

not been complied with by the Dominion Government. That is a question as to which there is a difference of opinion; and I think the hon. gentleman from Alberton, if he wishes to secure any large support for his resolution in the House, is unwise in keeping in that resolution a declaration as to which a great many members of the Senate cannot concur with him. For these reasons, I have thought it well to submit the following amendment to the motion made by the hon. member from Alberton:

That all the words in the said Resolution after the first "That" be stricken out and the following words substituted therefor:—

"The Government be requested to cause a thorough inquiry to be made by properly qualified persons for the purpose of ascertaining the feasibility of constructing and maintaining a tunnel or other submarine way across the Strait of Northumberland, and the probable cost of such construction and maintenance; and also the feasibility and probable cost of any other plan which may be suggested for the improvement of the existing means of communication between Prince Edward Island and the mainland."

That resolution, whatever its defects may be, has the advantage of not expressing any opinion as to the way in which the Government have complied with the terms of Union; and it speaks of properly qualified persons, "instead of civil engineers," so that proper persons may be selected for both the purposes indicated. It does not bind the country to any large expenditure of money. I think that Prince Edward Island is entitled at least to such an expenditure on her behalf as may be involved in making the inquiry provided for in this resolution. If after the inquiry has been made it is discovered that the cost is reasonable, then I think that it would be the duty of the Government to recommend that the work be undertaken. If, on the other hand, it appears that the cost is what might fairly be regarded as unreasonable, then we shall know that the cost is too great; and I believe that the people of Prince Edward Island and their representatives in this House—even the hon. gentleman from Murray Harbor—would not be so unreasonable as to expect the Government of the country to go into an immense expenditure for the purpose of maintaining communication between the Island and the mainland.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—My hon. friend from Alberton has presented his case with much earnestness and has shown great persistence and energy in seeking to improve the communication between Prince

Edward Island and the main shore, but I did not expect to find that the efforts which the Government have made in that direction would be so entirely ignored as they have been, not by my hon. friend altogether, although he has devoted very little attention to the last step which the Government took in that direction, but by other hon. gentlemen who have addressed the House. It is well that I should say a word or two as to the exact position of the question. About four years ago my hon. friend himself made a proposition to the Government to build a subway across the Straits of Northumberland, and he stated the consideration which the company that he proposed to get up, expected for that work, which we may take, I imagine, to be his estimate of what such a construction would cost. The consideration that he proposed to demand was an enormous sum of money, but in my opinion did not approach the actual cost of the work which he desires shall be done. The consideration which he suggested on that occasion was that the Government should hand over to the company, the Prince Edward Island Railway, a line 213 miles long and costing over \$3,500,000, and that they should pay to his Company, in perpetuity, \$250,000 a year. In consideration of this, however, the company was to build several short branches of railway within the Island for which there was to be no further charge. Now, \$250,000 a year in perpetuity, represents a sum of say about \$8,000,000, probably more than that, but taking it at \$8,000,000 the road having cost \$3,500,000, we will say, the consideration which my hon. friend proposes was obviously \$11,500,000 for this subway. My hon. friend gave reasons at the time for making this proposal, by which he undertook to show that it would cost the country nothing more than the present system, but I do not think that those reasons, at all events, would apply at the present moment. The service which my hon. friend contended at that time cost the Government two hundred odd thousand dollars a year does not cost the Government anything like that sum at present—in fact, the total cost of the service at present, including the loss by the Prince Edward Island Railway, during the past year, would not amount to one-third of the sum mentioned.

HON. MR. HOWLAN — One-third of \$250,000?