

during the present century, and indeed during the closing years of the previous century, will bear with me while I repeat some of these arguments and deal with the situation as it appears to me. In looking up the history of this movement I was struck with the number of times it had been debated in this House. While tracing the movement back I came upon a comment made by Hon. Thomas Greenway, a member of this House sixteen years ago, to this effect:

I remember having had the honour of a seat on a committee of this House more than thirty years ago, when we took a good deal of evidence on this subject.

That would place the investigation referred to away back in the seventies, in the last century. I am not going to refer back that far. However, I went to the trouble of looking up in Hansard how many times this question had been debated in the House during the present century and I was somewhat surprised to find that it had been discussed over one hundred times—119 times to be exact. It was not always a full dress debate; sometimes the discussion was considerably shorter. At any rate the subject has been up many, many times and the arguments advanced in its favour may perhaps be termed old. They are none the less worthy of support. I think the time that has been spent on it to-day, and in past years, is well justified by reason of the growing importance which attaches to this project.

It means, as has already been emphasized, an additional outlet. I am not going to attempt to make larger than it really is the importance of another outlet, but I would ask you to consider this feature. Suppose that only one-tenth of the wheat crop that is grown in the prairie provinces is exported by this route, and suppose that only one-quarter of the sum that has been stated might be saved, what is the result? I believe it has been stated frequently that from 15 to 20 cents a bushel could be saved on the wheat carried over this route, but suppose one-third or one-quarter, say 5 cents a bushel, were saved on the tenth of the crop that might go out by this route, would it not, Sir, be a better paying proposition than any railway in Canada at the present time? I submit it would.

Then aside from the question of the outlet and a cheaper means of getting our crop to its ultimate market, there is the other question which I do not place second, but place alongside of that first, and that is the opening up of a new and valuable territory, the importance of which, I am glad to know has been

very largely emphasized in the debate to-day. I refer again to the history of this project, and I note that when it really became of interest to this House, some 16 or 17 years ago, it was not a matter of political strife. Although that was not the beginning by any means, it had its resurrection at that particular time, about 1906 or 1907, because of certain facts relative to the necessity for another outlet and wider markets for the crop of western Canada at that time. There are members in the House who were at that time farming in western Canada, and who can well remember the difficulty there was in getting grain to market; how, particularly in the season of 1906, the railway facilities were utterly inadequate to remove the western crop, and there was great congestion at practically every point throughout the West. It was then this matter became a subject for debate, and the project was adopted by both old political parties as a necessity. I want to note a resolution that was passed in this House in July 1906 declaring that the construction of the Hudson Bay railway was necessary for the commerce of Canada and for the full development of our agricultural and other resources. That resolution was adopted by this House, and in the debate that followed it was shown that there was practically unanimity of opinion on the subject. I want to read a short extract from a speech by Sir George, then the Hon. Mr. Foster. Speaking to that resolution he said:

I believe the time has come when the Hudson bay railway should be more than an academic question just to be talked of sympathetically. I believe it ought to be built and it cannot be built now any too soon;

Then speaking after Mr. Foster, the leader of the government of that day, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, made this comment:

I agree altogether with what has been said by my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster) that the time has come for the construction of this railway.

Perhaps hon. members might think there is very little use in going into ancient history, but I believe that these comments and these expressions should carry a certain weight with us at this time. Ten years after that the Hon. Mr. Hazen expressed himself as I would like to express myself at this time, in referring to this scheme. He said:

The members of the House irrespective of party evidently thought that the scheme was practicable because both parties were pledged up to the hilt to build the Hudson bay railway.

And this House has reason for accepting their judgment as having some weight. Mr. Hazen continues: