

of all amounts paid on account of the building of the said vessel; copies of all orders and instructions relating to the towing of the said steamer from Maccan to Halifax, and also any contracts, correspondence or documents in reference to the procuring and building of engines for the said steamer, said: Before this motion passes, I wish to say a few words regarding this vessel and the manner in which it was towed into the harbour of Halifax; and I think it is a matter which requires investigation. By a return laid on the Table of the House, last year, it appears tenders were invited for the construction of the hull, spars and rigging of a vessel of 500 tons, for the use of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. A number of tenders, varying in amount from \$25,000 the lowest, to \$72,000 the highest, were submitted. The lowest tenderer failed, and the contract was subsequently awarded to Mr. O'Brien of Maccan, for the sum of \$29,000. At the time the return was laid on the Table, the contract was not signed, owing to the illness of the contractor, although the work was in progress. Whether it has since been signed, the hon. Minister can inform the House. So far as Mr. O'Brien is concerned, he is known as a ship builder of considerable experience, who has built some of the largest ships that have sailed out of the Bay of Fundy. The vessel was launched, I think, on the 30th November, and a tug boat, the *Hercules*, was sent from St. John for the purpose of towing her down the river to meet the *Newfield*, which took her in tow on the morning of Sunday, the 2nd December, to bring her to Halifax from Maccan, a distance of 300 miles at least, along a rocky and dangerous coast, and at the worst season of the year. In the afternoon a gale sprung up, and the result was that close at Digby, within sight of the light and within a few miles of the entrance to Annapolis Basin, the hawser parted on account of inferior equipment, and the vessel was cast on the rocks. Not only was she entirely dashed to pieces, but the melancholy loss of eight lives was added. I venture to say that no owner of a vessel in Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick, would have risked bringing a ship in tow in that condition from Maccan to Halifax at that season of the year when that coast is exposed to severe and violent gales, nor would any underwriter have been willing to take such a risk except at an enormous premium. That the vessel was not properly equipped for the voyage, we have the statement of the captain of the *Newfield* made before the Board of Enquiry. One of her anchors was unshackled, of course, for the purpose of enabling the hawser to be used, but when the port anchor was attempted to be used it was found also to be unshackled. The crew were unable to bend the sails, and when they attempted to get up the jib and a maintrysail, it was too late, as the vessel had already gone on the rocks. What makes this want of proper equipment more extraordinary is the fact that nearly opposite Maccan is the port of St. John, where the vessel could have been properly fitted out with all facilities, as well as in Halifax, and then have proceeded to England for her engines if necessary; and even so far as the engines were concerned they could have been obtained at the port of St. John as well. I admit that with regard to engines for ocean service, England stands unequalled but as regards engines for the working service connected with our bays, I think our makers compare favourably with the English makers. I need only mention Fleming & Sons, of St. John, and Burrill & Johnson, of Yarmouth, N. S., both of whom are now building engines for vessels employed on the same waters in which this one was intended to be employed. With regard to the equipment of this vessel, Capt. Guilford's statement is this:

"She ought to have been better prepared for the voyage before she left Cumberland Basin. Her bow anchors should have been shackled and her sails bent."

Again, in violation of the law she was sent out without proper side lights, and burning a bright light which the captain

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had caused to be put up in direct violation of the Statutes. She was also sent out on a dangerous unnecessary course of navigation, without being properly equipped, although the voyage was one which required that the vessel should be thoroughly equipped. The consequence was that when the hawser broke the crew were helpless. I hope the Government will take steps to ascertain without delay the causes whereby not only loss of property, but also loss of life, was occasioned.

Mr. McLELAN. All the papers in connection with the matter will be brought down. The hon. gentleman has referred to the contract, and to the delay that occurred last year in signing it. Subsequently it was signed, and it was carried out in a manner that elicited the commendation of the inspector who reported she was the best vessel that had been constructed in the Maritime Provinces. The latter part of the hon. gentleman's remarks refers more particularly to the next question that he has on the paper, respecting the unfortunate loss of that vessel. When all the papers are brought down the hon. gentleman, and this House, will be in a better position to understand and discuss this question. Owing to the melancholy loss of Capt. Brown, in whose charge the vessel was at the time, there are many questions put by the hon. gentleman that cannot be very well answered. The vessel was placed in charge of Capt. Brown. The Minister of the Department had every confidence in his skill and experience, and relied on his seeing that the vessel was equipped in such a manner as to be, to all appearances, safe. The captain's attention was called on the day of the launch to the fact that the chains coming on board had not been coupled together, but he replied that he supposed the operation of the windlass was quite sufficient to check it when he desired. The windlass did not work as expected, and the chain went out and was lost. I believe the whole equipment of the vessel was on board, and a few hours work would have bent the sails and placed her in a position to be managed by sails. Why the sails were not bent I am unable to say, and, owing to the sad loss of Capt. Brown, we cannot ascertain why he did not attend to this before starting. The hon. gentleman has referred to the fact that we have good mechanics in this country, and he asked why we could not have got the engines built here instead of in Glasgow. The hon. gentleman has stated that Great Britain is unrivalled in the construction of marine engines, and it was because we desired to have engines that were perfect, that were built by manufacturers who stand unrivalled in that work, that we decided to have these built at Glasgow; and we found that we should have less expense to send the vessel there to have them put in than to pay the freight that was demanded by shippers, the owners of steamships or sailing vessels, to have them brought to this country and placed in here. It was for the purpose of having the best possible engines that could be placed on board of her, and to have it done more economically, that she was sent over. The original intention was to have the engines brought to this country and put in here; but, owing to a failure on the part of the contractors to have them completed within the time agreed upon, it was decided to send the vessel over there, and this made it that period to which the hon. gentleman referred as a late period in the season. It was unfortunate that the work was delayed so long that it became late in the season and the stormy season of the year, but the whole matter was entrusted to Capt. Gilbert and Brown, men of long experience, and they were consulted upon this matter before any action was decided upon. Consultation was held with these gentlemen, who were the most experienced officers of the Department, who had had experience both in sailing vessels and steam vessels, and upon their advice the course was decided upon of towing the vessel to Halifax in order to