

vice. What did the committee recommend? It recommended:

"That the service between Georgetown and Pictou, at present performed by the *Northern Light*, be continued, and as the evidence before your committee goes to show that the *Northern Light* is fast becoming unfit for service, we therefore recommend that another suitable steamer be provided to take her place."

Such was the recommendation of the committee, a majority of whom were supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite, and it was made after hearing witnesses give their testimony. What have the Government done? They have done nothing. They were aware that the terms of union between Prince Edward Island and Canada have not been kept; that serious grievances were suffered by the people of Prince Edward Island because of the Government's inaction and broken faith; they were aware that public meetings were being held condemning that inaction on the part of the Government; they were aware that the Legislature had petitioned the Queen for redress, that delegates were going home; and still the Government did nothing. When I say they have done nothing, I mean they have done nothing except make promises which they have afterwards broken. When I allege they have made promises which they have afterwards broken, I wish to prove that charge by reference to the records. In 1884 this matter was brought to the attention of the Senate by Hon. Mr. Haythorne in a lengthy and able speech, in which he pressed upon the Government the expediency of making preparations to replace the steamship *Northern Light*. I will not trouble the House with the hon. Senator's remarks, but I will give a quotation from the reply of the leader of the Government in the Senate—the official reply, the reply that was at once telegraphed to Prince Edward Island and published in all the newspapers, the reply that was quoted everywhere as evidence of the Government's intention to do something like justice at last to the island. This is what Hon. Sir Alexander Campbell said:

"The notice that the hon. gentleman from Charlottetown has given is that he will 'call the attention of the Government to the expediency of making timely preparation for replacing the steamship *Northern Light* by a new vessel combining such improvements in design and construction as modern experience dictates.' In reply to the enquiry I may say that the Marine Department has entered into a contract for the building of a wooden screw steamer for lighthouse service in the Maritime Provinces, and it is intended to build this vessel with extra strong timbers, sheath her with green heart, and plate her bows with steel or iron, so as to fit her for ice navigation and assist the *Northern Light* when necessary. She will be ready for service in October next. It is also intended to repair the *Northern Light* thoroughly next season, replacing all defective timbers and plank, and otherwise strengthening the vessel and fitting her thoroughly for winter navigation. There would then be, therefore, for the service of the Government in or near these straits the *Northern Light*, thoroughly restored and strengthened, and this new vessel which is now being constructed, and which is to be finished in October, so that the valuable suggestion of my hon. friend would be acted upon and there would be another vessel there in the event of an accident happening to one of them."

There was the acknowledgment on the part of the leader of the Government in the Upper House that those grievances were well founded, and a solemn promise on his part that they would be removed, for the statement was made by him that a vessel was then in course of building which would be sheathed and prepared in such a way as to be able to assist the *Northern Light* in this winter work, and the expression of the Minister's opinion that the vessel would be ready for service on the following October. We have never heard of this vessel in Prince Edward Island; she has never made or attempted to make a trip in winter; she has never attempted to assist the *Northern Light*. If the Minister of Marine, listened to the telegrams which the hon. member for King's read, he would have found that the necessity of such a vessel being sent to navigate the Straits of Northumberland was acknowledged by the Department of Marine. The Department was telegraphed in January, 1884, that the *Northern Light* was incapable of doing the work, that she was almost worn out; and the fact of the matter

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was that in the opinion of many skilful men the vessel was so unfit as to be dangerous for the work. What did the Government do? They simply telegraphed to the captain that they would hold him responsible for the safety of the vessel, and they warned him not to run any risk in the matter. The construction put upon that telegram by the captain—and he was correct in drawing that conclusion—was that he must lay up the vessel and not attempt to perform the service. And he did so. On 16th January a telegram was received by the captain as follows:—

"Telegram received urging Department order you run; responsibility is with you; expect you to run no undue risk."

This was from the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. What construction could the captain of the *Northern Light* put upon it? He could not avoid running risks when he took his vessel out into the Straits of Northumberland, and forced her through the ice. On 18th January Captain Finlayson received a telegram from the Department of Marine as follows:—

"With knowledge of ice you must be judge, and held responsible for safety of boat; incur no undue risk."

In a letter dated Ottawa, 12th January, 1884, the Deputy Minister of Marine writes Captain Finlayson:

"Referring to my letter to you of the 14th December, 1883, I have again to instruct you to use your own judgment as to when the *Northern Light* should run, and not to be governed by directions from any persons, as the Department will hold you responsible for the safety of the vessel, and you are to incur no risk whereby the safety of the vessel may be endangered by being caught in the ice."

If the captain is to run no risks of having his vessel caught in the ice, he must not go out at all. For what reason was the boat built except to be caught in the ice? Yet this letter is sent by the Department.

Mr. FOSTER. No such instruction was given. The hon. gentleman says the captain was instructed to run no risk. He will find no such instruction there.

Mr. DAVIES. I was reading the official letter itself containing the instructions. It says:

"The Department will hold you responsible for the safety of the vessel, and you are to incur no risk whereby the safety of the vessel may be endangered by being caught in the ice."

Those are not my words, they are the words of the Department. It continues:

"No risk also is to be incurred for the purpose of carrying over any particular passenger or passengers."

What is he there for? How can she go out in the ice in winter, without running some risk? He says you are not to run any risk by going out into the ice, and his construction of the order was that he was not to go out at all, and those conversant with the matter knew why the instructions were sent from the Department; they were aware that at that time the *Northern Light* was not fit to go out, and they left the people of the Island for that season with hardly any means of access. They suffered all the inconvenience and loss arising from the want of a proper boat. And then we have the promise of Sir Alexander Campbell, that a new boat is to be built and is to be ready in October to take the place of the *Northern Light*. I charge that that solemn promise has been broken and violated, that no attempt has been made to keep it; that the *Lansdowne* was not sent there to assist the *Northern Light*, and that the people of the island have been grossly deceived in the matter. I find that Sir Alexander Campbell apologized because his promise was not kept, and said he had done all he could in the matter. Last Session when the promise which I have just read and the fact that his promise had not been carried out, was brought to his notice, he said:

"My hon. friend from Prince Edward Island, who introduced this subject to the notice of the House, has, I think, just ground for complaint—ground for complaint, I am sorry to think perhaps against myself, although really, as he has almost admitted, I am not responsible for the non-execution of the measures which, from time to time, I have been authorised by the Government to promise in this House."