

good purpose could be served by going into that question.

ST. LAWRENCE CHANNEL.

Mr. J. G. H. BERGERON (Beauharnois). Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I desire to call the attention of the Government to a matter of very great importance. We saw by the papers the other day that the steamer "Gallia," belonging to the Allan Line, has already gone ashore, and although I have no doubt, from the report I have seen, that it is not the fault of the buoys or the channel, still, I think it is about time to find out from the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies), whether he has come to any agreement with the hon. Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte), as to which department the work of protecting this channel belongs—the Department of Marine and Fisheries or the Department of Public Works. I understand that it has been under the management of the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries. I do not want, at this present moment, to remind my hon. friend that the contract seems to have been carried out better in years gone by than it was last year, but the only point that I now wish to bring to his notice is as to whether he has come to arrangement or an agreement with the hon. Minister of Public Works as to the future way of giving that contract. Last year was a most disastrous year for the trade between Montreal and Quebec. I think about fourteen vessels went ashore or went astray due to the placing of buoys in bad places.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). No, not due to the placing of the buoys.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Mr. Fitzpatrick). The ships drew too much water.

Mr. BERGERON. This remark has nothing to do with the "Gallia," I think. I am only drawing my hon. friend's attention to the matter, because the trade of Montreal has been much interested in it. Last year was a most disastrous one, and when the trouble has commenced so early this year it is time that my hon. friend, or his department, should consider whether his department or the Department of Public Works are responsible for seeing that such disasters do not occur again.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). I cannot see that disasters will not occur again. All I can see is that everything is done, so far as the Department of Marine and Fisheries is concerned, to make the best use of these aids to navigation. The "Gallia" is ashore very far away from the channel, altogether out of her course, and I am sorry to say, from the report I received this morning, that the prospects of her getting off are not

Mr. FIELDING.

as good as I had hoped they would have been. The water is falling, and there are a very few feet of water at her prow. How she got so far out of her course I cannot understand. No inquiry has been made, but it is alleged by the pilot that the vessel would not answer her helm, and it is alleged by others, according to the officer, whose report I have received, that the steering gear would not work. Efforts were made yesterday to get her off and they are being repeated to-day by a number of tugs and other boats. As to the buoying of the St. Lawrence channels there is no dispute, nor has there been, between the Public Works Department and the Department of Marine and Fisheries. The work was let last year, and although many complaints have been forwarded—

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. To the old contractors?

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. No.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. That is a pity.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. I called for tenders, and, of course, I had to accept the lowest tender.

Mr. BERGERON. You are not bound to do it.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The discrepancy between the tender I accepted and that of the old contractors was large. Sincennes & McNaughton were the old contractors, and Mr. Kane, of Quebec, was the contractor for last year. Although there was a good deal of talk in the newspaper press as to the manner in which he carried out his contract, my officers are not able to state very serious grounds of complaint. The commercial body of Montreal did not seem satisfied unless the contract was taken hold of by the department, and, as we are anxious to comply with their wishes, the work this year will be carried out by the department, and under the direct supervision and responsibility of the officers of the department.

Mr. BERGERON. Which department?

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The Marine and Fisheries Department. Effective measures are being taken to ensure the buoys being laid down properly so that there will be no ground of complaint at all. I have not heard any complaints this year. The officer who was in the employ of Sincennes & McNaughton will be engaged in this work. A steamer was built last year, specially for the purpose, which I propose to purchase from Mr. Kane, of Quebec, and I will ask for a grant to enable me to pay for it. Col. Anderson will have direct charge of the work, which will be carried on under Mr. Fraser, the engineer. We have also the officer who for