

they will be limited to a part of the great plains,—cannot be omitted. We must also look carefully at the question whether the road will be financially a success, if built at the present moment, or whether it would not be wiser to put off building till at least financial loss does not seem the inevitable result.

Around the question of the length of time that Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay are open for navigation has centred a great deal of discussion and enquiry. The most authentic and reliable sources of information are the reports submitted to the Dominion Government by the commanders of the expeditions sent to the Hudson Bay for the purpose of exploring that great inland sea. I shall quote from the reports of Lieut. Gordon who carried on expeditions in 1884-85-86; the report of an expedition under Commander W. Wakeham in 1897; and that of Mr. A. P. Low's expedition in 1903-4.

Lieut. Gordon made three trips, and submitted three reports to the Canadian Government, dealing at length with the whole question. His 1886 report is the most complete and ends with these words: "In concluding these notes on the ice, it may not be out of place to say that, whilst I am of the opinion that there will always be more or less fluctuation in the date of the opening of practical navigation for the purpose of commerce, the ship-owner who sends in a freight-carrying steamer before the 15th. of July will almost certainly be subjected to such delays as will add very seriously to the cost of the voyage; indeed, it is by no means unlikely that, given two similar steamships, one entering Hudson Strait on the 5th. of July and the other on the 15th., the second steamer might pass the first and get through with little delay.

"In regard to the closing of the season, so far as obstruction from ice is concerned, the end of October seems to be the time when the heavy old ice comes down in force, and although in 1886 this ice was driven eastwards by a heavy gale and the Strait remained open for some time longer, the