Such an undertaking would increase production to the benefit of both Western and Eastern Canada, because then the goods manufactured in the East could be bought and paid for by the people of the West. Irrigation would make homes for the discouraged farmers on the dry areas; it would provide homes for returned men who are desirous of going on the land, and it would make it possible to raise perishable and seasonable products. It would not add to our surplus of wheat; it would, however, produce the food which we need most, and for which there is a market. We could have canning factories, quick-freezing plants and possibly beet-sugar factories. It would bring employment to a great number of people; it would help the livestock industry, and it would turn those deserts into veritable gardens. Having seen life in the dry areas, and having observed methods of living in an irrigated area, I believe that irrigation makes the home more homelike. Flowers, small fruits, vegetables, shade trees and shrubs can be grown to gladden the heart and make people more happy and contented, and protective foods, such as milk, butter, eggs and cheese—many of which are needed by not only the growing child but the adult as well—can be produced.

An Hon. SENATOR: Home-grown vitamins.

Hon. Mr. GERSHAW: Vegetables, fruits and things of that nature which are so badly needed in all areas of Canada. The people of Canada do not get enough of such foods. Also, life would be happier, because there would be more and better social and community activities. In those areas at the present time there are only about 3.5 persons per square mile; in partly irrigated areas there are 12.7 persons, and in fully irrigated areas there are 29.7. I firmly believe that the Government should initiate these irrigation measures, the results of which would endure for ages to come, and would be a great blessing to this and future generations.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Kinley, the debate was adjourned.

PRIVATE BILL

FIRST READING

Bill F, an Act respecting The Quebec Railway Light and Power Company.—Hon. Mr. Lesage.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 3 p.m.