

FORT KENT DAM.

Committee Reported 'Unanimously' Against It.

RESOLUTION OF PROTEST PASSED THE HOUSE 31 to 7.

Winding Ledges Dam.

There are men in Madawaska Who have dam upon the brain, They talk dam in French and English, Talk it home and "crost in Maine;" They may dam up legislation, But the line must now be drawn When, across the Winding Ledges, They would dam up the St. John.

Know ye not, ye Madawaskans, And ye monied blokes of Maine, You may stop up other waters For your pleasure or your gain; But the river you have chosen, Though it is with lumber crammed, Is a saint among the rivers And must, therefore, not be dammed.

But the dam has done good service, For all through the last campaign Tory speakers conjured by it, And were not thought too profane; And when news of the election Crushed them like a battering-ram, They were heard to murmur fiercely, "Allegish" and "Fort Kent Dam."

The closing session of the committee appointed to investigate the Winding Ledges Dam scheme, was held yesterday afternoon. Messrs. C. P. Baker of Randolph & Baker, Fred LaForest, ex-M. P. P., and J. Fraser Gregory were heard in opposition to the dam, and Thomas Lawson, ex-M. P. P., supported the proposition.

Mr. Gregory in the course of an able address, said that it seemed to him that there must be something wrong with our governing machinery, because of the fact that advocates of such schemes as the Winding Ledges dam were not compelled to first go to the local legislature before seeking legislation at Ottawa. He thought that the law should compel them to do this. At any rate it looked like weakness on the part of the promoters, that they did not first endeavor to obtain the sanction of the Legislature. He was not surprised that the House had taken action, as the scheme must be disapproved of by a large majority of the members on both sides, and their opinion would have weight at Ottawa. I had never been denied that the scheme, if carried out, would be of great benefit to the people on the Maine side of the line, and he almost believed that a Maine syndicate was behind it. The bill was passed in the Maine Legislature because it was looked upon as likely to confer a benefit upon the state, and in his (Gregory's) opinion what is in the interests of Maine is diametrically opposed to the interests of New Brunswick.

Mr. Lawson in reply, dealt very fully with all the objections raised against the scheme, and made out a good case from the standpoint of the promoters. He admitted that there were three lawyers on the Madawaska delegation, but what of the other side. Mr. Gregory was equal to two lawyers and there was Mr. Macrae and Mr. LaForest. He admitted that his delegation had no mandate, but it was because they had been got together hurriedly and there was no time to call a meeting, but the Madawaska county council had chosen four delegates to go to Ottawa in support of the bill, which showed how public opinion was on the question. He contended that in other cases where charters had been asked for from parliament the promoters had not been compelled to first go to the legislature, and why should they in this instance? He thought the legislature had shown extreme haste in dealing with the matter.

Mr. Lawson, argued that there was nothing in the contention that the dam would obstruct navigation, and held its erection would not be a violation of the Ashburton treaty. He made a strong plea on behalf of the people of Madawaska, contending that they did not want to be hewers of wood for the St. John millmen any longer, but wanted to be in a position to manufacture their own lumber. If the bill did not pass parliament this year, it would next year, and if not next year it would go the following year. The millmen of St. John had had a monopoly of the business for

fifty years, and if they could not now stand competition they ought to close up. The question for the committee to consider is whether the up river country will be allowed to develop, or St. John rule the province. He hoped the committee would report against the resolution.

The Legislature's Protest.

In the legislature last night, Mr. Osman presented the report of the committee on the Winding Ledges Dam. It was to the effect that this project should be opposed as injurious to the general interests of the province.

Mr. Burgess opposed the acceptance of the report. He claimed that the Dam would not be an obstruction. He spoke from personal experience which was not the case with those who opposed the Dam. He doubted whether any of the latter had ever elicited a spruce log. The question was one between the people of the Upper St. John and the people of the city of St. John. He claimed that the people of Madawaska county, had a right to manufacture their own lumber and he did not think it fair that their efforts to do so should be opposed.

Mr. Tweeddale favored the report and approved of the action of the government with regard to it. He thought that it was in the interests of New Brunswick to prevent the building of this dam, and he was glad to see that when a blow was struck at the business interests of the province all parties were united. He had not received any intimation from the people of Victoria County that they were in favor of this project. It was well known that Senator Proctor, the promoter of this project was a speculator. He had already got possession of Grand Falls, and if he wanted to manufacture lumber he could do it there. He thought that the raw material of Canada should be manufactured in Canada and not used to build up a foreign nation. He was satisfied that if mills were built at the Winding Ledges the people of Madawaska would not derive the benefit from them that they expected because the alien labor law would interpose to prevent them.

Mr. Clair said that this was a business question, and that it was the desire of the people of Madawaska to have mills erected at which lumber could be manufactured. He thought the county of Madawaska was as much entitled to development as any other part of the province. He was convinced that the dam would not be the means of raising any delay in the passage of logs down the river. He thought that Madawaska should have fair play.

The vote was then taken on the report which was agreed to on a division as follows:

Yeas: Hon. Messrs. Pugsley, Dine, LaBelle, Harris, Sweeney and Bill Meers, Whitehead, Scott, Osman, Jones, Carpenter, McLatchey, Burden, Gogain, Barnes, Kim, Ryan, Tweeddale, Parry, Robertson, Hazen, Smith, Grimmer, Byrne, Lonsdale, Clark, Morrissey, Glazier, Loggie, Hart and Morrison—31. Nays—Young, Johnston, Poirier, Burgess, Leger, Clair, Gagnon—7.

Mr. Hazen's resolution against the passage of the bill incorporating the Winding Ledges Dam Company now before parliament at Ottawa, was then carried by the same vote.

Newspaper Corrected.

In the Legislature yesterday, Hon. Dr. Pugsley rose to a question of privilege. A paragraph appeared in the editorial columns of the Globe Tuesday evening in which it was said: "The government of New Brunswick, if not actually resisting, has been delaying action proposed to be taken against this legislation by the legislature."

The legislation referred to was that in regard to the Winding Ledges dam. He was not in the habit of calling attention to criticisms made in the newspapers, but in the present case the matter was of such great importance, and the statement was so contrary to the truth that he felt he must call attention to it. Instead of delaying the matter the government had hastened it in every possible way. It had been referred to a select committee who had been taking evidence at every available moment, and hurrying the matter forward. They hoped before the house closed this evening to be able to submit their report. It was grossly unfair for the Globe to make misstatements of this character.

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Feb. 17—deodtf

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Feb. 26—dtr

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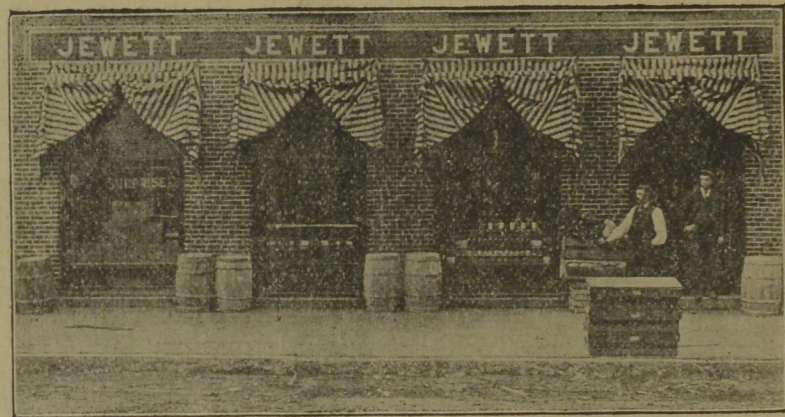
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