

Engineer, to go to the Island, and to the neighboring shore of New Brunswick, and to examine witnesses who had any special knowledge with reference to this subject. Mr. McLeod went there and made a thorough survey of the Prince Edward Island coast for some sixteen miles. He also made similar surveys on the coast of New Brunswick, and examined a large number of witnesses, residents of New Brunswick, and also of Prince Edward Island. Those witnesses who had had very long experience in winter navigation were competent to give opinions which would lead to the solution of this difficult question. Mr. McLeod embodied the result of this evidence in a report which he sent to the Government of the day, and which my hon. friend will find in the Sessional Papers of 1879. In that report he sums up the difficulties attending the settlement of this question, and states the manner in which it may be solved very well. That report is before the Government, and I am quite sure that the recommendations are of such a character that no reasonable and sensible man can easily object to them. There are two sides to the understanding of all the questions relating to the provision of continuous steam communication between Prince Edward Island and the main land, and it is manifest that many difficulties exist. There was a time, I acknowledge, when it was believed practicable to have steam navigation all through the winter between the Capes on the Island and the main land, but owing to the experience which we have obtained on this subject, I venture to say that this opinion can no longer be reasonably entertained. What is the Committee going to do? Whom are they going to examine? What new information can they obtain? I can see no benefit to be secured from their labors. Persons who have had an experience of twenty-three years in this matter have already placed their opinions on record, in the report above referred to, and what other views of value can be obtained in the Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island? Of course, I am aware that it is of no use to do more than protest against this proceeding. What better information can be given in this regard than can be got from the captain of the *Northern Light* and her officers, who, I believe, have remained in charge of the vessel since she was first placed on the route some eight years ago? I cannot see what my hon. friend expects to do by means of a Committee. He should point out the line of action which he proposes to take, and state what witnesses he is going to examine, and the object he intends to effect. The steam communication between the Island and the main land, as it at present exists, is kept up by means of boats. We all know that we must have continuous steam communication, if this can possibly be secured; and I judge that it would be more satisfactory if my friend would ask the Government whether they propose, in the future, to take steps towards the construction of another vessel, which would act in conjunction with, or take the place of the *Northern Light*—a larger vessel, free from the defects, if possible, which have been ascertained to exist in the *Northern Light*, during the experience of the last eight years. We know that a ship can be built suitable for that service if tenders were called for; and I would strongly urge upon my hon. colleague that, instead of wasting the time of the House and the money of the country on this Committee, which can result in nothing but delay, he should exert his influence with the influence of the other gentlemen from the Island on the same side of politics as himself to induce the Government to take immediate steps in this connection. I beg to say that I fully endorse every word that the hon. gentleman has said with reference to the manner in which the Steam Navigation Company of Prince Edward Island has carried out its contract. It is a capital company, it does its work well; and what I said the other day was not intended in any way as a

complaint of the manner in which it has carried out the contract. What I do say is that in extending the contract, if the hon. Minister has done so, provision should be made, by the granting of an additional subsidy, to compel the company to put on a boat in the autumn months of the year, so that the harbors of Charlottetown and Summerside might be kept open a few weeks later than at present. The hon. Minister could confer no greater boon on those two cities and the counties in which they are situated, than by providing a boat which will keep up the navigation three or four weeks later in the fall. As to building another boat, in addition to the *Northern Light*, that must be done unless the Ministry determine that the Terms of the Union shall not be carried out at all. It is well known that the *Northern Light* cannot perform her work the whole of this winter, and unless a new boat be provided, there will be none at all next winter. I should have contented myself with these remarks had not the hon. gentleman gone on to attribute the increase in the exports and the general volume of trade on the Island to the National Policy. This is not the occasion, or the time, to discuss the effects of the National Policy upon the Province of Prince Edward Island, but lamentable as the effects of that Policy have been on that unfortunate Province, it is still more lamentable to find an hon. gentleman standing up in this House and endeavoring to mislead Parliament and the country as to those effects. It is a matter of notoriety that whatever may have been the effects of the National Policy in other parts of the Dominion, it has produced nothing but ruin there. It is well known to the hon. gentleman that ever since the National Policy was introduced a result directly traceable to its operations is that the value of real estate has fallen in the towns of the Island over 50 per cent., and in the rural districts over 25 per cent. It is a matter of public notoriety that the young men of the Island have been leaving it in swarms—not in scores, but in hundreds—that the country is being deprived of its bone and sinew because its young men cannot find a livelihood there. But we have in this House, in the presence of the hon. member for Prince County (Mr. Hackett), a living example of the exodus that is taking place from the Island. Even that hon. gentleman has left his Province, where he has lived so long, in the hope of bettering himself elsewhere. I do not blame him for going abroad to improve his position, but I do blame him, after turning his back on his country, for endeavoring to mislead the House by saying that prosperity reigns in Prince Edward Island, when he must know that the very opposite is the case. As to our export trade, to which he has referred, I shall be very glad if our exports to the neighboring Provinces have increased; but I wish to point out that the reasons we have exported more to New Brunswick last year than formerly, were two or three in number. In the first place, we were formerly the owners of a large amount of shipping, and that shipping used to be profitably employed in the carrying trade between Great Britain and the Island. The quantity of goods we imported offered a fair freight to the Island, and the oats and barley which we exported gave profitable return freights. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman what has become of that shipping. We had an iron steamer which traded from the Island, but although it enjoyed a subsidy of some \$15,000 from the Government—and I have the misfortune to be one of the company myself—this policy, by compelling us to purchase our goods where we could not purchase them so cheaply or so profitably, has obliged us to sell the steamer at half its cost, because it had nothing to do. If the hon. gentleman will turn to the statistics which were laid on the Table of this House the other day, he will find that, in 1873, we built nearly 17,000 tons of shipping. How many tons have we in 1882? Three thousand. In 1878, the tonnage registered in the Island was over 18,000 tons; to-day it is only 4,300; in 1878, our exports from the Island were \$1,700,000; in