

Edward Island. To such an extent was that the case last winter that a great congestion of traffic prevailed from time to time on either side of the Straits. So great a rush of business was there, in fact, that the ferry was not able to carry over the cars fast enough, and was obliged to concentrate on the freight, allowing the mails and passengers to remain over at Sackville for whole nights.

Now let me say a word or two about the steamer itself. So far as I have been able to gather, the Prince Edward Island at the time she was put into commission was the most powerful steamer of her class and kind that had been built up to that date, and the greatest ice-breaker. In view of the tremendous increase in traffic, and of the inability of the car ferry at times to handle the freight which offers, the people of Prince Edward Island are now convinced that another car ferry is required. I believe that the Minister of Railways has made arrangements whereby a steamer will be provided so that the car ferry can go into dry dock and undergo that over-hauling and repairing which she certainly must need from year to year after battling with the ice all winter. The people of Prince Edward Island, however, are convinced that an additional car ferry should be provided, of equal proportions, strength, and capacity, with the present car ferry, so that there may be no interruption in the service.

The present car ferry is equipped with a double line of rails, capable of accommodating six Intercolonial cars on each track, so that twelve cars can be transported at one time across the Straits. These cars now run from Charlottetown or Summerside, and are then carried across the Straits on the ferry; but from the outlying districts of Prince Edward Island freight must be transferred from the narrow gauge to the broad gauge either at Summerside, Charlottetown, or Borden. Before the road was standardized down to Borden from either side all freight had to be transferred at that point. What we want in addition to the car ferry is to have the standardization of the road completed as soon as possible; then we would be part of the mainland more completely than ever. Passengers from any station in Prince Edward Island, from the extreme east or the extreme west, could take their seats in the cars and journey without interruption or change to any part of Canada, virtually to any part of the North American continent. That is our desire; that is what we have been yearning for, working for

[Mr. McIsaac.]

and agitating for. A good beginning has been made, and I am here to bear testimony to what has been done and to thank the Government for their efforts in that behalf. I desire to impress upon the Minister of Railways and the Government the ardent desire, the perpetual yearning, of our people that the standardization of the Prince Edward Island railway be completed in order that we may have unbroken connection with the mainland from any part of the Island, as regards passengers as well as freight. Many perishable products such as fruit and fish cannot successfully be transported unless we have that through service; for these reasons we are, as you can readily understand, most desirous that this work be finished with all possible expedition.

Now, I wish to say a word with regard to the railway terminals at Georgetown in Kings county, and the necessity for having them kept in order and maintained in the best possible condition. Freight is landed there from coastwise steamers, and this freight can be borne away by the railway cars if the line is kept in good condition right down to the wharf.

There is another suggestion that I wish to make,—and I do not wish the minister or any one to consider that it is in any way chimerical. Georgetown harbour is one of the very best on the North Atlantic coast; I am sure that what I say in that regard will be corroborated by those who have any acquaintance with conditions there. Now, this is what I wish to put forward, and I assure hon. members that it is not impracticable. At present all passengers and freight leaving the Island go by the Borden route, which is in the western part of the Province. Formerly we had steamers crossing from Charlottetown to Pictou, but this service has been discontinued. The ports in the eastern part of the province, and those places which are in the vicinity of Souris, Georgetown and Murray harbour, are quite close to the mainland of Nova Scotia. But all traffic, from that part of the province destined for Eastern Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and Newfoundland, has to proceed all the way to Charlottetown, thence to Borden and, after being transferred to the car ferry, take the rail route on the other side and all the way around opposite and beyond the point of its departure, to its destination. I feel satisfied, having regard to the growth of trade and the increase of production in Prince Edward Island since we have had the car ferry, that the day will come—and