

make no further allusion to it now, except to say that they do not agree with the High Commissioner that the position of the Island in the matter is precisely the same as that of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Under the terms of Confederation, the Dominion Government undertook to provide "efficient steam service for the conveyance of mails and passengers, to be established and maintained between the Island and the mainland of the Dominion, winter and summer, thus placing the Island in continuous communication with the Inter-colonial Railway and the railway system of the Dominion." The question is, have the Dominion Government performed this obligation? They are forced to admit that they have failed. But the High Commissioner answers that "a regular daily steam service is an impossibility," and that "proof has been adduced that continuous steam service has been provided as far as was practicable." The report of the Parliamentary Committee of 1883 is referred to as justifying these statements; but the undersigned feel impelled to remark that a perusal of that report has led them to a very different conclusion. It is said that the Island Government, prior to Confederation, had accomplished no more than the Dominion Government have done since that time, but it is apparently forgotten that one of the chief inducements to enter the union was to secure continuous steam service. The High Commissioner states that no representation was made in this matter to the Dominion Government till 1881, although the steamer named the "Northern Light" was put on in 1876. That the people of Prince Edward Island endured this grievance without formal remonstrance from their Government, not only from 1876 to 1881, but from 1873 to 1881, is a proof that they have acted most reasonably in giving the Dominion Government ample time to carry out their undertaking, and should not now be used as an argument against their claim. The High Commissioner takes exception to the statement that the "Northern Light" was not specially "designed" for the service, and refers to the address to the Governor-General adopted by the Legislature of Prince Edward Island in 1881, wherein that vessel is alluded to as having been "constructed expressly for the work." Both these expressions are correct. The "Northern Light" was "designed" for a totally different service—namely, for navigating fixed and comparatively thin ice in the River St. Lawrence—and, after having been so "designed," she was purchased by the Dominion Government and "constructed" for the service she has been attempting to perform. This is confirmed by Messrs. McLelan and Campbell, for they 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." They do not say, nor does the High Commissioner, that she was specially designed for the work to which she has been devoted, but it is stated that she was *completed* for that service.

The High Commissioner seems to labour under the impression that he has discovered a discrepancy in the statements in regard to the average period the "Northern Light" is unavailable during the winter, as in the communication of the undersigned it is given as 70 days, in the Address to Her Majesty in 1885, 64 days, and in the report of the Parliamentary Committee in 1883, 48 days. These statements, we have every reason to believe, are all correct, for the periods to which they apply. The average time, when the Parliamentary Committee reported in 1883, was 48 days, which increased in 1885 to 64 days, and in 1886 to 70 days. It is here worthy of remark that the steam service instead of improving is, year after year, becoming less efficient and continuous. Last winter the vessel was laid up 90 days.

With reference to the failure of the Dominion Government to make any provision for the conveyance of passengers, the High Commissioner explains by quoting from a letter of the late Minister of Marine, Mr. McLelan, that the "Northern Light" made regular trips this season until 27th January. Mr. McLelan states: "the delegates crossed by that route, and I believe they said it was the first time that they had ever been brought over—that is, they had, on all previous occasions, to work their passage." In the opinion of the undersigned this is the strongest confirmatory proof of the allegation that "no sufficient disposition has been shown by the Dominion Government to fulfil their obligations towards the Island in this matter." Your Lordship will probably learn with surprise that for thirteen years the Government of Canada, notwithstanding their obligation to provide efficient steam communication for mails and passengers winter and summer, have allowed such a state of things to exist, and that a merit is now being made out of the circumstance that once, and that less than two months ago, in those 13 years, even the official representatives of the Island Government were relieved of the labour of "working their passage." This favour will be still better appreciated when it is known that the delegates were only conveyed