

July, but was delayed on account of ice conditions. I know there is a great diversity of opinion held by members of this House and by people throughout this country in regard to the practicability of this route. We each have our opinions; some are better founded than others, but the fact is that of six boats which went in to Port Nelson in 1913 only four came out.

The reports in regard to conditions at the mouth of the Nelson river are, I think, such as should give anyone considerable thought as to how long it is possible to maintain an adequate channel in front of the estuary of the Nelson river. Captain Robertson, of one of the vessels which was lost, states that the bottom of the bay close to the mouth of the river, where the vessels must lie under this or any other plan which will make this a great grain shipping port, is strewn with great boulders covered by only about eighteen feet of water. It was largely because of that fact that this particular vessel was lost.

Mr. BIRD: What was his ship?

Mr. CANTLEY: He was captain of the *Alette*; the other boat lost was the *Alcazar*. One boat was loaded with 2,000,000 feet of hard pine, while the other one carried 3,000,000 feet of hard pine together with a couple of scows, which were never used.

Mr. DUNNING: My hon. friend will admit that those two wrecks did not occur in the straits.

Mr. CANTLEY: No, they occurred in the bay.

Mr. DUNNING: No, in the Nelson estuary.

Mr. CANTLEY: I am not quite sure what the minister defines as the Nelson estuary; they occurred about as close to the site of the present dock as they could get.

Mr. DUNNING: That is right, because the works are not completed, of course.

Mr. CANTLEY: I do not think so; the disaster was not due to the non-completion of the dock. I think you will find a mass of evidence in Hansard of 1914 bearing on the cause of the loss of these vessels. The matter was argued back and forth and at considerable length in the House in 1914. However, I am not going into that matter very deeply. The point is that of the six steamers going in, two remained and are there yet.

Mr. DUNNING: My hon. friend was asking for information; he asked me if it was correct that in 1913 two boats were wrecked. That is true, but it is also true that my hon.

friend might have taken the whole period during which work was going on there, from 1913 to 1918, and the same number were wrecked. That is to say, there were only two wrecks altogether during all the years the work was proceeding.

Mr. CANTLEY: I hardly think that is correct.

Mr. DUNNING: I have confirmed the information.

Mr. CANTLEY: I repeat that I hardly think that is quite correct, but we will not quarrel over it. Is the big dredge that went up there still available?

Mr. DUNNING: The suction dredge?

Mr. CANTLEY: Yes.

Mr. DUNNING: Yes.

Mr. CANTLEY: The last information I have is that it was piled up on the rocks. Have you salvaged it?

Mr. DUNNING: There is one dredge on top of the cribbing on the island, but it is in perfectly good condition and can be taken down if the chief engineer there so desires.

Mr. CANTLEY: We are assured that the ark is on mount Ararat, but it has not been salvaged yet. The top of an island is a rather poor place to have a dredge.

Mr. DUNNING: My hon. friend must understand that the department did not put it there; the elements were responsible.

Mr. CANTLEY: Agreed, and that is exactly what you have to war against. There are several features which will make or unmake this whole project as a commercial proposition. One is the type of vessel it will be necessary to employ in order to navigate these waters. I do not think any man with practical experience particularly in connection with ice navigation will seriously propose or maintain that the ordinary type of freighter can successfully navigate these waters. I hold that the vessels carrying on that trade, if it is ever carried on, must be vessels of practically the same type as those prosecuting the seal fishing around Newfoundland. These vessels are constructed with double spaced scantlings and with double plating, and I take it that vessels of that type, especially as they will have to be more highly powered than the ordinary tramp vessels, will cost practically double the amount an ordinary tramp steamer of the same capacity would cost. If these vessels are to be engaged for three months only—and that is about the limit—how can they successfully compete in the trade of the