

Hon. Mr. WOOD—Sixteen.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL—If it is 16 feet, why is the pier not made use of by timber vessels coming there?

Hon. Mr. WOOD—Barques come there, drawing 16 and 18 feet.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL.—I am not in a position to know what water is left inside, but I know positively that vessels drawing than 11 feet refuse to go inside, and I know that the business has been carried on outside, and that no steam vessel of less than 16 feet draught can be made to navigate those straits in winter. I assume that a vessel drawing 16 feet is not able to do the work that the "Stanley" can do, and I know that no vessel in the Dominion that is not built for navigating in the ice could possibly do the service that is required to be done in that location, because there is no such vessel built for ordinary purposes that is capable of contending with the ice in the straits. The only other place that vessels could be got from is Newfoundland. Such vessels have the power to get across and to contend with the ice, but they have not the adequate accommodation at Cape Traverse for such vessels. I think no hon. gentleman will say that any other boat in the place of the "Stanley" could be put in a position to break her way through the ice. In order to break through ice such as is encountered there, a vessel must have some free water to start in and such free space cannot be had inside Cape Tormentine pier. I cannot say anything about the accommodation on the other side, but I believe the accommodation is much more unlikely to be sufficient. The fact that nothing has been done up to the present time, either by the late government or the present administration, to establish navigation across those straits at that narrow point is sufficient to prove that the thing is impracticable. The first thing which has to be done is to build additional piers further out; and I know there is trouble and difficulty if you build out into deeper water the currents are interfered with, and the inside gradually fills. To start with, the government would have to spend a quarter of a million more to build docks on the two sides, before they make the experiment. The country is not

prepared for that at present. It is all very well for farmers from Prince Edward Island to talk about this matter. They are good farmers, but do not understand navigating the ice in the straits of Northumberland. We are to be asked to spend millions in making preparations, and then we will find it cannot be done. I think it is a little early for us to undertake any such task.

Hon. Mr. WOOD—I must say a few words in reply to what has fallen from the hon. gentleman who has just spoken. Otherwise I am sure the remarks he made would leave a very wrong impression upon the House. The hon. gentleman has spoken of the pier which was built at Cape Tormentine in connection with this service. That pier, the hon. gentleman states, will not answer for the "Stanley" or for any boat in the service. I must say in reply to that that the pier was designed by the government engineer here especially for that service, and the hon. gentleman who has spoken is the first person that I have heard express an opinion as to the unfitness of that pier for the purpose for which it was intended. The depth of water inside the pier at lowest neap tide is 16 feet, some say 17 feet. The depth of water just outside the pier is 20 feet. Twenty-two feet is the depth of water at high tide. There is about 6 or 8 feet rise or fall of tide. The hon. gentleman says vessels will not go there to load. Ever since the piers were built we have had a number of barques coming there to load. I think the number of barques that loaded there this year was fifteen or twenty.

Hon. Mr. SNOWBALL—Outside the pier?

Hon. Mr. WOOD—No; every one of them loaded inside the pier. They never load outside of the pier. Last year, I know, there were thirty barques loaded there, and the year before, not so many. I do not remember the number, but ever since the piers were built, it has done very considerable local business in that way, and the hon. gentleman is the first one I have heard who has entered any complaint of that character against it.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—He was thinking of Miramichi.