

used on the small tugs which ply up and down the Ottawa River here, would be sufficient to carry a vessel through any ice such as the *Alert* was likely to encounter. I think the Government in sending that vessel to test the navigation of Hudson Straits were trifling with the subject. It had to go with wind and tide. Only 175 tons of coal could be carried on the vessel, and how long would that last? I know nothing personally of the navigation of those Straits, but I feel satisfied from the reports made by a special committee of this House which sat in 1883, and of which Mr. Joseph Royal, now Lieutenant Governor of the North-West, was chairman, and the evidence given before that committee, that there is from two and a-half to four months' navigation there every year. That evidence was given by gentlemen who had examined the Straits, believing that it was only fit for fishing and hunting. The Hudson Bay officers and the New Bedford whalers want to preserve their fishing and hunting grounds; and, consequently, when enquiry is made as to the navigation of the Straits, they give the people to understand that the navigation, so far as regards a commercial route, is not feasible.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Does the hon. gentleman think the road, if continued between Lake Manitoba and Winnipeg, would have any traffic at all at present?

Mr. WATSON. Up to Grand Rapids?

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Yes.

Mr. WATSON. I certainly do not think it would have as much as if it would cross at the Narrows of Lake Manitoba, and went through the Lake Dauphin country which is now settled.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). What is the population?

Mr. WATSON. There are some six or seven townships in that district settled, and all the even sections are already homesteaded, while the odd sections, although reserved for railway purposes, are all squatted upon, so that there is hardly a valuable section of land remaining to be taken up in that district. The people there are greatly in need of railway communication, and, as was stated by the hon. member for Middlesex, when I introduced a Bill last year, which I am sorry was not passed, it would have formed a portion of the Hudson Bay Railroad when that road would be built. I stated then that I believed the Government had trifled with the House; and when we have before us the report of the Deputy Minister of Marine, certainly, as was stated by the hon. member for Simcoe, the Government apparently wished for some excuse for not giving assistance to the Hudson Bay road. Now, so far as the cost of the carriage of grain is concerned, it appears to me that there cannot be two opinions as to the benefit which would be derived in the shipment of grain to Liverpool. I am not going to give a set of figures as regards the cost or comparative cost. It is sufficient for me to know that competition would necessarily lower the rate, and if the Hudson Bay Railway had any idea of carrying grain freight, they would have to charge a lower rate than the Canadian Pacific Railway. As I strongly believe in competition, I believe that this road, if it will not do all that the people of Manitoba and the North-West expect, it will certainly reduce the rates. Now, I do not think I will occupy any further time in this

discussion. I feel that this road is entitled to the grant as much, if not more, than either the Calgary and Edmonton, or the Regina and Long Lake road, for these roads are only colonization roads; and with regard to them we do not expect anything better than a colonization road; but this line of railway will, we expect, in addition to being a colonization road, run through to the Hudson Bay, and give us more benefits than a simple colonization road. For that reason I am in favour of the resolutions now before the House, and I trust this House will see fit to pass them, and pass a Bill founded on them giving this road the \$80,000 a year for twenty years. If I had my way, I would divert this road into a better country. I have some reason to hope the promoters may see fit to adopt a better road, that is a road running along the south end of Lake Manitoba altogether. There connection could be made by their line with Portage la Prairie, and then the route which is to be traversed by the line I proposed last year, could be run on to the west, and open up a good tract of country for its full length inside of Manitoba.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Is there not a large settled district west of Lake Manitoba, and would not this proposed line cut off that settlement from all railway accommodation between Lake Manitoba and Riding Mountain?

Mr. WATSON. In that newly-settled country there is certainly a large settlement, and this road, as laid down, would require a branch running from the south end of Lake Dauphin to the west. I had hoped that the charter, granted two or three years ago, and which was extended last year, of the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company would have been carried out, and I have hopes that road will still be built. If it is, it will accommodate the settlement in that section better than the Hudson Bay road. But they have got the land; and if not wiped out by other enterprises, I hope the promoters of the scheme may be placed in a position to go on and construct that road.

Mr. ROSS (Lisgar). This road runs through my county, starting from Winnipeg and running north-west. North of the present terminus, there are a number of settlers in my county, forty miles away from any railway, and there are settlers going in even back of that, so that in a year or two there will be settlers sixty miles from the railway. It is the intention of the promoters to cross at the Narrows and use the western route, and not between Lake Manitoba and Winnipeg, because there are some settlers west of Lake Winnipegosis. With regard to the country around Lake Dauphin, a large number of settlers will go in north of that this year, and a large number went in during the past year. Besides that there are large timber areas in that region, and along the streams that rise in Duck Mountains and run towards Lake Winnipegosis, where mills would be erected to accommodate the settlers, and timber would be sent down by rail to Winnipeg to supply the people in Winnipeg and settlers on the prairie. For this reason the road is very important as a colonization road at present, and a large amount of traffic would be given to it in the near future. The charge was made by the hon. member for North Middlesex that this is a wild-cat scheme. The hon. gentleman had no right to apply that term to this, any more than to any other system of railway. Two companies came before this House,