

know that the question of winter communication between Prince Edward Island and the mainland is a very important matter for the people of that province. At the time that province entered into confederation with the Dominion, it was one of the stipulations that the Dominion should give Prince Edward Island communication, winter and summer. With respect to summer communication, I do not think we have very much to complain of, but we cannot say quite so much with regard to our winter communication. Although the Dominion government has done a great deal to improve that service, a great deal remains yet to be done. Soon after we entered into confederation, the then Dominion government, led by Alexander Mackenzie, provided a steamer to navigate the straits of Northumberland. The old 'Northern Light' was put on that service and did a great deal of service and demonstrated that the straits of Northumberland might be navigated in winter. The government which succeeded Alexander Mackenzie, the government of Sir John A. Macdonald, built the 'Stanley' and put her on that service, and she has done remarkably well, and rendered good service, and the present government have provided another steamer, the 'Minto,' so that at the present time we have two steamships for that service. Although they have rendered very good service, still, we cannot say that it is anything like perfect. During the past winter there was a good deal of interruption, and consequently a good deal of loss was entailed, particularly with perishable freight. For some weeks the service was interrupted, and the shippers were put to serious loss. For many years the principal route was between Pictou, Nova Scotia, and Georgetown, Prince Edward Island, and that route gave fair satisfaction, but in the western part of Prince Edward Island we are always contending that a better route might be obtained by Cape Tormentine, New Brunswick, to Summerside, or, failing Summerside, Cape Traverse. There are many advantages in connection with the western route. Between Summerside and Cape Tormentine, it is only a little more than one-fourth of the distance between Pictou and Georgetown. Summerside is the second town of importance we have in Prince Edward Island.

Hon. Mr. YEO.

It is a town where a great deal of business is done and in which there are business establishments second to none in the maritime provinces. The people are very anxious to give the route for Cape Tormentine a trial. During the winter of 1902, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries sent the ship 'Stanley' there. She was put on and it always takes some time to get things thoroughly established, but after she got fairly under way she rendered good service. Last winter she was put on the same route again. She was late in getting there; navigation had closed two or three weeks before she was put on the route, and she was at a great disadvantage, because the freight that had accumulated there had to be sent through other channels, so that when she got there she started under unfavourable circumstances. A very severe winter set in. Hon. gentlemen will remember that last winter in the east was one of the most severe winters we have had for several years. Perhaps partly from an error in judgment of those in charge, and perhaps partly owing to the severe winter, the service was not satisfactory, but I do not think that should condemn the route, because if she had been on the other route between Pictou and Georgetown, there would have been a stoppage for some considerable time. Now the western route should have a fair trial. If it is found impracticable, it need not be continued. Summerside has a good natural harbour, and there is a break-water there in course of construction. For some reason or other, the parties who had the contract have not gone on with the work. However, I have no doubt that in the course of a short time that work will be gone on with and completed, and by confining the water in the channel it may considerably help the navigation in the winter. If it is not found practicable to make Summerside the winter port, it is thought that Cape Traverse, on the Prince Edward Island side, and Cape Tormentine, on the New Brunswick side, would be certainly good. The distance is only some eight miles between the two provinces, and there is a great advantage in making this the winter route, because the old ice boat service is conducted between these two points, and if at any time the winter steamer should be caught in the ice and unable to perform