

of union in the matter of steam communication remain unfulfilled, the people of the Island are precluded, to a considerable extent, from participating in the benefits which that policy is calculated to confer.

The Committee of Council, while admitting that the Island may have felt inconvenience from the interruption in the trips of the "Northern Light," yet consider that the material interests of the province have not greatly suffered, owing to the fact that its exports to foreign countries have nearly doubled from 1872 to 1884. The undersigned fail to comprehend why this argument should be admitted in justification of the failure of the Dominion Government to carry out the terms of union. That the Island has improved is notwithstanding the inaction of the Dominion Government, and its progress is due to its natural resources and the great industry of its people, and tends to show how much greater its prosperity would have been had it enjoyed the continuous communication which was guaranteed it, and which it had a right to expect. The Island's contributions to the Federal Treasury in excess of the expenditure, together with the money which has been uselessly expended upon the inefficient communication afforded, would very probably be adequate to defray the interest upon a sum necessary to construct a work which would effectually overcome its isolation. Here the undersigned desire to say that the Ministry of Prince Edward Island, so far from regarding the Canadian Pacific Railway as a local work for the benefit of British Columbia only (as alleged by the Committee of Council), have always warmly supported the present Administration of the Dominion in their policy of constructing that great national highway; and all that they now ask is that a work of vast importance, not only to the Island but to the whole of the Dominion, as solemnly guaranteed as was the railway to British Columbia, should be undertaken and brought to a successful completion.

Within the last few months a scheme has been proposed which, it is claimed, will successfully remove the disabilities from which the Island has so long suffered. Engineers of the highest standing in America, and whose reputations are well established in Great Britain, have given it as their opinion that it is practicable to lay a metallic subway across the Straits of Northumberland, through which railway communication could be effected, and that the cost of such an undertaking would not exceed a sum which it would not be unreasonable to ask the Government of Canada to expend. During the past summer, soundings were taken, and the bed of the Straits was found to be admirably adapted for the laying of the tube, the Admiralty charts corroborating the results of the examination which was made.

The Committee of Council speak of the "liberal treatment" of the Island by the Dominion Government, and that it has received especial consideration, on account of its isolated position, though possessing a population less than some cities on the mainland. To this statement the undersigned desire to except. They have clearly proved, as they believe, that Prince Edward Island contributes to the general revenue more than is returned in expenditure. To the unfortunate misapprehension that the Island is being treated with exceptional liberality, and that it does not return to the general revenue one-third of the amount expended, is probably due the invidious distinction made by the General Government in the remuneration of their officials on the Island. The same erroneous impression has possibly influenced the General Government in declining, up to the present time, to maintain many of the public piers in the province, although expressly bound to do so by the British North America Act.

The Committee of Council say "the 'Northern Light' was placed at Charlottetown as head-quarters; her officers and crew are inhabitants of the Island, and her unceasing and hazardous efforts to make communication in the severest weather cannot be unknown to the Island Government." The Committee of Council seem to entertain the idea that the officers and crew of the "Northern Light," being Island men, are consequently bold enthusiasts, and would be willing to incur great risk in the effort to maintain communication with the mainland. The undersigned desire to remark that, whatever zeal the officers of the "Northern Light" have displayed in the performance of their duties, their ardour must have been considerably dampened by the instructions which were issued some time ago by the Department of Marine, and which are as follows:—

"Capt. FINLAYSON, steamer 'Northern Light.'

"Ottawa, January 16, 1883.

"Telegram received urging Department order you run. Responsibility is with you. Expect you to run no undue risks.

"A. W. McLELAN."