

Some of the largest French warships visited the place. As a matter of fact, there was a naval engagement in Hudson bay, and the ships which took part in it came through the straits which my hon. friend thinks are hardly navigable. Hundreds of vessels have passed through the straits, and only two of them have been lost. They navigated it with the old sailing vessels in the past for three months of the year. As my hon. friend has stated, now that we have wireless telegraphy, lighthouses and other aids to navigation, we may be able in the near future to navigate the straits four or five months in the year. If my hon. friend would take the trouble to read the evidence of the committee of which I was chairman, he would find that there are three times as many snow storms in the straits of Belle Isle as there are in Hudson straits, but my hon. friend never said anything about the icebergs that interfere with navigation around Belle Isle.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—I did.

Hon. Mr. DAVIS—Then I was not in the Chamber when he did. I believe that with proper facilities the season of navigation in Hudson straits is just as long as in the straits of Belle Isle. My hon. friend talks about the cost of storing wheat at Port Nelson, but he does not tell about the immense amounts we have to pay for hauling that wheat from Winnipeg to the seaboard. How much money would that amount to? Port Nelson is only 500 miles from Winnipeg and the wheat lands of Saskatchewan, as against a couple of thousand miles that must be traversed to get to tide water by existing routes. We have that much in our favour. We now have to store our grain at Fort William for six months of the year, and pay storage and interest. I don't know that we would have to store it much longer at Hudson bay. If my hon. friend has read the reports that have been before this House, and the statements made by men who have investigated this question, and who have travelled through that country, he will find that the navigation in Hudson straits is open a month longer than it is on lake Superior. It is in the spring that the navigation of the straits is not open, and not in the fall of the year. My hon. friend laughs, but if he looks further into the matter, he will see that during the fall of the year, into November and on into December, the straits are open, and that is the time when

Hon. Mr. DAVIS.

we want to get out the wheat. But we have something besides wheat. We have enormous herds of cattle, and the shrinkage on those cattle coming down from the prairies over the railroad or on the boats is over 10 per cent. We send those cattle out in August, and surely my hon. friend does not say the straits are not open in August. That being so, we could send them through the straits to the Old Country and save that 10 per cent. As far as the building of the road is concerned, I think the money is well spent. I know that all the people up in our country think so, and many of the people down here think so too. The Western country is bound to progress, and with increased population we can produce enough on the Western prairies for 60 million people, and there would be all kinds of work not only for the Hudson bay road, but for the roads down East, and all other means of transportation. All the steamships and trains would be occupied in taking out the products of our country. Do not let us start to knock new projects. This work has not cost a terrible lot of money; to stop work on the road now would be ridiculous. As far as the work has gone, it is a very good road and my hon. friend will find that when it is completed it will pay more than a lot of railways in Quebec, where there is not one passenger a week. We have proof that there are millions of acres of good lands and timber, fish and minerals along the line of the Hudson Bay railway, and there is a prospect of having a safe route through to Great Britain. Another thing that my hon. friend has not imagination to see is that the Hudson bay is going to be the greatest summer resort on this continent. My hon. friend laughs, but I may tell him that that is a fact, and there is no use of him laughing about it. There is a beautiful summer climate there, and tourists will be right on the salt water. The hunting and fishing are good, and if Fort Churchill should be made the terminus, I fancy we will see it become one of the greatest summer resorts on this continent and there will be an immense tourist traffic on that road. Of course, my hon. friend will tell you that there is not going to be enough traffic to grease the wheels, but I think the road will pay notwithstanding that some people knock it. We have stood the knocking of that road for a quarter of a century; in fact it has been knocked all the time. Some have been