

inconvenience ; and it would be something more,—it would be a cruel thing,—because it is within my knowledge that, last spring, numbers of poor people were waiting for a passage across, and they had not the means to pay their expenses if they had been long detained there. I was informed that some of them went out and sought work while waiting for the arrival of the ‘Northern Light’; and therefore, while taking fewer passengers might be a remedy for the danger, it would be cruel, when the Government have another vessel, fully capable of assisting the ‘Northern Light,’ to detain passengers there.”

The Committee of Council state that the small passenger list of the “Northern Light,” and the large annual deficit in working the Island Railway, are the best evidence of the limited travel to be provided for. The undersigned submit that this argument constitutes no justification for the failure of the Dominion Government to carry out their obligations to the Island. So long as communication with the mainland is at all certain, the traffic is large, but with the irregular movements of the “Northern Light,” and the doubt that exists as to her seaworthiness, it is not extraordinary that travel and traffic are limited. So far as the Island Railway is concerned, traffic is restricted, for the reason that, after the close of navigation, no shipments can be made from the Island. Were the Island’s communication with the Intercolonial Railway and the other railways of the Dominion continuous, as Canada solemnly promised it should be, the case would be different.

The Committee of Council desire it to be borne in mind that the Dominion Government did not undertake the carrying of agricultural produce nor freight of any kind, although they have at all times afforded facility for the transport of any freight offering. The facility afforded may be judged of when it is explained that the freight capacity of the “Northern Light” is not more than 200 barrels. But while it is true that the Dominion Government did not expressly undertake the carrying of freight, it is well known that freight traffic is more remunerative than passenger traffic, and that if a larger and more powerful steamer had been provided, having increased cargo room, the returns would have been much greater, and the outlay proportionally less.

The Committee of Council say that “it will be claimed on behalf of the Island that the population consumes goods the produce of the mainland, but that, while this is true, the same occurred previous to the Confederation;” and they proceed to quote the value of the imports of the Island from the Dominion in 1872, upon which duties were collected, at \$1,067,480. The undersigned desire to say that this amount accurately represents the value of the Island’s imports in 1872 from and through the Dominion of Canada, but that in those imports there were included dutiable goods the growth and manufacture of other countries valued at \$371,163, as also articles on which the Island levied no duty, valued at \$58,190; so that, these amounts being deducted, the sum of \$638,127 would represent the real value of our imports from the Dominion.

The Committee of Council state that the total value of goods entered for consumption in Prince Edward Island from all countries, in 1872, was \$1,605,241. The undersigned cannot conceive where such information was obtained. They have carefully examined the Trade Returns of the Island for that year, and they find that the total imports into the Island amounted in value to \$2,439,078, nearly if not all of which were entered for home consumption. The undersigned must express their regret that so grave a misapprehension should be entertained by the Committee of Council as to the trade of the Island.

The Committee of Council say that “no doubt the same inter-provincial trade continues with this change in favour of Prince Edward Island—that the goods from the other provinces are now free of duty, whilst, previous to the union, they paid duties the same as on importations from other countries.” There can be no doubt that inter-provincial trade continues, as the present tariff of the Dominion is framed with the special view of encouraging manufactures. This trade is, however, much more advantageous to the other provinces than to the Island, as it is impossible that manufactures can be carried on on the Island to any great extent while regular communication with the mainland is interrupted for over four months of the year. That the people of the Island obtain certain goods from the other provinces free of duty is true; but the statement is, nevertheless, misleading. Protected by a high customs duty, the Quebec or Ontario manufacturer is able to obtain in many lines of goods, prices nearly, if not altogether, equal to the cost and duty of the same goods of British or foreign manufacture. Situated as Canada is, and having a view to the infant state of her manufactures, and the tariff policy of the United States, the undersigned believe the fiscal policy of Canada to be a justifiable one; but, while the terms