

lose no time in providing the proper means of crossing. I certainly would like to see one or two of the gentlemen make a trip down to the Island for the benefit of their health and the good of Prince Edward Island. The hon. member for Queen's has spoken of steam communication in summer, which is a matter of great importance to us. What we want is new boats. The boats now used have been there a long time, and are altogether unfit for the service. We want two new paddle-wheel boats of large capacity for freight and passengers for summer, and two strong screw boats for the fall and winter service. The screw boats to run between Summerside and Shediac as long as possible. This would lengthen the season of navigation at least three weeks, which would be of the greatest importance to the inhabitants of the west end of the Island. With all the great cry about the National Policy and the benefit it was to do this Dominion, we do not feel any good results from it there. In fact, we are very much against it; but, if we had boats which would run late in the fall, and enable us to transport our goods to and from the Islands, there would not be so much discontent. We need two new boats for summer and two for winter service, so that one might leave Pictou and one Georgetown at the same time. If there is nothing done now, I believe the people of the Island are getting so excited over the matter that they will either go in for a tunnel or appeal to the Imperial Parliament for separation, and I do not know but one of these courses is as good as the other. But something must be done. The Minister of Railways, when he sat on this side of the House, and the late Government was in power, was as active as any gentleman from Prince Edward Island in demanding that this grievance should be remedied, and I thought we only needed a change of Government to have that done. I do not know what the reason is, but the hon. gentleman has kept very quiet on the subject ever since he has been in a position to do anything for us. It is probable that the branch railway will be built, but in connection with it the winter cape service should be made more efficient. Sheds should be built for the boats and their crews, and larger ice boats and water boats provided. The men who perform that service should also be better paid, as hitherto they have been very inadequately remunerated for their difficult and dangerous work. I hope and trust, however, that the Government will take this matter into their consideration at once, and deal liberally with the people of Prince Edward Island.

Mr. JENKINS. The question brought before the notice of this House by my hon. colleague is one possessing the deepest interest for the people of Prince Edward Island, and I cordially endorse all that he has said as to its great importance to their trade and commerce. But, Sir, when my hon. colleague questions the sincerity of the present Government and their intention to improve the means of communication with the Island, I cannot agree with him. I have firm faith, not only in the sincerity of their intentions, but also in their ability to carry out any scheme for improving steam communication between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. My hon. colleague says he does not believe in a Committee; he says there is nothing to enquire about. On this point I differ entirely from him. I think there is everything to enquire about, and I think the fact that no Government has ever had any reliable information with regard to the difficulties of communication, is a very good reason why they may not have taken action in the matter. My hon. colleague thinks the late Government were entirely sincere in their efforts to give us steam communication. I will not differ from him on that point; I will not question their sincerity, but I do question their wisdom. They took the *Northern Light* off the hands of its builder. She was not built for crossing the straits, but for passing up and down the St. Lawrence—a very different service. She is built very light and narrow, in the shape of a ram, and

when she tries to pass through the fields of ice in the straits, she sticks, and cannot stand the constant concussion to which she is subjected. If we want to overcome the difficulties of winter navigation, I believe we must take the *Northern Light*, not as a model, but as a model to avoid in every particular. She was not intended for the service and was utterly unfit for it. When she first came to Charlottetown I walked out on the ice, which was just sufficient to bear the weight of a man, and she was not able to go through more than one third of her length at each attempt. I told the captain: "If you turn her stern foremost she will go," and Admiral McClintock, who visited Prince Edward Island last summer, made the same remark. Although she is unfit for the service, I think a ship may be built which will overcome the difficulties of winter communication on almost all occasions. These difficulties are a given weight of ice, impelled by a given force of wind and tide. To overcome these obstacles, we must get a greater weight and greater force. I see no difficulty in this. I may say that I placed on the Table, a day ago, a notice to have a Committee formed to enquire into that point, on which we have at present no reliable information. No two men will agree as to the depths of ice a steamer will go through, or as to the amount of ice that comes in a conglomerated form, piled together. Nor do they agree as to the power of resistance required. I think a Committee may be very useful, not only in acquiring reliable information, but in sifting that information. We know that in Prince Edward Island there are sectional interests, and these interests are conflicting. Of the people who reside in different localities, each one thinks his is the proper locality for winter navigation. I was coming up in the train with a gentleman who lives in Georgetown, and he said: "There should be no sectional jealousy: Georgetown is the place." Every man thinks the same of his own locality. I believe if this Committee is formed and if it sifts the evidence properly, it will have this good effect: that the people belonging to the different sections will see that their interests have not been overlooked, as they would think they were if it were merely a scientific committee, without a representation for the different districts. My view of winter navigation is: that we should put a steamer where the men now cross and put ice boats on board the steamer. If the steamers were unable to pass through the ice, then the ice boat could easily get over it, because the heavy ice which would obstruct the steamer would make easy work for the boats. My hon. colleague has spoken to the effect that efficient steam navigation was a strong factor in inducing the people of the Island to overcome their reluctance to Confederation. I can endorse that statement. When Confederation was first propounded, only ninety-four of the whole inhabitants of the Island could be found to endorse it, and I may say I was one of the ninety-four. Again, when the subject was brought up in the Local Legislature, a resolution was passed, stating that no terms could be offered to Prince Edward Island which could be accepted. That resolution was passed by a majority, I think, of twenty-five to four, and I may add I was one of the four. Better terms were afterwards offered, but they also were rejected. Afterwards what are now known as the "better terms" were offered, and I am certain that the policy of continuous steam navigation between the Island and the mainland was a strong factor in inducing the people to overcome their reluctance to Confederation. It is impossible to over-rate the importance of steam navigation to the people of our Province. We are in an isolated position. We are unable to benefit directly by the National Policy, which has had so very beneficial effect on the other Provinces, because we are unable to enter into manufacturing. If we had continuous steam navigation, I believe manufactures, to a certain extent, would be carried on, and we would benefit, both directly and indirectly, by the National Policy. The people of the Island in 1878,