

Therefore, the amount of saving that has been accomplished amounts to that four or five million dollars spread over two or three years; and when you set that over against the amount of deterioration that has taken place in four or five years one fails to see where the saving comes in. There is an old saying that "a dollar saved is a dollar earned"; but in this case a dollar "saved" was a dollar wasted.

Now, let me deal more particularly with the question of feasibility, for I know that in the minds of certain members there is some doubt as to the feasibility of this route, although it is a matter that has been discussed for a good many years. I want to say that the sources of what may be termed exact knowledge concerning the feasibility of the Hudson bay route consist of the reports of the several expeditions that have been sent out by successive governments. A vast amount of money has been spent, at one time and another, in sending out competent people, properly equipped, to ascertain the truth about this route. It is no use contending that the governments—the Liberal government and the Conservative government—undertook this thing for purely political reasons, and went into it blindly and inadvisedly, because there is evidence that is readily accessible to show that all the material facts were at hand, and those facts are very well set forth in these reports. Now the more important of these reports are: the Gordon report of 1884-5-6, the Wakeham report of 1897, and the reports of the Hydrographic surveys under Captain Anderson, and others, from 1910 to 1914. I know that attempts have been made, at times, to discredit these reports. Partisan zeal has sometimes led people to try to discredit these reports, but I say that any candid student of them must admit their great value, and, I would add, to a certain extent their finality. The evidence which they give is cumulative and progressively convincing, and you cannot get away from it. They vary as regards details but on essential points they pretty nearly all agree. I think they may be taken as being trustworthy, and practically nearly all that you need to consult—I think they may be said to be a compendium of all that can be said for or against this route. Another thing I might interject is this—that these reports have an added value because they contain, embedded within them, all the available unofficial evidence, evidence that has been gleaned for a long period from sea captains, from Hudson's Bay Company officials, and from others that are qualified to

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speak. All this evidence is to be found in these reports.

Now, having carefully studied these reports the conclusion I have come to—and I hope my bias in favour of this route has not in any way interfered with my judgment; I do not think it has—is that, as was stated a few moments ago, the months of reasonably safe navigation are July, August, September and October. Indeed, in some favourable years you may add part of June and a part of November to that period. The opening and the closing of the straits for navigation depends upon the Arctic stream of ice, coming from Baffin's bay, which closes the eastern entrance to the straits from the latter part of November to early in July. In the early part of July, usually in the first week of that month, the ice opens out and permits steamers to enter, and the date of that opening is fairly constant. Reports that extend away back for two hundred years show that the first week of July is a fairly constant date for the opening of the straits. Sometimes, indeed, steamers can go in there in the middle of June and instances of this having been done can be quoted. The closing of the straits is also pretty constant and takes place every year about the last week in November, although sometimes the closing is extended to December, and in some cases the beginning of January, on one or two occasions in fact the straits might have been cleared in the first week in January. These are the facts concerning the navigation of the straits, and although I believe that on the west end of the straits the Fox channel ice is a factor, yet from the evidence given it cannot be said that the Fox channel ice governs the navigation of the straits. Whatever you prove of the eastern end of the straits applies to the western end also. In establishing this, one does not contend that the route is such that it will not require a certain amount of adaptation on our part. The difficulties are great of their kind, but they are not at all insuperable. They can be overcome. They have been overcome and are being overcome. The reports of Captain Anderson of the Hydrographic survey prove that with every successive season of investigation something of value is discovered concerning the navigation of the straits, and perhaps the most instructive thing is this: that in 1911 when the Minto went into the straits it had a very difficult passage and suffered considerable damage, but in 1912 under similar conditions the Minto, benefiting from its previous season's experience, went in and made the passage with the