

feet in height flows through it. This should, in its comparatively low latitude, effectually prevent ice forming across the Strait. The Esquimaux have made many attempts to cross in winter and spring, but have rarely succeeded. When they have succeeded it has been by getting upon floes and floating around in the ebb and flow of the tide, or in the drift current produced by the wind, till the neighbourhood of another floe has permitted of gaining a further advance towards the opposite shore. The chief difficulty in navigation is when the Fox Channel ice flows outward in June in very large quantities, and I rather think that before that ice comes down, there is a period during which sailing vessels could get through, especially if aided by signal stations on shore, connected by telegraph. These stations could warn vessels of where the ice floes are located.

#### NAVIGABLE THE WHOLE YEAR ROUND.

I think it is probable that steamers could make their way through the Straits the whole year round, but of course such voyages would do no good during the five to six months of the year in which the Hudson Bay harbours are closed. For ordinary sailing vessels, the known period of navigation is from the end of June till the beginning of November. Steamers could unquestionably pass for a longer period. The Straits are very deep and are free from rocks and shoals, as is also Hudson Bay, except along some parts of the shore.

#### MANITOBA AS NEAR EUROPE AS MICHIGAN.

I consider the Hudson Bay route decidedly practicable, and have no doubt whatever that it will be a most important channel of trade between the grain fields of the North-West and the Mother Country. Return cargoes would include the usual importations and large quantities of coal and iron, the freight on which would be low on account of the cheapness of the long water carriage.

The distance from Churchill Harbour to Liverpool *via* Hudson Straits is 2926 miles; while from Montreal to Liverpool it is 2990, and from New York to Liverpool 3040 miles. Churchill is, then, 64 miles nearer Liverpool than Montreal, and 114 miles nearer New York. Lake Winnipeg is consequently brought nearer Liverpool than Toronto, and northern Minnesota and Manitoba as near as Michigan. The effect of this in developing the wheat fields of the North-West, where a further advantage exists of an immensely