

every hon. gentleman in this House to pause before passing this vote. The hon. member had spoken of the trade that would spring up between Toronto and Montreal and the Atlantic ports. What was that trade? There should be no Utopian ideas on this question. It should be dealt with as a practical business matter before embarking on an expenditure of this kind. He contended that vessels would rather keep out at sea and travel 250 miles further than use this canal, and encounter the dangers of the Bay of Fundy.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON said the member for Cumberland had stated broadly that at least 500,000 tons of shipping would pass through this canal annually if it were constructed. Would the hon. gentleman supply the *data* on which this statement was founded? If he could be satisfied that anything approaching that amount would pass through the canal all the misgivings he now had as to its execution would vanish, and he would join the hon. gentleman in pressing for the commencement of this work. But it was simply no means of making such an estimate that he doubted the wisdom of constructing the canal. He had looked in vain for *data* supplied in reports submitted to Parliament, in reports of boards of trade and articles in the press.

Hon. Mr. TUPPER said this subject had engaged the attention of Boards of Trade, the Canal Commission and various engineers who made it their special business to investigate these points. After most careful examination and investigation by these parties, it had been estimated that not less than 500,000 tons of shipping would annually pass through the canal. He would also refer the hon. member for Chateauguy to the best informed newspaper supporting the Administration in the Lower Provinces—the *St. John Telegraph*. That journal, in a very elaborate article, estimated that 500,000 tons of shipping would immediately require to use the canal. He (Mr. TUPPER) had read these calculations very carefully and found they were not exaggerated. No persons in the world formed more accurate views as to the traffic that would pass over a public work they were engaged in the construction of, than engineers. Mr. PAGE himself stated to him (Mr. TUPPER) that the canal as proposed

would not be equal to the traffic that would offer for it. He took that, coming from a gentleman not disposed to recommend any hasty expenditure for this work, as reliable. The most successful commercial men Canada had known advised the construction of that work. Every source to which this House could look for reliable information had joined in urging the building of the canal as a work which would be attended by the greatest commercial results. It was impossible in a work like this to estimate correctly the amount of traffic that would be required at first. It had always been found that they enormously increased trade. One of the arguments against Confederation was that there was no trade between them. But the trade over the Grand Trunk Railway *via* Portland alone had since grown from \$300,000 to \$3,000,000. Our statistics did not furnish us any figures as to the increase of inter-Provincial trade by the political union, but if they could be obtained, he believed they would astonish the House. The enormous fleet of American fishing vessels would alone contribute very considerably to the 500,000 tons that would use the canal.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON said he never had the advantage of reading the articles in the *St. John Telegraph*, but he had examined most of the reports that had appeared in relation to this proposed work, and he had not found any business-like statement of the traffic that was likely to seek that channel if it should be opened for traffic—no statement of the kind of traffic, the number of barrels of flour for instance, that would go to the West Indies.

Hon. Mr. TUPPER said the newspaper he had just sent over to the hon. gentleman showed that the Board of Trade estimated that 700,000 barrels of flour would pass through the canal.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON said he would like to know where it was to go. It was exceedingly unlikely that flour would seek the Gulf of St Lawrence in order to get into the Bay of Fundy and thence go South. Of course this proposed canal was entirely off the route to Western Europe, where most of our flour went, and from which most of our ocean traffic flowed into the St. Lawrence. What he would like to see, and what all the speculative advocates of this work never condescended to give—unless this paper which the hon.