

Now, let us suppose that the case is as the hon. member puts it. Let us suppose that everything is as he says—that under favorable circumstances the straits can be navigated until the 1st of November, and that a certain portion of crop—I think the hon. gentleman said five million bushels could be taken out; and that—I presume he made a pretty liberal allowance—the saving to the people of the North-West would be about five hundred thousand dollars a year. What would be the cost of the road to the country? If that road cost twenty-five million dollars, as it probably would—

HON. MR. BOULTON—Fifteen millions is the outside estimate.

HON. MR. POWER—No one in Canada pay attention to the estimated cost of railways. A railway of 700 miles long cannot be built in such a country as that for twenty thousand dollars a mile. All North-West railway companies that we incorporate to build railways over the prairie, through good lands, and with a favorable climate, take power to bond their roads for twenty thousand dollars a mile; and it is out of the question to say that a railroad leading through such a country as that which intervenes between Winnipeg and the Hudson Bay coast, where supplies would be so costly and where work could be carried on for such a comparatively short period during each year, could be built for any such price. I am satisfied that the road will cost about as much as the original construction of the Intercolonial Railway. It cannot be built for less than twenty-five million dollars; and that is a large sum to pay for the purpose of saving half a million dollars a year to the people of the North-West. There is another way of looking at the matter. Supposing that the road was built and was operated until, say the 1st of November. Let us consider what the business of that road would be during the months of July and August—that is, if the previous year's crop was carried out during the year in which it was harvested, the road would have little to do in the way of carrying anything to Fort Churchill. It would have something to do probably in September and October. After the 1st of November there would be no business for the road

until the 1st of July. Now, I think that if the hon. gentleman and his friends who propose to build that road will stop to inquire they will find that if they wish to make that road pay they will have to charge high rates for the time it will be in operation. To make an investment of twenty-five million dollars in that road profitable they would have to charge such rates that the people of the North-West would find it a good deal cheaper to send their wheat out by the existing routes. But then we do not propose to depend upon existing routes, because—and I was rather surprised that the hon. gentleman did not refer to the fact when speaking of the Sault Ste. Marie Canal—the Canadian Government are now engaged in the construction of a canal at Sault Ste. Marie for the express purpose of affording an outlet, independent of the United States, for the produce of the North-West through our own territory; and the hon. gentleman's proposal is to try and neutralize the work that the Government are doing there by sending grain out by another route.

HON. MR. BOULTON—I propose to increase its outlets.

HON. MR. POWER—That is the way it strikes me. The hon. gentleman has called on us to be up and stirring on behalf of the North-West. I think we have been stirring for a good while, but it is seemingly a case of "hope on, hope ever." We have built the Canadian Pacific Railway; we have given the Northern Pacific admission into that country in order to afford the farmers the competition which they think necessary; we are now engaged in the construction of a canal which will cost us \$5,000,000, for the purpose of affording an additional exit for the grain of that country. We have spent altogether, I presume, not less than \$100,000,000 on behalf of the North-West. Now, just when we begin to realize some little advantage from this tremendous expenditure, the people of the North-West, through the hon. gentleman, come in and tell us to cut our own throats commercially—to render useless the expenditure which has taken place. The hon. gentleman, by some process of reasoning that I was not quite able to follow, undertook to prove to us that the trade of the remaining eight months, when this