

cept by some such arrangement as was proposed a long time ago—that of a railway ferry. It is in the recollection of members of this House who were here in 1884, that it was proposed by the Government to establish a railway ferry for crossing passengers and freight cars. The execution of that enterprise has been postponed from year to year, and now we hear no more of it. I think such a ferry would be a waste of money. I do not think it would pay the Government to establish such a ferry, because it would be a very imperfect solution of the question which interests the citizens of Quebec, and it would cost a sum of money almost as great as the interest and sinking fund on the money which it would be necessary to advance for the construction of a bridge. Therefore the citizens of Quebec have not paid much attention to that scheme. Without such a ferry it becomes almost impossible to send goods, not only from Quebec, but from all the country north, which is now served by the Lake St. John Railway, to the United States, or to the southern portion of the Province of Quebec. I may give an instance of some of these difficulties. There is at St. Raymond, a place 36 miles north of Quebec on the Lake St. John Railway, the largest manufactory of pulp in the whole Dominion. It is controlled practically by the Canada Paper Company of Montreal. The pulp has to be carried from St. Raymond by the Lake St. John Railway to Quebec and up to Montreal, a distance of 172 miles, and then back all the way by the Grand Trunk from Montreal to Windsor Mills, a distance of over 100 miles; whereas, if there was a bridge at Quebec the distance would not exceed 100 miles. The absence of a bridge at Quebec renders it impossible for the Lake St. John Railway, which is an enterprise of great importance to the Dominion, and which has accordingly been very largely subsidized, to accept freight that is offered it every day. I happen to be a director of the company, and I know that on several occasions proposals have come from firms to carry lumber of one kind and another from the Lake St. John region to the United States. On one occasion the company refused more than 1,000 carloads of lumber, which is supplied very largely from the country north of Quebec. We could not accept the offer, because it would have cost just as much for the crossing of the river at Quebec as to send the cars all the way to Montreal, and from Montreal by the Grand Trunk or Canadian Pacific Railway to the United States. These are the principal reasons why the citizens of Quebec consider it a question of life or death to them to obtain the construction of a bridge at that city. The cost of the bridge has been estimated at between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000. As to the traffic, estimates have been prepared by no less an authority than Mr. Walter Shanly. Taking only the present traffic between the south and north shores of the St. Lawrence, and supposing it would not increase, he has calculated that it would be sufficient to pay interest on the cost of the bridge. Then it was said, why should not the bridge be constructed by private enterprise, without any help from the Government? The answer is easily given. It is very well known that in enterprises of that kind much higher interest is demanded for money borrowed on the money market when the enterprise does not receive any public assistance. The assistance that is asked at this mo-

Mr. LANGELIER.

ment is not a bonus of \$3,000,000 or \$4,000,000, but only a guarantee of interest on certain bonds of the company necessary for the construction of the bridge. To the several demands made, not only by that company, but by influential delegations of citizens, delegations from the city council of Quebec, delegations from the board of trade, the Government have always promised more or less aid, or if the Government have not promised it directly, it has allowed the deputations to believe that some assistance would be given. The objection made at one time was that no complete plans had been prepared for the bridge and no estimate made. That objection does not exist longer. At this present moment there is a Bill before the House to continue the company's charter for a certain number of years. That company obtained assistance from the Local Government at Quebec, and plans and surveys very complete in their character, were prepared two years ago. The company is now in a position to say to this Government the kind of a bridge that is to be built, and the amount it will cost to build it. There is another point to which I desire to refer. The Local Government has found it to the advantage of the general interests of the province that such a bridge should be built, and during the last session but one of the Legislature of the Local Parliament subsidized the bridge to the extent of \$1,000,000, that subsidy being made conditional upon this Parliament, which is more interested in the scheme than the Local Parliament, doing its share, that is to say, assisting in proportion to its means and its interest in this public undertaking. I need not say that the question of the bridge has come up at every election during the last ten years, especially during the last two general elections. It is a question brought forward before the electors, not only of the city, but of the whole district of Quebec. It interests not only the three divisions of Quebec, one of which I have the honour to represent, but also all the counties south and north of Quebec which do business in that city, all the way from Rimouski to Quebec on the south and Montmorency to Three Rivers on the north shore. The people of these counties have signed a petition, which has been presented to this Government, asking aid for the construction of a bridge at Quebec. Such was the condition of affairs when the last elections came on. In a previous debate, to which I need not refer, I spoke of what took place with respect to the other question brought prominently before the people of Quebec during the same visit made by Sir Charles Tupper to that city; and to which I alluded the other day. Sir Charles Tupper spoke of the scheme for the construction of the bridge. Here is what he is reported to have said on the subject:

“From the time he took the matter up as Minister of Railways, he had concluded that the bridge was necessary as a connection between the Intercolonial Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway. His old colleagues in the Government knew how strongly he held to that view. Yesterday he had met Mr. Schreiber, the Government Engineer of Railways, who had told him that there was no great difficulty in constructing the work, which was destined to make a great railroad centre of Quebec, and a great Atlantic summer port. In fact, he said, you may one and all regard that work as an accomplished fact.”

He also said:

“He was certain that the traffic of the Quebec bridge would repay all that would be expended upon it, whether the different railways interested voted subsidies towards its construction or paid tolls for using it.”

Those were the statements made by Sir Charles