

He says that his engineers guarantee the feasibility of the subway, and I have no doubt that they are correct; at all events, I am not in a position to contradict this statement. However, I believe that the great objection to the project is the cost of the work. I do not say that it should be regarded as an insurmountable difficulty, but I believe it is the main difficulty which the Government see in the way just now. The question being uncertain, I may be allowed to say a few words relative to the other part of the resolution, still admitting that the scheme of my hon. friend, if practicable within certain limits, is in my estimation the best: but if the Government should not decide to spend so large a sum of money as the undertaking involves, there are other schemes which may answer the purpose of fulfilling the contract made between the Government of the Dominion and the Government of the Island at the time of the union. Not later than three or four months ago meetings were held at Shediac, N.B., and Summerside, P.E.I. The latter point is about the middle of the Island, and there is constant and active communication between Shediac and Summerside during the summer season. Meetings have been held this winter to petition the Government for an appropriation to dredge the harbor of Shediac a few feet deeper to enable the steamer "Stanley" and other vessels to maintain constant communication across the Straits throughout the winter. People who live in the vicinity of those places say that it is feasible to maintain such communication, and the Government should send competent engineers to report upon the subject. If it is feasible, while it will not furnish such complete communication as the subway would, it will go a great way towards fulfilling the terms of union. But there is another scheme which, while it does not involve so large an expenditure as my hon. friend's project, is, I believe, adequate to fulfil the demands of the Island, if it is feasible. It is the scheme embodied in the Bill which I introduced myself this Session for a steam ferry between Cape Richibucto and Cape Wolfe. Dr. de Bertram has that scheme on hand and has had engineers to report upon it. He has had preliminary surveys made and the engineers report the perfect feasibility of the project. They say that it is quite practicable to have ferryboats on

that route which will carry a train of cars from the Island to the mainland and *vice versa*, not only in the summer season but also in the winter season, without interruption. Those views are corroborated by many persons who have studied the question. Three or four years before I left Richibucto and accepted a position here I visited the coast, and was told by persons residing there that the passage was clear the whole winter through, except a few days in the spring time. There is no tide in the Straits of Northumberland, and there is no difficulty in providing wharves on both sides for a reasonable outlay. There is a reef there, and, moreover, there is in winter hardly any bond ice, on account of the current, which runs in such a way as to leave a passage up to the shore free from ice at both ends. The distance between the two points is only twelve miles. At each end the water is sufficiently deep to permit vessels suitable for the service to approach near the shore, which will make the cost of constructing wharves very low. I wish now to give some testimony in support of what I have advanced. Dr. de Bertram had among other engineers one named Edwin E. Glaskin, employed to make the preliminary surveys of the work. I will now read some extracts from his report to show that the scheme is not by any means visionary and that it is approved of by competent engineers:

"As a result of my personal observations and the full and careful examinations which I have made on the shores of the Island and mainland, assisted and confirmed by the evidence collected from the keepers of the lighthouses, fishermen and others most capable of making correct observations, as well as the evidence laid before the Government by the Select Committee, I am convinced that there is not at any time during the winter sufficient ice at Cape Richibucto to obstruct daily communication between the Island and the mainland by properly constructed steamers having suitable piers provided for their accommodation."

This view, says the engineer, was supported by a commission appointed by the Government, composed of Messrs. Prowse, Jenkins, Howlan and others. He gives an extract from their report, which I assume is correct:—

"It is possible to maintain constant communication between the Island and the mainland winter and summer—that there is always open water at the western end of the Straits—that there is never a day during the entire winter when there is not a clear channel across at the Capes (above mentioned) and that a steamer could make the passage any day in the year winter and summer."