

two or three years leads to the conclusion that the traffic which would pass through it would be very small. The hon. gentleman says that it would be used by some five or six hundred fishing vessels. I recollect, when the subject was discussed in this House in 1875, getting the opinions of many of the Nova Scotia members, and the universal opinion was that it would be of no service to the fishing fleet. The navigation of the Bay of Fundy is not suitable to fishing vessels; they have to accommodate themselves to the tide, and when it fails them they must wait until they can get it again. As the tide is very high in the Bay of Fundy, difficulties in this respect are more serious there than in perhaps any other part of the world.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I regard the tide in the Bay of Fundy of the greatest possible advantage, because it does not leave a vessel dependent upon the wind to the same extent as elsewhere. The vessels go up with one tide and down with another.

Mr. MACKENZIE. They go a certain distance with one tide, no doubt. The tide would, no doubt, be of service if used judiciously. I do not say that the scheme is impracticable, but I doubt very much its utility from the reports made from time to time by maritime men on the subject. My recollection is that several New Brunswick members, and those from the neighborhood of St. John especially, were warm in favor of the construction of the canal, while those from Nova Scotia were entirely hostile to it, believing that the trade which would pass through it would be very much less than was anticipated by its friends. I think it was rather conclusively proved that vessels passing to the West Indies would never seek that route, but that it would be much cheaper and better for them to take a straight line eastward until they reached the open sea and got into a direct line to the West India Islands. The trade from Prince Edward Island and any trade from the Lower St. Lawrence to Boston would undoubtedly be benefitted by a short course there; but that trade is comparatively light. With regard to the cost, I think the projector estimated it at from three and a-half to four millions, and he will be able no doubt to obtain the money in the English market with the guarantee of the Canadian Government to pay 4 per cent. interest upon it.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Mr. Page places it at over \$4,000,000.

Mr. MACKENZIE. Of course I have no means of ascertaining the probable cost of the work, which is perhaps speculative to a great extent. It is the first work of the kind to any great extent. Although the principle is applied in dry-docks, that is a very different thing from hauling vessels over a distance of 20 miles; and the grade must be greatly against the possibility of taking heavy vessels over it. No doubt it can be done; because railways of this kind have been constructed in other places, including one at Ste. Marie, to take vessels into Lake Superior. But will it pay for vessels to go into Baie Verte, a somewhat difficult navigation, and pass over the railway to the waters of the Bay of Fundy? It is very doubtful. I am not inclined to oppose the resolution, mainly on account of the scantiness of substantial information in regard to the scheme. But I doubt very much if it can be made a success. The money, no doubt, will be raised by the projector, but there is every danger that you may have a repetition of the Grand Trunk experience—a declaration that the work will stop, after the expenditure of the first subsidy, till more assistance be given. I fear much of Mr. Page's opinion is what the Minister states, that when the work proceeds a certain distance we shall find difficulties interposed, which we shall be called upon to make good. At the same time I would prefer doing the work this way to having it undertaken by the Government, which would be much worse.

Mr. KILLAM. Upon an engineering question of this magnitude I do not pretend to express an opinion to which any particular weight would attach. Anything I say must be regarded purely from a commercial or political standpoint. We have had the subject of the Baie Verte Canal before us for a number of years, and we understand that the Minister of Railways has made it a subject of great consideration as one not only concerning his county but the whole Province of Nova Scotia. But it was supposed by all of us that when the National Policy came into force, and the public Treasury was reinforced by the immense sums raised by the Finance Minister, that some decided step would have been taken before this either to ascertain what was practicable in reference to transmission across the Chignecto Isthmus, or taken in pursuance of the votes given by the House previously for the construction of the Baie Verte Canal. \$500,000 were placed in the Estimates once for its construction.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. \$100,000 three years in succession.

Mr. KILLAM. No portion, however, was expended. I suppose full consideration had not been given the scheme, and the money was merely placed in the Estimates for the purpose of going on with the work if found practicable, or for other purposes. I am not prepared to say that I believe the expenditure of \$12,000,000, or \$8,000,000 or \$3,000,000 by the Dominion is a legitimate expenditure. I speak of those different sums because about \$12,000,000 was the estimate for a canal available at any time of the tide, while \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 was thought enough for a canal available at half tide, according to the estimate of Mr. Keefer. The Minister now proposes to spend \$3,000,000 for a substitute scheme, a ship railway.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. A little over \$2,000,000.

Mr. KILLAM. I consider the capitalized value of this sum, supposing the scheme really practicable, and that men with capital, energy and skill are prepared to proceed with it, cannot be far from \$3,000,000. But these \$3,000,000 would be spent merely for an experiment.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman loses sight of the fact that we pay nothing if it is an unsuccessful experiment.

Mr. KILLAM. As to the commercial merits of the scheme I claim, speaking with all modesty, to be as fair a judge as any hon. gentleman on either side of the House. I leave all the statements of the Minister of Railways as to the number of fishing vessels which may use this railroad, the tonnage of the vessels entering the Bay of Fundy and likely to use this railway, with his conjectures as to whether a vessel could be carried up by the tide, to the public who are better qualified to judge than the hon. gentleman. But I do not believe his statement to-night that the railway has the commercial value he attaches to it. I believe any sort of transmission would have a certain amount of local commercial value, but not that general commercial value in which he believes. I do not believe it would have that general commercial value which he believes. It might be possible to have some mode of crossing the Isthmus, which would save time and thus induce owners of vessels to pay some toll for crossing it. The commercial value of the work must be estimated by what those vessels would be willing to pay. Not one of the 600 fishing vessels spoken of bound for the United States ports could be expected to pass through the canal and be transported over the ship railway. With a fair wind they would square away to get out of the Gut of Canso, preferring to take their chances upon the open sea outside the Bay of Fundy than to go into the Bay of Fundy where fogs and difficult navigation render the course more dangerous and necessitate their paying a higher rate of insurance. Nothing has been done since I have had the honor of representing a