

a half or two years, on the most approved principle for resisting ice, and she has performed the service—I have not heard one gentleman from Prince Edward Island who has spoken say otherwise—most efficiently. I am assured from enquiries that I have made of the Department that she has only failed three times during the past year in making the transit across the Straits at the ordinary time or thereabouts. The proposition, therefore, is that we are to make a subway or a tunnel to create communication across the Straits of Northumberland at a cost—at my hon. friend's estimate—of about \$11,000,000, or at the cost of the Severn tunnel, of \$21,000,000, in order to provide better crossing on three days of the year. That is actually what it comes down to, and that illustrates how premature this demand is at this moment. There is nothing yet to show that this steamer does not, with reasonable efficiency, and more than reasonable efficiency, perform the service which is required for the crossing of the Straits of Northumberland. My hon. friend from Marshfield, who always speaks with candor and straightforwardness on every subject, has stated that the vessel does good service, that she performs the service with fair efficiency; and my hon. friend from Alberton, in his address, did not devote half a dozen sentences to any imputation on the inefficiency of the "Stanley." My hon. friend from Murray Harbor in his speech dilated upon the sufferings and the troubles of the people who travelled by the "Northern Light" and by ice-boats across the ice, but he did not materially depreciate the service by the "Stanley." What he did say was as much praise of the "Stanley" as could be expected from a gentleman who insists upon a subway or tunnel across the Straits, and who stands upon the ground that the agreement with the Island originally was to have a subway, and not a service by steamer. He said that the words "steam service" did not mean service by water, and he stated that everybody in his senses at the time knew that a service by water could not be efficiently maintained, and that it must have been a different service that was intended. Now, I say that an hon. gentleman who thinks that the original bargain was that we should make a tunnel is not likely to give anything but faint praise to a steamship service, and yet my hon. friend

did give the crossing by the "Stanley" something more than faint praise. He found no fault with it in any great degree. I take it, therefore, we are justified in assuming that up to this time the service rendered by the "Stanley" is as good a service by a steamer as it is possible to procure. We may find that we have been deceived in that, because, as I learn, and as we all know, the winter has not been very severe during the past two seasons, and it may turn out in the future that if the winters should prove colder and a greater body of ice should appear in the Straits this steamer will not perform the service efficiently. But surely, before we plunge into this enormous expenditure, which my hon. friend from Halifax is willing to put at \$5,000,000, and which he thinks we should expend, because in his opinion we spent \$3,000,000 elsewhere foolishly—

HON. MR. POWER—I did not say that.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—The hon. gentleman said that the Government ought to be made to do this, because they had spent \$3,000,000 foolishly elsewhere.

HON. MR. POWER--I did not put it that way.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—Very much like that, in substance. But my hon. friend did not stop there. Another of his reasons for thinking that the Government should spend at least \$5,000,000 on this service was that they had spent \$70,000,000 in obtaining access to British Columbia. Now that is a statement of the case which is not characterised by my hon. friend's usual fairness and candor. The expenditure of \$70,000,000 on the Canadian Pacific Railway was not made only to enable us to get to the Pacific Ocean, or to carry out the agreement with British Columbia: it was made to enable us to open up our enormous North-West Territories, and for a good many other purposes which I need not mention, besides merely getting to British Columbia. That was an argument which my hon. friend from Murray Harbor also used, and he desired to give it point by understating, I think, the population of British Columbia. Now it does not seem to me that these are arguments at all. Let us assume for a moment that the Government did spend \$70,000,000