

SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT.

navigation. I know a little about the country between Manitoba and the Hudson's Bay and a great deal about the country lying between the great lakes (Superior and Huron) and James' Bay, having travelled from James' Bay to points on Lakes Superior and Huron by canoe and otherwise and from having spent seven years in that region.

In my opinion there are no great engineering difficulties in the way of building a Railway from Winnipeg to Hudson's Bay rather the reverse, as much of the country to be traversed is very favorable for such a purpose, and wood for construction purposes is abundant. I consider that Hudson's Bay and Straits are open to ordinary navigation sufficiently long in each year to be utilized for ordinary commerce. I have seen all the shore of Lake Winnipeg, and know the interior for a considerable distance inland along its western side. It would, in my opinion, be much easier to build a railway on the western than on the eastern side of Lake Winnipeg. The western side, between Lake Winnipeg and Lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis, offer many facilities for the construction of a railway. On the eastern side the country is generally rough and unproductive. The advantages to Canada generally of the opening up of communications, via Hudson's Bay, would be, 1st. Gaining access to a mineral region, which for richness, variety and extent is equal and perhaps superior to any other region on this continent. 2nd. Gaining access to whaling and sealing grounds that are already highly remunerative and are capable of great development. 3rd. Gaining access to salmon and other fisheries, to game in unlimited quantity and to the richest fur producing region in the Dominion. To Manitoba and the Northwest the route via Hudson's Bay is all important, giving them a shorter and cheaper route for both export and import than can possibly be had by any other route.

Churchill is the only real harbor at present known to me, on the west coast of Hudson's Bay. The other so called harbors, as at York Factory, being only roadsteads of a very low order, and not always safe. There are no harbors on James' Bay that can be classed as good, except for crafts of any light draft of water. The harbor at Moose Factory is a very indifferent roadstead. There are harbors on the east coast of Hudson's Bay, both along the mainland and among the sounds and islands along the coast, all are in tide waters. Churchill Harbor is slightly nearer to Liverpool than Montreal, and very considerably nearer than New York. At present no comparison can be instituted between Churchill and other ports on the west coast of Hudson's Bay, for, strictly speaking, there is no other port known there. I believe that Hudson's Straits are never frozen over in winter. My reasons are, 1st. That the latitude is too high, 2nd. That the current and tide are too strong to allow of a general freezing over at any time and 3rd. That the