

*Hudson Bay Railway*

lie, it would be almost impossible, I am told, to hold them at the docks for loading.

But supposing all these difficulties were overcome. What next do we have to contend with? I think everybody will agree with me that the ordinary cargo steamer would not be suitable for this route on account of the ice conditions. A special kind of ship would have to be constructed and especially strengthened from the bow to the fore rigging and perhaps further aft. These steamers, of course would cost very much more than the ordinary tramp steamer or cargo boat and as they would only be able to operate in Hudson bay, as my hon. friend himself says, for four months at most during the summer, what would they do during the other eight months of the year? They would not be practical business carriers for this reason: They would cost about twice as much as the ordinary boat to build, and when they went into competition with other steamers on other routes after they had finished their charters on the Hudson bay route for four months, in order to pay dividends and even make expenses they would have to get higher freight rates than competing boats. It would be impossible to let these boats after only four months on the Hudson bay route lie up for the rest of the year. It is hard enough now for people in the shipping business to make both ends meet with their boats running twelve months in the year instead of only four. Consequently, I say that unless my hon. friends expect the government to build these steamers and spend large sums of money in building proper dockage facilities no shipping man is going to invest in boats which would have to be specially constructed for the Hudson bay route.

If the government did construct these boats, or if shipping men did, what would be the result then? I think every hon. gentleman will agree with me that no boats are going into a dangerous business, no steamers would go over this route unless when their charters were made with their agents or with the railway companies, they were guaranteed a higher freight rate than if the Hudson bay were all clear of ice and they could go in and out night as well as day without any difficulty. Consequently, special steamers having to be constructed, operating only four months in the year and demanding a higher freight rate, the insurance companies also asking a higher freight rate both on the steamer and cargo, my hon. friends would find that instead of getting lower freight rates than at the present time the freight rate on the Hudson bay route would be much higher than the rate via Quebec, Montreal, St. John or Halifax.

[Mr. Duff.]

I think it is unnecessary for me to say much more. The hon. member for Nelson (Mr. Bird) has referred to what Captain Anderson had to say about this route. I do not wish to weary the House by quoting at length, but I hold in my hand Captain Anderson's report for the year 1914, and I shall give a few extracts to show what he thinks of the feasibility of the Hudson bay route. He says:

After clearing the ice about Belle Isle, the course followed was from 75 to 100 miles off shore and little or no ice was seen until we hauled in for cape Chidley, on Sunday the 19th.

That is the 19th of July. Cape Chidley is the cape outside of Hudson bay.

At 3 a.m. light winter ice was entered and passed through without difficulty until 7 a.m., when about 90 miles southeast from cape Chidley and 80 miles off shore, heavy winter and Arctic ice was entered, making progress slow and hazardous. Later in the day, the rudder received damage by coming in contact with a large pan while "backing up" and the ship was hove to for repairs.

Backing up means that when the steamer cannot get through the ice she has to back up in the water behind her and go ahead a second time.

Mr. SHAW: What was the name of that boat?

Mr. DUFF: The Acadia, but I can also quote from the experiences of the *Bœthie*, the *Minto* and the *Bonaventure*. It goes on:

It was found that the rudder stock had been twisted, necessitating the removal of the quadrant and cutting a new key slot. This operation took the remainder of the day and the night.

The ice fields appeared very extensive, no open water being visible from the mast-head. The steamer *Bonaventure*, chartered by the Department of Railways and Canals for carrying supplies to the Hudson bay terminus at Port Nelson, was picked up by wireless and reported that she was icebound about 25 miles southeast of the Button island.

The *Bonaventure* was icebound about twenty-five miles away from the other steamer, showing conclusively that this was a very extensive field of ice covering practically the whole of Hudson bay.

Mr. HOEY: You mean Hudson strait.

Mr. DUFF: The water outside Hudson bay.

Mr. BANCROFT: The location the hon. member is speaking of is Hudson strait, which is a good many miles from the bay.

Mr. DUFF: How can you get into the bay unless you pass through the strait?

Mr. BANCROFT: I did not understand the hon. gentleman was arguing that.

Mr. DUFF: I do not quite understand what my hon. friend is driving at. I am saying