

representative of the people was in 1883 when I was a member of the committee called for by the late Joseph Royal for the purpose of getting information on the navigation of Hudson Bay. At that time we had the power to call for persons and papers. We had the Bedford whalers, who had traversed that route for years, and we obtained all the information we could get. At that time we came to the conclusion that the navigation of Hudson Bay and straits was practical for four months of the year.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—That is not enough.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—Well, that has been increased wonderfully by modern inventions. We know that Hudson bay is as open as the Atlantic or the Pacific, and the Hudson straits are 60 miles wide without any obstruction in them, and clear open water, except for ice certain seasons of the year. There is no doubt about the navigation. No person claims that Hudson strait is full of ice at any season of the year. One of the inventions helpful to navigation to which I refer is wireless telegraphy. A vessel coming into Hudson bay wishing to know if there is open water through the straits, can be advised by wireless if they can come through, which would have the effect of lengthening the season two or three months. It has been suggested that vessels can go in there from six to eight months of the year—

Some GENTLEMEN—Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—Those who make that suggestion are enthusiasts. Then, as to storing wheat at Port Nelson, the people of the Northwest have advocated that as a means of getting additional value for their wheat. It is much better to have it stored there than on the prairies, as it is sometimes stored in Saskatchewan. The railways have had to put an embargo on it. I would almost have thought my hon. friend had a brief for the steamship company in which he is interested, which carries wheat from Fort William, and that he does not want to see it go the other way; but there have been snow storms on lake Superior in which boats were not safe, and the insurance has been very high. I am not advocating Port Nelson as a terminal. I have my doubts as to whether that is the best port. Instead of going to Nelson you can go to Churchill and get a good harbour. I have my doubts about Port Nelson, because the pressure of the ice on any pier erected

Hon. Mr. WATSON.

there must be tremendous. That is a matter for the engineers. I think that at present the Government should proceed slowly in regard to the location of the terminal. So far as the railway is concerned, the Government of Canada are perfectly justified in building it as a colonization road.

Hon. Mr. POWER—To what?

Hon. Mr. WATSON—Hudson Bay, either Nelson or Churchill. I am not going to advocate either one. Churchill is a port that has been used for hundreds of years. We had a committee of the Senate three or four years ago, of which the hon. gentleman from Prince Albert was chairman, and the evidence adduced at that time from people who knew the country shows that the hinterland of the Nelson region is capable of maintaining a great population. There is a lot of good land and timber in that locality and there is supposed to be a lot of good minerals also.

The same objection that is urged against the building of the Hudson Bay railway was raised to the building of the road up to Cobalt a few years ago. It was suggested that the people of Ontario could not afford to build a road in that direction. If that road had not been built the chances are that the silver mines of Cobalt would never have been discovered, and now there is a rush farther north in connection with the locating of gold mines. I say that the people of Canada are justified in building the line to Hudson bay as a colonization road and that a glance at the map will show this.

Hon. Mr. DAVIS—Even if never a bushel of wheat goes out there—to open up that country.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—Settle the Northwest first.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—I cannot at all subscribe to my hon. friend's idea that the expenditure for building that road should be stopped. The road ought to be completed. My hon. friend thinks nothing can go out by that route, but the people of the West have for years believed it will be found practicable. I am not as enthusiastic about that part of it as I am about building the road for settling the territory through which it runs. The time has gone by when the eastern provinces can talk against spending money for building that road. If there is any part of Canada in regard to which the people of this country have hope