

St. Lawrence-Welland they have always offered, and offer to-day, systematic and active opposition.

INADEQUATE DEVELOPMENT OF CANADIAN WATERWAYS.

The results of this opposition by wealthy and interested corporations is to be seen not only in the inadequate development of water connection from Montreal to the Upper Lakes. It is quite as noticeable in the neglect to provide water transportation from Lake Superior to the Western provinces via the Lake-of-the-Woods, Lake Winnipeg, the Saskatchewan and other rivers entering the lake last named. Were this route developed, not only would it provide for an enormously increased volume of traffic, especially of grain and coal, but it would result in a great lowering of freight charges by the railroads. In the investigation of the Western freight rates by the Dominion Railway Commission at Ottawa, the reason assigned by the officials of the C. P. R. for the cheaper rates in the East was that water competition in that part compelled the lower rate. Such competition is, in point of fact, the most effective, if not the only, method of regulating railroad rates.

In this connection, and as a comment on the transportation conditions in Western Canada to-day, it is of interest to quote the statement of Sir Robert W. Perks, of London, England:—

"Whenever I have been out West I have been struck with the fact that no organized and effective effort has hitherto been made to use these magnificent waterways, which, after all, are the cheapest form of traction.

I do not know whether you have ever been down the Danube, as I have been, and watched the huge flat barges carrying very often three thousand tons, half a dozen of which are towed down the Danube with a small tug, all loaded up with grain.

The cost of carrying grain by this method is almost infinitesimal: and were a system of this sort adopted in the West, the value to the vast grain growing Prairie Districts would be incalculable."

OPINIONS OF PROFESSORS WILLMOTT AND COLEMAN OF TORONTO, ON WESTERN WATERWAYS.

In reply to inquiries on this subject, Professor A. B. Willmott has made the following statement:—

"Regarding the possibility of a waterway from Lake Winnipeg to Lake Superior, I may say that I have been several times through by canoe from Lake Superior to Lake-of-the-Woods and believe that there is ample water for a barge canal through that district. I thoroughly agree with you that if this could be constructed at any reasonable cost it would have a great influence in lowering rates on the export of grain from the West. I feel confident that a barge canal from Edmonton to Winnipeg would be very easily carried out and at a comparatively small expense. From the mouth of Winnipeg River to Lake Superior would be much more expensive but is still quite possible. You will recall that the old Mackenzie government proposed to utilize these waters and even went so far as to start the building of a lock at Fort Francis. This lock still remains uncompleted. The development of this waterway would also mean the development of a large amount of power.

I thoroughly agree that the government should be urged to make an investigation of the proposition and submit data as to the cost of such a canal system, cost of operation, probable freight rates on wheat, etc."