

NO OTHER SCHEME WILL AVERT COMMERCIAL DISASTER.

It is being said that the proposed canal by way of the Georgian Bay, Lake Nipissing and the Ottawa River would, were it completed, owing to the comparative shortness of the route, be more certain than the Welland-St. Lawrence system to ensure Canada's supremacy as regards the water-borne trade of the North West. There is no desire to antagonize or disparage another all-Canadian route and it is quite unnecessary to do so. For, should the development of the North West continue as rapidly and be as great as all Canadians hope, both the Georgian Bay Canal and the Welland will be taxed to their utmost to transport its produce and, that, even though a very considerable share shall pass through the Hudson Bay route.

PROMPT ACTION IMPERATIVE.

It must be remembered, however, that according to the report of the engineers (see page 325) the Georgian Bay Canal cannot possibly be completed in less than ten years after its construction shall be decided upon, while practical men who have had experience as constructors of such work hold that twenty or even twenty-five years will be required to construct it. On the other hand, the improved Erie Canal will be open to navigation within five years which would give our rivals an advantage of from five to fifteen or even twenty years, an advantage which it would be exceedingly difficult to overcome—difficult to the very verge of impossibility. It was no doubt with this thought in his mind that the Premier, speaking at Fort William last July, said that to prevent the diversion of the grain carrying trade of the North West to the Buffalo-New York route "our only remedy is to deepen the Welland Canal to 22 feet," and he added with emphasis, "This is one of the first things to which we must apply ourselves." And