

*Hudson Bay Railway*

accommodate an ordinary ocean-going steamer. Here are two illustrations showing what has been possible in the past in the navigation of that channel. The steamer Minto with a draught of 20 feet was twice into the place where the harbour works are now being carried on, previous to any dredging work having been done at all. At the time this steamer entered the channel there were no buoys to mark the course, and yet no trouble was experienced. Again, in 1914, two coal ships from England, each of 22 feet draught, entered the port, or approximately to the point where the harbour is now located. These facts bear out the statements that already have been made as to the existence of a natural channel through that estuary. I should like to refer to one other point, bearing not so much on the port as on the navigability of the straits and the bay. The hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Duff) made a statement which showed that he was not altogether acquainted with the facts. At any rate, the statements I have are entirely contradictory of what he said this afternoon. The hon. member stated that fogs were a great detriment to navigation in the bay and straits. A statement made by Captain J. Hackland would seem to contradict the hon. member's assertion. Captain Hackland stated that navigation in Hudson bay and the straits is not dangerous. There are, he says, no shoals and there are very few fogs. Let me quote what he says:

During sixteen years of navigation of the bay—

Observe, he makes this statement after sixteen years' experience of actual navigation in the bay.

—we were never impeded by fogs.

As to icebergs, I will simply give two quotations from the report which the hon. member had in his hand, that is, Captain Anderson's report. The report states:

Many icebergs were seen and dense fogs prevailed off the Labrador coast.

I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that these same icebergs, and fogs of similar origin, are encountered by all ships that take the north Atlantic course, while no icebergs are encountered in the bay. This statement would seem to bear out the contention that fogs are not encountered in the bay either. In the same report we find this statement:

After passing the strait the weather was clear and very few fogs were encountered.

Now, to turn to the other aspect of the question, which I have placed second in order but which I by no means regard as being of secondary importance, namely, the develop-

[Mr. C. W. Stewart.]

ment of the resources of the country lying adjacent to the route traversed by the railroad. I want to quote from an hon. member of this House who on one occasion gave expression to sentiments in which I heartily concur. The member for Saskatoon, Mr. George McCraney in the year 1907, stated that he believed, altogether apart from the benefits of transportation which the Hudson Bay road would give us, the opening up of that country would be sufficient remuneration for anything we might spend in that connection. I think that if we make a search, not of theories or suppositions, but of the actual records available in the various departments of government here after surveys and exploring expeditions have been made, we shall be convinced of the truth of this statement. I want, first of all, to refer to the fisheries of the bay itself. I think I can briefly sum up what I believe to be the truth regarding the fisheries of the bay in short extracts from three reports that were made in the year 1914. In that year three expeditions were sent to Hudson bay to investigate the fisheries. One took the western shore and the waters adjacent thereto, another the eastern shore and the waters adjacent, and the third James bay and its waters. In the report of the first, Mr. C. D. Melville, officer in charge of the survey work, in his summary states:

1. The question of railroads is of paramount importance.

May I, Sir, read that over as having a direct bearing on the present discussion. In the first statement in his summary of his investigations Mr. Melville states that the question of railroads is of paramount importance. To proceed:

With transportation provided for there can be little doubt that the white fish fishery will prove to be one of the greatest in Canada and with its development the other fisheries will become of immense value.

In a footnote he states that it had proved profitable to send fish to Winnipeg, Chicago, and other points in central Canada and the United States from Prince Rupert, the headquarters of the northern Pacific fisheries, which is 1,745 miles from Winnipeg. And by actual mileage, Port Nelson would not be over one-half of that distance from these centres. I might further point out that if the Ontario government goes ahead with the project it has in view at this time, of connecting the south of James bay with a direct railway to Toronto, it would place these fisheries practically at the doors of the greater cities of eastern Canada. The second expedition—the Burleigh expedition—which investigated the western shore, reports as follows through the officer in charge: