

Dominion Government in this spirit. The impossibility of continuous steam communication in mid-winter has been fully demonstrated, as pointed out by Messrs. McLelan and Campbell, but the efforts of the Dominion have been so far successful as to reduce the period of interruption to an average of one-third of what it was previous to the Union. Messrs. Sullivan and Ferguson say that the "Northern Light" is not suitable for the service, and was not specially designed for the work. They apparently forget that in the joint address to the Governor-General from the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in 1881, this same vessel is spoken of as having been "constructed expressly for the work, and placed upon the route," although complaint was made of the irregular and unsatisfactory trips she made. Upon this point Messrs. McLelan and Campbell say:—"The Dominion Government, after a most careful and anxious inquiry, contracted with a Mr. Sewell, of Quebec, to complete a powerful steamer on a model specially designed for ice service. In December 1876 this steamer, named the 'Northern Light,' was completed and placed upon the route between Pictou and Charlottetown, and has been maintained each winter to date at an aggregate cost, including construction, of \$249,956.57."

No representation appears to have been made in the matter to the Dominion Government until 1881, although the "Northern Light" was put on in 1876. Messrs. Sullivan and Ferguson state the average period the vessel is unavailable during the winter as 70 days; in the Address to Her Majesty 64 days is given, and the Parliamentary Committee at Ottawa in 1883 gave 48 days as the average. The latter also said in their report that "the daily records kept by the captain of the 'Northern Light,' and the testimony given by the officers show that the heavy ice encountered was the cause that compelled him to discontinue crossing in mid-winter;" and further, that "the evidence of the officers examined is also to the effect that the steamer is not sufficient to overcome the difficulties of the winter navigation, and although they suggest slight improvements on her model, which would better fit her for the purposes for which she was intended, still are unanimously of opinion that no steamship can be built capable of keeping up continuous communication in mid-winter between the island and the mainland." They add, "We examined personally several gentlemen of large practical experience in crossing from the island in the winter season, all of whom confirm the above, and whose evidence is hereto appended." This Committee consisted of three representatives from Prince Edward Island, and two from the mainland, and surely their opinions are worthy of credence, and justify the contention of the Dominion Government that the utmost has been done to carry out the terms under which the island entered the Union. Messrs. McLelan and Campbell in their report also say, "If continuous steam communication has not been maintained, it is certainly not because the Dominion Government sought to avoid expense. The 'Northern Light' is as large and as powerful a steamer as experience in Arctic exploration has proved advisable, and she is kept on full expense, equipped and ready to run at all times during the entire winter, and, were it possible to do so, no additional expense would be incurred, except for fuel, whilst the cost of the ice-boat service would be saved, and the construction of railways, piers, and boat-houses to and at Capes Traverse and Tormentine, rendered unnecessary." The Government have, it may be added, spent, or are committed to spend, about \$951,698 in connexion with the communication between Prince Edward Island and the mainland. The remainder of the rejoinder addressed to Lord Granville refers to other matters, some of which do not directly refer to the questions at issue.

Messrs. Sullivan and Ferguson call attention to the speech of Sir Alexander Campbell in the Senate in 1884, respecting the provision of one of the lighthouse steamers to supplement the "Northern Light" during the winter, which certainly seems to have been promised. Considering the narrowness of the Strait, it appears doubtful if a second steamer would be of much advantage, but in any case there is no mention of the matter in the papers in the possession of the High Commissioner for Canada.

They admit, as Messrs. McLelan and Campbell contended, that a railway to Cape Traverse had been built and a pier constructed, although stating that the latter requires some alterations; also that the railway to Cape Tormentine is being made with the aid of a large subsidy from the Dominion Government. Complaint is made that although an appropriation has been made for a pier at Cape Tormentine, its construction has not yet been commenced. But the Dominion Government have said that it will be built, and no doubt the delay is owing to the time taken in laying the railway with which it will be connected.