

The CHAIRMAN.—I would suggest that if this Public Accounts Committee is to be of any service we should recommend to the House that all the Public Accounts for three or four years back should be submitted to this committee. Then there would be no question as to our authority to enquire into such items as have been referred to.

Mr. MCKENZIE.—Certainly, if you do that it will be all right.

Mr. BENNETT (Simcoe).—If you approve of that, as I understand from your remarks, I will second the motion to that effect if you will make it.

Mr. MCKENZIE.—To what effect?

Mr. BENNETT (Simcoe).—To go back for three or four years.

Mr. MCKENZIE.—I am asking for the ruling of the Chair as to our procedure. The rule last year was that if there were any special accounts which the committee desired to take into consideration a motion was made in the House for those particular items to be referred to the committee. But we cannot go beyond the scope of the order of reference.

Mr. CECIL DOUTRE recalled and examined.

*By Mr. R. A. Pringle, K.C.*

Q. I find, Mr. Doutre, a memorandum on the file signed "W.P.A." Who is "W.P.A."?—A. The Chief Engineer of the Department, Colonel Anderson.

Q. In order to get this on the record I will read it:—(Reads.)

B.H.F.—C.R.C.

25511—A.

#### MEMORANDUM.

I have made enquiries as to the amount of grain received at the ports of Midland, Collingwood, and Depot Harbour last season, from the middle of November to the close of navigation, and find the quantity to be as follows:—

Midland. . . . .	2,357,872 bushels
Collingwood. . . . .	260,300 "
Depot Harbour. . . . .	1,138,568 "

It is impossible to state exactly how much of this was received as a direct result of the ice breaking operations.

After the middle of November, ice is liable to form in the harbours, and while the work of breaking the same may not be heavy, still it must be continuously carried out. Even if no ice forms, boats must be kept ready night and day to perform the work, and after considerable experience, the only reliable method of doing this work is to enter into an agreement with a reliable concern, properly equipped, who will undertake to keep the harbours open up to a given date. The price must be based on local circumstances.

In a locality where ice forms early and thick, it may be necessary to keep several powerful boats in continuous operation day and night for a considerable length of time although in some seasons there may be practically nothing to do. It is usual to make the best terms possible based on previous experience.

"Submitted for information of Deputy and Contract Agent. W. P. A."

Ottawa, Ontario, November 20, 1908.

Q. You have a recollection of that document?—A. I have.

Mr. MCKENZIE.—Whose report is that?

Mr. PRINGLE.—It is the report of Colonel Anderson, Chief Engineer of the Department.

Q. Then there is also a memorandum by Mr. Fraser *re* ice breaking operations at Collingwood, Depot Harbour and Midland. (Reads.)