

all have been greater and cost the Dominion more than was at first calculated. The Grand Trunk railway was the first great instance of this, and the Canadian Pacific has been equally prominent as one. Both have cost Canada many millions more money than was originally estimated, and yet both have been carried out, and are to-day the two great rocks on which the progress of the Dominion for the past twenty-five years has been built.

It is high time that we should have in Canada some variety to this monotony of cost exceeding estimates in our great national undertakings, and we believe it will be found in connection with the opening of a highway between Manitoba and Europe, via the Hudson's Bay. The dangers of the sea voyage in connection therewith are fast disappearing before investigation, and the two years navigation of the Bay and Straits by Lieut. Gordon have wonderfully extended the open period of navigation of both, and there is little doubt but that will still stand considerable stretching. Old Hudson's Bay Company officials told us that we could not depend upon two months of open navigation, but Lieut. Gordon decided upon at least three after his last year's voyage, and after the voyage of last summer extended the time to at least four. We may reasonably expect that further investigation will prove that we can have at least one half of the year of open and safe navigation, and that Port Nelson will be a port quite as long open each year as Montreal.

While maritime research has thus greatly reduced the delays, dangers and consequent expense of the sea voyage of the Hudson's Bay route, a very cursory and hap-hazard system of exploration has swept away many of the engineering difficulties and lessened greatly the estimated cost of opening a highway from Manitoba to the head of tidal navigation on the Nelson. Already we are well aware that the construction of a line of railway from the head of Lake Winnipeg to such a point on the Nelson presents scarcely any engineering difficulties and could be constructed at less than double the cost of a line across our open prairies, while timber is so plentiful that construction material could be secured along the proposed route. Why the construction of about 300 miles of such a railway should be any strain upon Canada is a mystery to every one.

But further discoveries have lately been made in connection with this northern outlet. We find now that by constructing a canal of about half a mile in length we can secure a navigable waterway reaching over 150 miles North from the head of Lake Winnipeg, so that the line of railway necessary to give us an outlet in summer by the Hudson's Bay requires to be less than 200 miles in length. Truly the difficulties in the way of an outlet to the old world are fast disappearing inland, while the explorations of Lieut. Gordon have divested the sea voyage of all the imaginary terrors with which in by gone days it was surrounded.

The amphibious highway which we have thus outlined is all that is now necessary for a northern outlet, and we feel satisfied that it would not be long in use until the connecting rails would link this northern line with the great system of railways of this continent. Yes, we believe that ere another decade passes the tourist will rush from the Gulf States to the shores of the Hudson's Bay during the hot days of summer to secure the cooling invigoration of an Arctic zephyr.

THE COMING CIVIC ELECTION.

Already we are hearing the first mutterings of a coming contest in civic affairs, and in the course of another fortnight we may expect to have a double dose of aldermanic candidates in the field, or it may be a treble supply as we had last week in candidates for mayor. There can be little doubt but we will have plenty of candidates, and if they are only the right kind their multiplicity will be no matter for regret on the part of the ratepayers.

It is already apparent that there will be no necessity for the Board of Trade or any other outside organization to step in with a "citizen's ticket" in order to free the city from a rule of incompetence and rascality, or that rascals and imbeciles need put themselves forward with the slightest hopes of securing the suffrages of the electors. That work was so effectually done last year that its repetition will scarcely be necessary during the present decade. We do not, however, mean to convey by this that the present city council have made no mistakes during their time in office. On the contrary they have made quite a few, some of which might even be stigmatized as blunders. But we can apply no worse term to any-

thing they have done than mistake or blunder, for we question if even the most irreconcilable of kickers among our ratepayers will insinuate, much less state, that our mayor or alderman approached any item of the civic business of the past year with anything but the best of honest intentions, or that other than such intentions actuated them even when they made mistakes or blunders. The ratepayers have therefore no fight this year with existing corruption,

If we are to judge by the candidates put forward for mayor we will have this year an array of candidates for civic honors, of which no city need be ashamed. In the three gentlemen put before the electors for the highest office within their gift, we had business men whose characters (not merely reputations) will stand the closest scrutinising, and whose separate records show that in the management of their own affairs they have given proof of their ability to manage the affairs of the public. In the mayoralty contest therefore we need not expect to hear the bitterness connected with it last year, or even in ordinary years, and it is very likely that little personal matters of closer acquaintance with one candidate than another will decide the vote of many a conscientious elector, as we confess it will with ourselves. With the retirement of Ald. Pearson from the contest the situation is in no way changed. The choice left to the electors is only narrowed down to two instead of three. There may be a "dark horse" yet in the field, but we fear that he would not be likely to meet with the proverbial success of such animals. Whatever may be said in favor of the candidates now before the electors, it is certain that very little can be said against either, so far as their character and fitness for the office is concerned.

What will be the calibre of the aldermanic candidates remains to be seen, but it is very likely that they will be in keeping with those for the Mayoralty. There is no reason to expect that we will have any, and certainly very few underserving candidates before the people. We have reached that state of civic reform in which good timber only need put forward for civic honors. The sharp fight of last year like a thunderstorm cleared the air and showed the honest electors that they and not the weeds held the city's destinies in their hands.