

Hon. Mr. WOOD—Perhaps he was. With regard to the possibility of winter crossings being made between the capes, I would like to say this: the hon. gentleman who has last spoken, has referred to crossing there as impracticable in the winter time—that is, by steam service, I presume, he means. It has always been a place where ice boats have crossed for the last fifty years. I was myself of the same opinion as the hon. gentleman who has just spoken until within the last few years. I did not suppose that it was possible to contend with the difficulties which must be met in the Northumberland Straits in the winter time, and until the “Stanley” was built and placed upon the route between Pictou and Georgeown, and it was demonstrated what a steamer of that build and power could do, I did not suppose it was possible for any steamer to make her way across those straits with any regularity in the winter time. Since she has been placed upon that route, and it has been shown what a steamer of that character can do, I am satisfied that the majority of the people living in the vicinity of Northumberland Straits have been convinced that a similar steamer, perhaps drawing not quite so much water but a steamer similarly built, strong and powerful, will be able to make regular crossings between Cape Tormentine and Cape Traverse. The condition which is necessary in order to enable a steamer to navigate the strait of Northumberland is simply this, that the ice shall be either in motion or movable when the great power is applied to it. When ice jams form, and the ice is blocked in a solid mass for one, two or three miles, no steamer, no matter how powerful she may be, can get through it, but if those large ice cakes are in motion, or are capable of being moved when a sufficient power is applied, the steamer can make her way through them. Now the difficulties which the “Stanley” has met with in the past have been these large ice jams. When the wind prevails for a certain length of time in one direction, the ice forms in immense bodies, extending for a mile or two miles in one direction, and when she is once fast in a jam of that kind it is impossible for her to get out. The condition of things between Cape Tormentine and Cape Traverse is this: there are two tides coming into Northumberland straits, one round the eastern end

of Prince Edward Island and the other round the western or northern end. Those two tides met right at the mouth of the Baie Verte, where those two capes are. The tides come together there and separate twice in every 24 hours, and unless there is a very strong wind in one direction the ice is broken up there twice in every 24 hours, I have had some opportunities of observing the condition of things there for I have often visited the capes in the winter time, and there is scarcely a day but you will see these long streaks of water through the ice, and no impediment whatever to a steamboat of the “Stanley’s” power making her way across the strait at that point. This opinion I know is shared by the most experienced men and most competent judges living in that locality, and my own observation and the knowledge I have of what the “Stanley” has done, has led me to the conclusion that if a boat of the “Stanley’s” power adapted for the service were placed on that route there would be no difficulty whatever in making crossings every day in winter when it was fit for people to be out of doors at all.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL—What preparations are there on the other side when you get across?

Hon. Mr. WOOD—I will speak as to that. There is no preparation at the present time. It would be impossible for the steamer “Stanley,” or any other steamer, to run between Cape Traverse and Cape Tormentine until a wharf was built at Cape Traverse. The wharf at Cape Tormentine is sufficient in my opinion.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL—How much injury did it receive last year?

Hon. Mr. WOOD—No injury, except that it is worm eaten. It certainly needs some repairs. I understand the government are contemplating putting creosoted timber round the outside of it, and I hope they will do so. Unless something of that kind is done, the worms will eat it up and the work will be eventually ruined.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL—It will collapse.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—Yes, unless it is protected from the worms. However, as a protection for the “Stanley,” in its present