

the charge was 8 cents, and whereas for several years the cost to Montreal was from 4 to 4½ and 5 cents, last year at one time it went to 20 cents. There is the disaster that comes from having a bottle with too small a mouth. If you are going to increase our production in the West, is it not necessary, even though Montreal handles as much grain as it now does, even though the Pacific route is going to be opened up—is it not necessary to have a third outlet? I think it is.

I would like to meet a few objections. One is this. Some ask, where are you going to get a return cargo? You have not a population in that northern country, and for some years there will be very little return cargo. Let me point out this: Montreal has no large return cargoes in comparison with the amount shipped out. Canada ships out four tons for every one brought this way across the Atlantic. That means that even at the present time three out of every four vessels must come back across the Atlantic empty, or else the four vessels must return with quarter-cargoes. How much difference is there then? Is there any great disadvantage for the Hudson bay route in that respect? I think not, and it is quite apparent that with the development that will take place in the northern country considerable return cargoes can be brought back. That is something that must be developed.

The hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Duff) made the statement that the advantage of the thousand miles saved—that is about the difference between Fort William and Montreal, and I would point out that that is a most difficult part of the route—was nearly all lost by the slow progress through the Hudson straits. I would ask if that is any slower than the rate of progress of the boats that must pass through the 44 miles of canal in the St. Lawrence river, or go through the Welland canal or the St. Clair flats or the Soo canal? That is the more difficult and the more circuitous route. Surely by the Hudson bay route, with plenty of depth, with no canals, and wide open water for four months in the year, the progress will be greater, and therefore instead of the advantage being lessened by that route, it will be increased and mean a saving of perhaps 1,200 or 1,500 miles.

Remarks have been made by two or three hon. members that we ought to go slow in this matter, that we ought to take a year or two to investigate. Well, we have been twenty-five or thirty years investigating it already. Surely that is going slow enough. The idea of taking two years more to investigate I have no sympathy with, although it

is a very good scheme for chloroforming the whole project. I see no need for any further investigation except of one particular point, and that is which is the better port, Fort Churchill or Port Nelson. That could be ascertained in a very few months, and I think it should be done as quickly as possible.

I shall not dwell upon the wisdom of spending a few more millions after \$21,000,000 has already been spent on this project as that has already been touched upon. I pass on.

I have something that is a little bit new. It may be a little bit prosy because I shall have to read it. Some years ago Earl Grey made a trip to this northern country in order to investigate, and he was accompanied by a correspondent of the London Times. This correspondent on his return gave an address in the city of Toronto, from which I wish to give a few extracts. Objections have been taken to this project at times by men who are opposed to it because of selfish interests, and by men who living nearby are perhaps biassed, but surely that cannot be said of a correspondent of one of the world's greatest dailies and a man living in Great Britain. I think his evidence and opinion should be taken as worth something. He says:

Now, I might, perhaps, begin by reminding you that the Hudson bay route is not a new experiment; for very nearly a century that was the predominant trade route to the west of the continent. You may remember that there was a period, lasting very nearly fifty years, of the acutest commercial rivalry between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Fur Company, with headquarters at Montreal. During that long struggle the Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed the advantage of being able to get goods to the interior about a month earlier than their rivals.

Further on he says:

Franklin went by that route on his great exploration trips, and the description he left applies admirably to what we saw on our trip down there the other day. It was by that route that the British troops—infantry, artillery and sappers—were sent in 1846 to help the Hudson's Bay Company guard the great frontier country of Manitoba against the possibility of American aggression.

Again he says:

I believe from my observations that the present Far Northwest of Canada can be reached from Liverpool by the Hudson bay route quicker than from New York.

Hudson bay affords a back door to this continent, which might be easily used by the British in case of imminent need, and possibly mean, again, the saving of the Northwest to Canada; and that route, which has been so important in the past, may, therefore, not be unimportant in the future.

Again he says:

Still, I do not think we can say the question of the Hudson bay route is, as it has been regarded, of supreme importance to the prairie provinces alone. I maintain that if the route is opened up it will be of great national interest to Canada—to the whole of Canada—and of great imperial interest as well.