

which may arise in the course of his official business, but I pointed out, and I am very glad to say I think he and his successors have availed themselves of the hint, that what they could not do themselves they had authority to employ assistants to do for them. That was the course adopted by the Government, and I rejoiced when I found that they had recourse to that expedient in the matter of carrying out these conditions. A competent marine gentleman, Captain McElhinney, was despatched to the north of Europe, and by his skill and experience he was enabled to design and to carry out to perfection the steamer we have all approved of so much, and I cannot help thinking that before the Government involve themselves in any entanglement in regard to building a tunnel under the Straits of Northumberland, that it would be wisdom for them to ascertain, by having recourse to the same means and sending experts to enquire into the performance of this winter steamer in the Straits of Mackinac, whether such a steamer as that could not be trusted to navigate the Straits of Northumberland in the winter season. I read that extract because I was persuaded that it presented to the mind of every gentleman who has lived near the Straits, as I know my hon. friend from Wallace has, and my hon. friend from New London who has also crossed it a good many times, and they could not avoid seeing that that is a description even of a more formidable crossing than an ordinary crossing of the Straits of Northumberland, because to a large extent the obstacles which render that crossing difficult would be no obstacle to a steamer such as this upon the Straits with ice such as I have described. Therefore all these points make greatly in favor of a steamer doing our work properly. I would impress still further on the Government the fact which I have urged upon them before, that the experiment has never been tried. Considering the probability that if a tunnel or subway is undertaken, the time during which it will be in progress, and the difficulties which may be encountered in doing so, render it essential in the interests of the Island that some better means than the ice-boats should be found for crossing the Straits in the winter. I would point to this circumstance that the mails, when the boat service is well organized, and they make quick passages, are now de-

livered in Charlottetown several hours earlier in the day by that route than they are by sending them on to Georgetown, and carrying them across in the *Stanley*. This is a point which makes in favor of crossing at the capes. But I have this much further to say in regard to it before I sit down, and I must apologise to the House for the time I have occupied, that something is still due to the Island, not only because, as my hon. friend has stated, of the large amount of Dominion capital which has been expended in building interoceanic lines for the Provinces generally, with which Prince Edward Island is identified to the extent of one-fortieth part, but the trade which we had before we entered Confederation has been annihilated by the policy which has been adopted. It has had this undoubted effect on Prince Edward Island; it has destroyed our old trade with British ports, a trade which was conveyed in our own ships for the most part, and returned it almost to our own doors. That trade has been annihilated, and we are not in a position to avail ourselves of any advantages which we are offered as indemnity for that loss, because we cannot get across those Straits with regularity in winter. It is for that reason, I say, that it is essential, even though the Government should take hold of the proposal of the hon. gentleman from Alberton, that they should obtain a favorable report as to building the subway or tunnel, that something should be done during the interim that must unavoidably elapse before that tunnel could be in operation, and the interests of Prince Edward Island demand that an improvement in the service in the Straits should be provided for in that interval.

HON. MR. PROWSE—I look upon the question before the House as being one of the greatest importance to Prince Edward Island that could possibly come before Parliament, and I think also that it is one of very great importance to the Senate of the Dominion of Canada as well. You are aware that Prince Edward Island did not enter the Union at the time of the Confederation of other Provinces. That was a Union which took place in 1867, and although the first meeting, as I said on a former occasion, to bring about that Union, took place in Prince Edward Island, yet the terms then proposed on which to effect the union were