

SPECIAL COMMITTEE. REPORT.

That, while in the opinion of your Committee, sufficient evidence exists to prove the practicability of a route of communication with this Province via Hudson's Bay, your Committee is glad to perceive that it is the intention of the Dominion Government to send an expedition to examine into the general question of the navigation of Hudson's Bay and Straits, and to obtain such information as will enable correct charts of the coasts and harbors to be constructed.

That, considering the paramount importance to this Province of such an investigation, your Committee advise that steps be taken by your Honorable House to secure a proper representation of this Province upon such expedition.

Your Committee has also examined many persons familiar with the country between this Province and Hudson's Bay, and has examined the reports of engineers and others, charged with the duty of making technical explorations of such country, and are of the opinion that no engineering difficulties exist which will prevent the construction of a line or lines from this Province to the shores of Hudson's Bay.

Your Committee begs to draw the attention of your Honorable House to the immense commercial importance to this Province of the proposed route of communication, whether by rail and water, or by rail alone. They find that the area under cultivation in the states of Minnesota and Dakota, and in this Province, in 1882-3, aggregated nearly 9,000,000 of acres, which produced a crop of all kinds of grain amounting to upwards of 80,000,000 bushels. One railway alone (the St. Paul, Minn., Manitoba R.R.) carried southward 13,087,120 bushels of wheat, 370,010 barrels of flour, during the year ending the 30th June, 1883, and it is safe to assume that had the outlet via Hudson's Bay existed, at least one-half of this produce would have followed that channel to the seaboard.

Your Committee feels justified in assuming that this route would be extensively availed of by the shippers of this country and the neighboring States of America in consequence of the fact that the distance from Winnipeg to Liverpool via Hudson's Bay is 570 miles less than from Winnipeg to Liverpool via Montreal and the Straits of Bell Isle, and 770 miles nearer than via Montreal and Cape Race, while it is 1,051 miles nearer than by way of New York. By sea, Churchill Harbor is 64 miles nearer to Liverpool than is Montreal, and 114 miles nearer than New York.

Not only is the all rail route much shorter than by an other line, but nature has provided water ways from the head of navigation of the Red