

"ARCTIC" EXPEDITION

THE FACTS OF IT.

Of all the subjects exploited by the Opposition none have received the same circulation as the alleged "Arctic" scandal. Allusions have been made to this vessel, and the expedition upon which she was despatched, upon many occasions when political exigency or party purpose might be served. Notwithstanding this, it may be said with perfect accuracy that all the facts relating to the incident have never been published, and few people know the truth of the matter.

ORIGIN OF ATTACK.

On May 15th, 1906, during the discussion of the Estimates of the Marine and Fisheries Department the following item was before the Committee:

"Maintenance and repairs to Government steamers and ice-breakers, including steamer 'Arctic' \$375,000."

During the progress of the discussion, Dr. J. D. Reid, of Grenville, made the following statement—Hansard, 15th May, 1906, p. 3369 Vol. 11:—

"I, like my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, and like a great many more people in this country, am skeptical about that quantity of goods having really been placed on board this Steamer. I find in looking up the Department of Marine and Fisheries that the gross tonnage of the 'Arctic' is given as 762 tons—from this we would have to deduct the space that is occupied by the machinery. **I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE 'ARCTIC' WOULD CARRY THE TOTAL QUANTITY OF GOODS SAID TO HAVE BEEN PLACED ON BOARD THAT VESSEL.** That is my own private opinion. It looks to me as if there had been some mistake. I have estimated the total weight of these goods, and as far as I can figure out, there would be 748 net tons of goods placed on board the steamer 'Arctic' on that trip. I have taken the items as given in the Auditor General's report and figured it up from those."

SUPPLEMENTARY CHARGES.

It might be added that while the above forms the text of the main charge, Mr. Taylor of Leeds, and Mr. Northrup of Hastings supplemented it by alleging that **"THE QUANTITIES PURCHASED WERE GREATLY IN EXCESS OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE EXPEDITION,"** and **"THAT EXTRAVAGANT PRICES HAD BEEN PAID."**

SIR WILFRID GRANTS ENQUIRY

Sir Wilfrid Laurier met the issue promptly and frankly. After alluding to the charges of unnecessary purchases and extravagant prices,—Sir Wilfrid said—Hansard, Vol. II. 1906, 3391-2, May 15th, 1906: