

Kay) seems to place a great deal of blame on the late administration for not hurrying forward the work of this Hudson Bay railway, and he gives as one of the main reasons why there was a change of sentiment in that part of the country the fact that the late administration were not hurrying forward this work. If that is the case, if the people of the district of Prince Albert voted against the late administration because the work had not been carried out quickly enough I want to know how my hon. friend will reconcile his claim that this administration are in favour of this work with the fact that instead of hurrying on the work they immediately stop it, as my hon. friend from Humboldt (Mr. Neely) has stated. It is all very well for the hon. member for Prince Albert to say that the right of way can be cleared out and supplies got in at any time a month later from this. If any private corporation, company or individual had any considerable amount of work to do in that part of the country they would take mighty good care to get their men and supplies in there just as soon as the frost made it possible to allow them to be taken in over the muskegs. For the first couple of hundred miles there is a very considerable amount of that road that will have to be built across swampy land and muskegs. It is absolutely necessary to get the supplies in there this winter if the right of way is going to be cleared out, and if the contractors are going to be able to go on with the work next summer.

Mr. CURRIE. What percentage of arable land is there along that road?

Mr. TURRIFF. If my hon. friend (Mr. Currie) will take a trip over the road he will be able to form a very fair idea of the amount of arable land. I have not been over the route. The hon. member for Prince Albert seemed to think that the late government were very slow in what they were doing in connection with that road. But, my hon. friend should remember that it is only about three years ago, or a little over three years ago, that the present leader of the opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) made the announcement as leader of the government that the road would be built, and that from the time he made that announcement, or from the time that parliament met and it was possible to vote money, money has been expended in no stinted way in surveying the whole route from the Saskatchewan river to Port Nelson and Fort Churchill, a distance of 500 or 600 miles. When you consider that every part of that road is beyond the farthest settlement you can realize something of what the difficulties are. I have never been opposed to taking plenty of time in having proper surveys made. There is no use in going on and spending millions and millions and then finding out after the money has

Mr. TURRIFF.

been spent that it has been largely wasted simply because a few hundred thousand dollars had not been spent in the first place in finding out where the road should be built. We have an example of that in the case of the Canadian Pacific railway. I am not saying it in any spirit of criticism of the Canadian Pacific railway, but when that railway was built the people of Canada knew very little about that part of the country through which it was to run. If that road were to be built now it would not go over the same route at all. You see the Canadian Pacific railway every year spending tens of millions of dollars in changing the road both east and west of Winnipeg. Anybody who travels over that road will see that in some places they run for miles away from the old road that had been in operation for twenty years. Therefore, it takes time to have a proper survey made of a national undertaking such as the Hudson Bay railway. It was not only in connection with the road that information had to be obtained, but it was in connection with the harbour facilities as well. Nobody could tell whether Fort Churchill or Port Nelson was the better place to adopt as the terminal of the Hudson Bay railway until outfits had been sent up there and proper surveys and soundings had been made to find out which would be the better and the cheaper harbour and which would be adopted in the general interest of the country. As my hon. friend from Humboldt has pointed out, this part of the road, covering some 185 miles, for which the contract was let, will not be affected by the question as to which port should be selected. Two years have been devoted to the work of finding out the best line of railway. This work has been done under a very capable and a very able chief engineer. I do not think there is any reason to suspect that his work has not been satisfactory. He located that road and the late government let the contract.

Had the work been permitted to go on good progress could have been made during the coming summer, but that is now questionable, and the statement of the hon. member for Humboldt seems reasonable, that in all probability through the suspension of the work a whole year will be lost. The construction of the Hudson Bay railway is the most important question in the west next to the question of securing the American market, and when the present Prime Minister told the people out there that when he came to power they would not get the American market, but that they would get the Hudson Bay railway operated by the government, it was looked upon as something of a set-off. But, now that we are not going to get the American market and now that the work on the Hudson Bay railway has been stopped, what are the people of the west to