

non-sense in spending this enormous sum in works which must be idle and useless, at all events, until the 180 miles link is put in, and worse than useless, because they will rot and decay. I was speaking of the prices they are paying for the lumber they are putting into that road. The Premier claims credit because it is being built at a less cost per mile than the Intercolonial railroad. The reason of that is, where we had the best masonry that is to be found on any road on this continent in our piers, culverts, abutments, bridges, &c., they have built all theirs of logs and timber trestle work. Perhaps the Premier may think it is equally good, but I mention the fact to show that no comparison can be established between the cost of the two roads. I have gone over the number of structures of timber on the 228 miles of road under contract, and I find the cost in the schedule for abutments, bridges, culverts and other wood work is over \$800,000. We all know, by the system under which they are building, the cost will exceed what is put down here. It is not built as the Intercolonial railroad was, but at schedule rates, and you may safely put down the cost of wood and wooden structures at \$1,000,000. Now, you have not only an expenditure on ordinary railway, of \$6,000,000, but you have one-sixth of that of wood. Taking seven years as the period in which they will make the connection, this road will be almost worthless by the end of that period. Let us go into a little calculation as to what the result of that will be. You have \$6,000,000 expended upon the construction of 228 miles of railroad running into a country upon which the foot of white man never trod before the engineers went there, and which furnishes no local traffic. Now, what liability for interest does that bring upon us? At the rate of five per cent, which money costs us, it is \$300,000 a year, and if it is to be worked at all, the expense will be very great. Why, the cost of the Intercolonial railway during the past year was \$1,661,000. What shall we put down for the working of this 228 miles, and remember it is in two separate sections, increasing the cost of running? Shall we say one-half or one-third of that amount? If we put it at one-third, it will be \$500,000 for working the 228 miles of road running into that barren and forsaken country. You have,

*Hon. Mr. McLellan.*

then, \$800,000 a year as the cost of these pieces of railway. Now, I ask the House where is the traffic to come from? Where are the advantages to compensate this country for an expenditure of \$800,000 a year, or half of that sum, or even a dollar of it? I find in the report of Mr. Mortimer, already quoted by my hon. friend from Saugeen, in which he speaks of the Dawson Route—and it will be borne in mind, it is proposed to utilize a large portion of the Dawson Route in the water stretches connection. He says:—

“From my own personal observation, it is not possible, without a very large expenditure, to pass more than six tons of freight per day over the road.”

Now, with the additional obstructions to the line that exist upon that portion of the route, added by the change of location—additional portages and 400 feet of rise and fall—I think you will find that it is not possible with any expenditure to pass anything like six tons of freight per day over that route. Nobody will maintain for a moment there can be any local traffic there; it must be all through freight, and if you can pass even six tons of freight per day over the road, what is that to pay its working expenses? We had the statement made by an hon. member from Manitoba, that there would not be a single man or a ton of freight pass over the water stretch route if it were completed to-morrow, because there is a free and unbroken all-rail route by the United States, and I believe the House is satisfied there would not. You have, therefore, the whole \$800,000 standing against you, and no return, and at the end of seven years, even though it stands that long, the wood-work, to the value of \$1,000,000 in the railroad will, in the main, have to be renewed. This, then, is the position of the matter as it appears by the information before us. Six millions of the people's money is being spent on the construction of two widely separate pieces of road that it is not proposed to connect for six or seven years—in fact, not at all by the Government. This cost involves in seven years a further sum, in interest and working expenses (supposing anything so surprising as the working of it) of at least five millions of dollars, and at the end of seven years, another million in renewals—altogether, a sum of twelve million dollars, for which there can be no possible