

On the 15th of February, 1909, I placed a motion on the order paper of this House for a return of information regarding the dredging of the Rivière Jesus, and I was informed that in November, 1863-4, about half a mile below Macdonald's wharf was dredged by the government, and from 1902 to 1908 it was dredged by contractors. The distance dredged was about two miles, the width 100 ft., the depth from six to ten feet, and the work was carried as far as Mascouche river. These works are to reach as far as Terrebonne. Such was the information handed out from the Department of Public Works in the return I mentioned. I desire now to draw the attention to the importance of the locality bounded by these two rivers, and to show the great need there is at present for improving their channels; first, in connection with local navigation; secondly, in regard to the general scheme of Canadian navigation; thirdly, and finally, I intend to demonstrate the need of this work in connection with the Georgian Bay canal project.

According to the census of 1901, the total population of the parishes in the vicinity of these rivers, and which must benefit directly from the execution of this work, was 10,200 souls; the total population of the villages in the same section was 6,779, forming a total of 16,979. I will not detain the House with an enumeration of the number of acres of cultivated land in the surrounding country. I will simply say that, since the last census, the now incorporated village of Cartierville has sprung into existence, and a large number of families have established their homes along the shores of the Rivière des Prairies, and the consequent increase in population over the figures of the last census must amount to fully 5,000. I am sure this is no exaggeration. In fact, in another ten years that section of country will contain a population of at least 50,000 people. There is already, as I have shown, in round figures a population of 22,000. The city of Montreal is now rapidly spreading all over the island. Outlying towns and suburbs are being annexed to the city every year. Its limits already extend within one mile of the Rivière des Prairies, and very soon the municipalities of Cartierville, Bordeaux, Ahuntsic and Sault-au-Recollet will be included within the city. That is to say, the whole section, extending from the River St. Lawrence to the village of the Rivière des Prairies, will form a portion of the city of Montreal.

Along the banks of the river a number of houses of education, all of a high order, and to which many of the city children are sent, have been established. The water-works system of the city extends to Rivière des Prairies. The new prison of Montreal is now being built within a few acres of the

banks of the river and in the heart of the municipality of Bordeaux. Land is being sold in building lots, and of late, as if by enchantment, unincorporated villages have sprung up on all sides throughout that region—one of the finest in all Canada. In vain will you look through the blue-books of the past ten years for such names of places as Youville, Parc Laval, Bas du Sault, Pont Viau, Saraguay, Cartierville, Abord à Plouffe, &c., &c., all of which are considerable villages, and which but a short time ago were but land marks, or stopping places, along the route. These, thanks to the wonderful progress and expansion of the city, are to-day places of sufficient importance to entitle them to charters of towns from the provincial legislature.

Stone, wood, coal and other like commodities are in great demand there, but owing to the lack of a system of navigation, it would be difficult to obtain exact statistics as to the cost and the amount needed, both for domestic consumption and for industrial purposes. I really believe that a system of navigation circling the Island of Montreal would be of the utmost utility and benefit to all that large population along the shores, and I look ahead to such a system in the near future.

The very first question one might ask is this: Is navigation possible in that river? The answer is simple. I must draw your attention immediately to Rivière des Prairies which I am referring to as one of the two alternative routes of the Georgian Bay canal. According to the report of the engineer it would save \$9,000,000 or \$10,000,000 if the Georgian Bay canal were built by the route of Rivière des Prairies instead of by the St. Lawrence, where there is already the Lachine canal. It would be much shorter.

Mr. HUGHES. Better for the navy, too.

Mr. C. A. WILSON. Better for the navy, and I am glad that my hon. friend from Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Hughes) takes that view. I will come to a point that will please him very much in a few minutes. I will refer to military and naval defence. Our cruisers, rather small perhaps, that tin-pot navy to which somebody has referred in the House, will be more protected on the Back river in those good constituencies of Laval, Jacques Cartier, Terrebonne and Two Mountains than on the border or on the south side of the St. Lawrence river and that is one of the reasons why I am in favour of that route. I was about to answer the question: Is navigation possible in that river? It is possible, for it has existed in the past, and it still exists during the high-water season. The route now under consideration has been, since the first pine tree in the valley of the Ottawa was felled by the shanty-