

good reason to complain of being precluded from the benefits of the Intercolonial and other railways which their more fortunate neighbours on the mainland enjoy; but their chief grievance is that, in direct violation of the solemn compact upon which they entered the Confederation, and to which Your Majesty was graciously pleased to be a party, the Dominion Government have not provided that efficient or continuous means whereby mails and passengers can be transported to and from the mainland.

10. The people of this province, we submit, have just ground of complaint at the inaction of the Dominion Government, and at the extraordinary apathy which has been shown in regard to the interest of this Island in the matter of communication with the mainland. Nine winters have passed since the "Northern Light" was first placed on the route, and notwithstanding the fact that her inefficiency for the service was apparent from the outset, no other steps have been taken to fulfil the terms of union. From the time the "Northern Light" ceases running until she again resumes her trips, a period averaging, as already mentioned, 64 days each year, the Post Office Department transmits the mails by the route between Capes Traverse and Tormentine, and during this period in each year the Dominion Government have at no time since confederation made any provision whatever for the transport of passengers, who are forced to make such arrangements as best they can for crossing to and from the mainland. This unaccountable neglect on the part of the Government of Canada is the most direct violation of the terms of union which we are called upon to represent to Your Majesty. Moreover, the Dominion Government have established no communication between the Intercolonial Railway and Cape Tormentine, so that travellers are compelled in passing between these points to drive in open sleighs a distance of 40 miles in the coldest and most stormy portion of the year.

Between Cape Traverse and the line of the Prince Edward Island Railway, a distance of about 12 miles, railway connexion has been opened, and that but partially, only this winter, although provided for by Parliament three years ago.

11. The derangement of business consequent upon the irregularity of the mail service, when for many days at times no communication is had with the rest of Canada, exercises a most prejudicial effect upon the interests of the Island. The hardships of travelling, which only the strong and robust are able to endure, and the dangers attendant upon the present mode, which have been most painfully exemplified this winter, are other disadvantages from which the people of this province suffer most acutely.

12. The feeling that they are being unjustly treated is not without strong foundation. In order to fulfil the terms of union with British Columbia, a province of less than 15,000 of a population, exclusive of Indian and Chinese, Canada has contracted for the construction of nearly 3,000 miles of railway, at a cost of more than 80 millions of dollars. This gigantic undertaking is being pushed forward at a rate unparalleled in the world's history, and a vast expenditure is being made, and still more is contemplated, in acquiring and subsidising other railroads and in forging the links to bind the scattered provinces from the Atlantic to the Pacific; yet the fulfilment of the terms of union with this Island, by providing the means of communication over a strait only nine miles wide, is postponed from year to year, without any thought, it would seem, that thereby a sacred obligation is being violated, and an immense injury being done to a large body of people.

13. This grievance, of which we here complain, has been repeatedly brought to the notice of the General Government, while session after session the representatives of the Island in the Dominion Parliament have called attention to the non-fulfilment by Canada of her pledged faith with this Island. In 1881 we addressed the Governor-General in Council upon the subject, and prayed for the adoption of measures to remedy the state of affairs complained of, as well as for compensation for the loss sustained on account of the non-fulfilment of the terms of union. This address was duly acknowledged, but no practical results followed; and upon the notice of the Dominion Government being again directed thereto, assurances were returned in both of the years 1882 and 1883 that the question was under their consideration.

Again, last year we addressed his Excellency in Council with a like petition, and claiming five millions of dollars for the loss sustained to that time on account of the non-fulfilment of the said terms, and we also informed the Dominion Government that we then approached them for the last time, and that unless a favourable answer was accorded without delay, your Majesty's interference would be invoked.