

THE SENATE.

OTTAWA, Wednesday, May 19, 1909.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Eleven o'clock.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

HUDSON BAY RAILWAY.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. PERLEY inquired:

Have the government received any returns from the Hudson's bay survey staff, as to the route that the government is likely to build the railway to Hudson's bay, and will any work on construction be started this summer?

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—The government have not received full returns yet.

Hon. Mr. PERLEY—And there will likely be no work done this summer?

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—As to the remaining part of the question they cannot say.

GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC BRIDGE AT QUEBEC.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. PERLEY inquired of the government:

When do they intend to start building the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Bridge at Quebec, and when do they propose to have said bridge open for traffic?

Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—I am advised by the department, that they have not yet received the report of the commission of engineers who are preparing plans for the bridge. They have not yet completed their work, and, consequently, there is no possibility of saying when they are likely to have the bridge opened for traffic.

WATER-CARRIAGE GOODS BILL.

Hon. Mr. McMULLEN—Before proceeding with the orders of to-day, I wish to refer to a matter that has transpired in the House of Commons in connection with an important measure sent down to them by this House.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not think that is in order here.

Hon. Mr. GIBSON.

Hon. Mr. McMULLEN—A Bill passed this House on two separate occasions, the Water-carriage of Goods Bill, a very important measure. There is not a shipping community which has not suffered for years under the shipping regulations that exist in this country. Shippers are handicapped, owing to the fact that the regulations do not afford them that protection and relief which they afford to shippers on the other side. That Bill passed this House twice and was sent to the Commons, and I understand it has been allowed to die, as it were, a natural death there. I cannot understand what influence has been brought to bear upon the government to permit that Bill to drop. I have had an intimation that there are a few shippers in the province of Nova Scotia who are deeply interested in the matter, and that they have exercised their influence to prevent the Bill from going through. It would rather indicate that one man in Nova Scotia is worth ten in any other province. If we are going to have cross-firing of this kind between this Chamber and the House of Commons, and a Bill that received such extended consideration at the hands of our committee, and adopted as unanimously as the Water-carriage Bill was adopted in this House, is to be ignored in the other, in my humble opinion the Senate will at least be justified in adopting a very independent attitude in dealing with Bills coming from the Commons. I regret exceedingly, in the interest of shippers of goods in this country, that that Bill should have been rejected. There was no more important Bill before parliament for years. Relief was asked for by our shippers. They expressed a strong desire that that Bill should become law. They were only asking what is accorded United States shippers. Why should not Canadian shippers be placed on as good a basis as foreign shippers? Why should United States shippers be allowed to ship from Portland or Boston on better terms than are granted Canadian shippers from the same port? Simply because our shipping regulations are in an unsatisfactory condition. I very much regret that that Bill has for the second time been rejected by the House of Commons.