

to discover America got many of his ideas from my hon. friend, because nothing has yet ever been taken up which he did not, in his mind, consider at some time or other. As regards the tunnel, although that does not properly come under this resolution at all, I was much pleased to hear the Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) say that very shortly he hoped to be able to lay on the table the report made by his deputy minister, and when that report is brought down the tunnel question can be more intelligently discussed. I have taken the ground for many years that the government should proceed as quickly as possible with a thorough investigation into the question of constructing a tunnel. Let us know as nearly as possible what it will cost so that it need not be kept before the people of Prince Edward Island and Canada continually. If its construction be found practicable, let it be taken up and disposed of in a business way. If it be not practicable, let us take up the next best method. But in any event it will take several years to construct the tunnel and some time to obtain the preliminary information, and in the meantime we must improve the methods we have. My hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) said that the fact that the routing of freight via Pictou did not cost any more than by Pointe du Chêne and Summerside was no injury to the people of the island. I am aware of that, but it is to the detriment of the Prince Edward Island Railway and to the advantage of the Intercolonial Railway, because by that means the deficit on the Prince Edward Island Railway is larger than it ought to be. The putting of the service across the straits under the Railway Department appeals to me from a business standpoint, as it would simplify matters very much. It would reduce the cost, although I believe that the estimate of the cost given by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries is too large. He did not give credit enough to the winter service. You must take into account the fact that the government is compelled practically to find some use for the winter boats in the summer and has to retain in its service during the summer season the staff employed on the winter boats. We have no fault to find with the government on this account, because they must necessarily retain the whole year around the officials whom they are bound to employ on the winter service. I do not know that these are the most suitable steamers for taking the Governor General and his party on excursion trips. They are very expensive for that purpose; they are large consumers of coal and every time they are used for this purpose alterations and repairs have to be made to them; the state-rooms have to be changed and bathrooms put in just for these trips, and when the steamers are put in their regular service this has all to be changed again. This ex-

pense was not deducted by the Minister of Marine.

Mr. BRODEUR. Oh, yes.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES. It is not given in the report of the Governor General's trip at page 20 of the Auditor General's Report, only the actual provisions consumed are given, all the rest are charged to the winter service. These steamers may be suitable for lighthouse service along the Labrador, lower Quebec and Newfoundland coasts, but I am not sure that they are the best boats even for that purpose. As I suggested this afternoon, if these boats were kept for the winter service entirely and were put out of commission during the summer, the crews of the winter and summer steamers being interchanged, there would be a material saving.

We have no special fault to find with the management of these boats by the Marine Department except, as I have stated, that that department was not established as a carrying or transportation department, and should not have control of work of that kind, while the Railway Department was established for that purpose and is conversant with all details of transportation questions. I have already suggested that a railway corporation situated as the government is situated here, with portions of its railway on the island and on the mainland would also control the connecting link.

Inasmuch as my object in making this motion has been attained by this discussion and the minister has suggested that it be withdrawn for the present and that it would be taken under consideration by the government, I see no reason for not acceding to his wishes. I am glad to see the matter has been fully discussed by the Minister of Railways, the leader of the opposition, the Minister of Marine and others and I am sure good will come of this discussion. I have pointed out the serious handicap under which the people of my province rest in the shipping of their products in competition with the people of the other provinces of Canada. That is the real point I had in view in bringing up this motion. We should be on an equality with our neighbours on the mainland, with the rest of the people of the Dominion, in regard to freight and passenger rates, or at least we should have a nearer approach to equality than we have now. This matter deserves the immediate consideration of the government, and I am convinced that if it were all under one department we would be nearer an equalization of rates with the rest of Canada, than will be possible with the service under two departments. So long as the existing conditions continue, we will not have attained the object we had in view in entering confederation. Mr. Speaker, under these conditions I will agree to withdraw the motion for the present.

Motion withdrawn.