

over. Mr. George A. Bain, C.E., said before the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that the ice is never solid for more than 1,000 yards from the land, and there is little difficulty that could not be overcome to prevent the loading and unloading of steamers all the winter. Perhaps what is referred to in the paper is the Straits and not the Bay. If so, I think I can show that there is error there also. The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba appointed a commission of inquiry, and they wound up their report thus: "No evidence has been given that goes to prove that Hudson Strait and Bay proper ever freeze over, or that the ice met with is sufficient to prevent navigation at any time of the year." That report was made after the examination of witnesses upon oath. Capt. Hackett, for 39 years employed by the Hudson Bay Company, in his evidence stated that the Straits never freeze, and that there is no reason why steamships should not navigate them at any time; while Admiral Markham, whose authority as an Arctic explorer none will gainsay, said that a well-found steamship would have no difficulty at all times in navigating Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay. I will not go further to prove that there is some little mistake in the mind of Mr. Fleming, and I should not like it to go forth that the condition of Hudson Bay and Strait would prevent an additional route, which I trust will be opened shortly into the heart of Canada.

Dr. RANKINE DAWSON: I have very little claim to be heard to-night, and absolutely none to criticise the very full, able, and interesting paper to which we have listened. Like others, I have done my share of voyaging, perhaps more than my share. I have lived for some years on the ocean, and have averaged for several years in succession upwards of 60,000 miles a year of ocean travel. I can testify to the vast improvements in speed and equipment that have taken place, and of which we have been told to-night. "The prison, with a chance of being drowned," in Dr. Johnson's time, has been transformed into the floating hotel of our own. Mr. Sandford Fleming drew a very interesting parallel between Canada and Russia. I think, however, he made a slip in saying, "We have in Canada greater varieties of climate, and larger areas of country suitable for settlement and cultivation." The Russian Empire is one of the wonderful countries of the world, and with its 8,000,000 of square miles of very partially developed territory, and 125,000,000 of patriotic citizens, ranks second only to the British Empire as a whole in these respects. I was much interested in what Mr. Fleming has told us as to the differentiation of steamship business.