

of its great potentialities in the Northwest, as an adjunct to the Grand Trunk railway, could be made a great asset.

I have to-day cut a statement from one of the newspapers of the quantity of grain taken to the port of Montreal. It says:

The greatest number of ships in port on any one day; the greatest number of ocean arrivals in any one year; the greatest tonnage of ships in any year; the advent of the new C.P.R. 2,000 bushel cars for grain, which were in operation throughout the year in connection with the extensive grain movement between Georgian Bay ports and Montreal; the greatest grain movement through the port of Montreal, doubling any former record in the history of the port; the highest annual interest charges to be paid by the Harbor Commissioners, and which the commissioners are pleased to state are being fully paid as they become due.

What does that show? It shows that in the port of Montreal this summer there were handled the enormous quantity of some 60,000,000 bushels.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: 140,000,000.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: I did not think it ran quite so high. I ask where the bulk of that grain came from. It came from the Canadian Pacific railway and from the Grand Trunk railway. Those two companies occupy a strategic position in respect to the grain trade of the Northwest. The Canadian Pacific railway staked their future on the construction of the line from Port McNicoll to Peterborough and from Peterborough to Montreal. I think in the past season they passed through Port McNicoll some forty odd millions of bushels of grain; I think at the Port of Midland fully forty million bushels were handled by the Grand Trunk system; and from Parry Sound there were handled probably eight or ten millions of bushels. That was the bulk of grain shipped into Montreal.

Hon. Mr. ROCHE: How much of that was American grain?

Hon. Mr. BENNETT: I will come to that in a moment. Of the grain which came through Midland and the other ports I have no doubt some was American grain. A few years ago the Canadian Northern railway carried about 36 per cent of all the grain coming from the Canadian Northwest. When it reached the head of the lakes, owing to the fact that the Canadian Northern had no port, the grain went to Buffalo. With the facilities of Grand Trunk at Midland, and with another large elevator at Parry Sound, it would be easy for the two railroads acting in conjunction to handle upwards of one million bushels of

Hon. Mr. BENNETT.

grain. In this connection I would like to point out that last year upwards of one million bushels of our grain of all kinds went to Buffalo. It is infinitely better that that grain should go through our own channels, via the Grand Trunk up to the time that navigation closes; or, on the other hand, by way of the C.P.R. to Montreal. The bulk of the freight coming down to Montreal this year came by rail, very little, comparatively speaking, coming by the canal system of steamers.

The honourable gentleman from Halifax (Hon. Mr. Roche) asked me a question as to American grain. Let me say in reply to that that is a most important factor in the future of this Government railway, and for this reason. You can carry grain from Chicago, Milwaukee, or Duluth over to the ports of Midland and Port McNicoll and thence to Montreal. Once there it can be distributed in the Eastern States even as far as Boston, and a large and profitable trade is being done there at the present time. So the Canadian Government system of railways would have the advantage of attracting not only the trade of the Canadian Northwest, but also a considerable part of the trade of the Western States. On the other hand, if the grain goes to Buffalo it has to be carried eastward an even greater distance than from Montreal.

The question of deepening the St. Lawrence canal has been mooted, and while I do not anticipate that the Government is going to take any action in that matter at present, I trust that some day during the present Session there will be a debate on that subject. I believe that the press of Montreal and a considerable portion of the American press are opposed to the deepening of the St. Lawrence canal. I am in agreement with Montreal on that question. I maintain that the future of the St. Lawrence waterway scheme can only be tested by the success of the elevator system at Port Colborne. The largest boat on the upper lakes, carrying half a million bushels, can be handled there. There the grain is transferred to boats carrying probably 80,000 bushels. Grain can be routed to Montreal either by Port McNicoll or by Midland as cheaply as it can be by Port Colborne: it is therefore fair to argue that if larger vessels could be taken through to Montreal, the grain might be carried cheaper than it is at present. But there are setoffs against this advantage, one of the greatest being that any canalization of the river would entail the operation of these vessels at a very low speed.