

Mr. SINCLAIR: I would like to inform the leader of the opposition that the idea is that, instead of a boat running from Pictou to Charlottetown, as at present, it will run from Pictou to Wood Islands and so far as I know, the subsidy will be given to this boat.

Mr. BENNETT: Now at last we have the story, because a few minutes ago the Minister of Public Works said we would escape payment of the subsidy on the line from Charlottetown to Pictou. But the member is frank about it, and says "We propose to exchange that subsidy and put it on the line from Wood Islands to Pictou landing." That amounts to \$30,000 a year. As a matter of fact, it is one of the things which engaged the attention of the late government. The contract was made under circumstances which we will not discuss to-night, but there is no more justification for \$30,000 a year to run from Pictou to Charlottetown than there is for a fifth wheel on a coach. The sum was out of all proportion to the service rendered.

Now we get the whole story. I point out to the minister that this is the beginning of a project which ultimately will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is the beginning of another enterprise to establish another ferry between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, not New Brunswick. At the present time the ferry which traverses the narrow sea from Borden to Charlottetown serves the wants of that community, and there is a provision whereby the old ferry is maintained in condition, so that there will be constant communication. Now the member is frank about it. They have in the summer time communication by the old vessel Hochelaga, which is owned by a firm in Montreal. They bought her for a reasonable sum to carry out the contract for a number of years, with a subsidy sufficient to pay for her a little more than once, and in the meantime she operates in the dear old summer time between Charlottetown and Pictou. Now that is to be discontinued, and we are going to have a ferry which will run the fourteen miles between Pictou and Wood Islands, and the subsidy heretofore paid, amounting to \$30,000 a year, is being relied upon for this operation. The sum of \$30,000 is the capitalized value of \$750,000 at four per cent; that is all that means. And with the cost of \$200,000 to put in these piers at Wood Islands, without any explanation given by the minister as to why it should be done, and without any detail being furnished as to this new enterprise, we are now embarking upon it regardless of what the ultimate cost will be.

Undoubtedly, on the story which we now have by the member, we are embarking on a

[Mr. Bennett.]

new enterprise to establish a new line of communication between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia,—not New Brunswick, as at present—to meet the line of railway. The next demand will be to increase the wharfage and facilities at Pictou. We did repair them once before, when they were not good enough for the Hochelaga. Those who have been at Pictou harbour know that it has great historical background. It has magnificent history, but it has very little industrial wealth, and the wharves have now fallen more or less into a state of disrepair. The next thing will be to repair the wharves for the new ferry, and then increase the subsidy, and altogether we will have established a new claim upon the public treasury, without any explanation having been given when we started it. After it starts, we know perfectly well that the reason given hereafter will be: Well, it must be finished. That is the case in connection with a dozen of these items—it must be finished.

I think it my duty to point out that this contemplates an expenditure which certainly will involve this country in an outlay of many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The total population of the island is 80,000, and nearly half of it lives in the city. Therefore the entire rural population, producing new wealth, is limited to about 40,000 people. That is the story. I should like to have the minister's explanation of it.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am glad the leader of the opposition has got up and told us about the sympathy he has for Prince Edward Island. But I want to tell him that there is one thing we are glad of, and that is the tourist traffic. While the leader of the opposition may not think Prince Edward Island is on the map at all, we are looking for tourist traffic down there this year in connection with the national park. We have a ferry running from Borden to Tormentine which cannot carry all the traffic. Last year on occasions there were from twenty-eight to thirty cars left on the island, which could not go across to the mainland because of the congested traffic. This other service will be the means of getting away from that difficulty. As I said before, they are going around to the Cape Breton national park.

Some people down on the island were asking for a new car ferry at Borden, but this will do away with the necessity for that ferry. However, I am glad that the leader of the opposition has put himself on record to-night against having any interest in Prince Edward Island.