

nent officers. They are engaged by the month, they are not appointed by Order in Council, and it seems to me that they cannot be classified as permanent officers. I quite agree with all that the hon. leader of the Opposition has said that the services of men of experience should not be dispensed with, but I would add that they should not be dispensed with unless we find men equally as good to take their places. In the case of Captain Mackenzie, he had been engaged for only one year, and he has been replaced by a man as competent as he was. Now, the case of Captain Macdonald was a very peculiar one, indeed. I may say to my hon. friend that I did not dismiss Captain Macdonald. What took place was this: The chief engineer went to Halifax, in either January or February, and on inquiry found that there were two men employed on the dredge "Prince Edward," these were Captain Macdonald and the engineer. The chief engineer found that two men were not necessary, and then he instructed Mr. McCormick to make the choice between the two men, and he chose to retain the engineer, because repairs had to be made to the boilers. I may say that although he was not authorized to do so, he dismissed Captain Macdonald, although he did what was for the best. When the time came to engage another man, I took Captain Larkin. I am very glad to say that there were no complaints at all against Captain Macdonald, but he was a good and capable officer.

Mr. MACDONALD (King's, P.E.I.) I must say further with respect to this matter, that I did understand before the change was made, that it was quite settled among the leading friends of the hon. gentleman down there, that Captain Macdonald was to be continued as captain of the dredge; but there were one or two parties in the county that Captain Macdonald comes from—I am now speaking only from what I have been told,—that one of my late opponents in the election and another gentleman who was formerly an opponent of mine, brought pressure to bear on the Government, and succeeded in having the services of Captain Macdonald dispensed with. I only hope that the Minister has got as good and as worthy a man in his place. I believe the chief recommendation of the man who has taken his place, is that he was the prosecutor of Mr. Hackett in his election trial.

#### Roads and Bridges—

Bridge across the Saskatchewan at Edmonton, N.W.T..... \$50,000

Mr. OLIVER. I would ask the Minister of Public Works if it is intended to expend this money this present season?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. This question is under the very serious consideration of the Government. I received not long ago a cheque from the town of

Mr. TARTE.

Edmonton for \$25,000, and later on I received through the Bank of Montreal the balance of the money contributed by that town toward the construction of this bridge. I am not quite free to say any more than what I am saying now.

Mr. CLARKE. Are tenders to be called for the construction of this work?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. Yes, of course. If we go on with the work there is no doubt that tenders will be asked for.

Telegraph Lines—British Columbia—To provide for an alternative line connecting Cape Beale and Carmenah with Victoria by extending the French Creek-Alberni Line southwardly to the south-west coast of Vancouver Island..... \$4,600

Mr. McINNES. When does the Minister propose to begin the work on this telegraph line?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. We expect to begin work in a month.

Mr. MARTIN. I wish to point out to the Minister of Public Works the position that Prince Edward Island occupies in reference to telegraphic communication. I do not suppose there is any other part of the Dominion which suffers in that respect as much as Prince Edward Island. Under the terms of union the Dominion Government undertook to maintain a telegraphic service between Prince Edward Island and the mainland, and it was supposed that it would give the public such a service as the public had in other parts of the Dominion. Now, the fact is that a telegram from Prince Edward Island across the straits of Northumberland, a distance of only nine miles, costs 50 cents, while for an equal distance in any other part of the Dominion, the charge is only 25 cents. I am sure the Minister of Public Works, in reading the terms under which Prince Edward Island entered the confederation, will conclude that the understanding was that the Government would establish such a telegraphic service between Prince Edward Island and the mainland as would afford the people the same advantages that they have in other parts of the Dominion. I am aware that the company holds, as it were, a monopoly of that service, but I think the Minister of Public Works should make an arrangement with the company in order that cheaper rates should obtain between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. Every hon. member will agree that messages going from the capital to that province are charged 25 cents or 50 cents more than to any other part of the Dominion, except to British Columbia, and that this is a state of affairs which should not continue. The Government, having undertaken that service, they should charge the customary rates in other parts of the Dominion, and I hope the Minister of Public Works will see that some