

During the same year a delegation was sent from the Province to wait on the Dominion Government and to urge the claims of the Province. After the delegation had returned on the 27th March they caused a telegram to be sent to the Dominion Government asking for a reply to their several Addresses and Minutes of Council. The telegram is as follows.

"CHARLOTTETOWN, 27th March, 1883.

"To the Secretary of State, Ottawa :

"Required immediately to lay before the Legislature now in Session, Dominion Government's answer to Joint Address of Legislature of April, 1881, relative to steam communication with mainland, and also to Minute of Council of January last upon the same subject.

"T. HEATH HAVILAND,
"Lieutenant Governor."

To this they received a reply stating that the subject was under consideration. Now we gained an important step in that communication. We had the assurance given us then for the first time that this matter was under the consideration of the Government. On the 18th April, 1884, the Legislature passed a second Address, and I may say that although party spirit runs high in the Island, these Addresses were passed unanimously by both political parties in the Legislature. On a question of this kind they were united as one man. The answer to this second Address is dated the 24th April, and is as follows :—

"OTTAWA, 24th April, 1884.

"SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 8, of the 18th instant, transmitting, in order that the said may be laid before His Excellency the Governor General, a Joint Address from the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island, on the subject of an efficient steam service for the conveyance of mails and passengers between that Province and the Mainland of the Dominion, winter and summer, and to state that this matter will receive due consideration.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"G. POWELL,

"Under Secretary of State."

Following that there was a Minute of Council passed on the 20th February, 1885, which was acknowledged on 6th March, 1885, and the same expression is used, that it will receive due consideration. In the Session of 1885 an Address was passed by the Legislature to Her Majesty the Queen, in which the whole question is so concisely put that I will venture upon the time of the House to read it. The Address is as follows :—

"To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty :

"MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,—We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Coun-

cil and House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island, in General Assembly convened, humbly approach your Majesty and represent that :

"1. Prince Edward Island entered the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada upon the 1st July, 1873, on certain terms and conditions set forth in the Order of Your Majesty in Council, dated 26th June, 1873, and of which terms the following is one :—'The Dominion Government shall assume and defray all the charges for the following service, viz. :—Efficient steam service for the conveyance of mails and passengers, to be established and maintained between the Island and the mainland of the Dominion, winter and summer, thus placing the Island in continuous communication with the Intercolonial Railway and the railway system of the Dominion.'

"2. During no winter season since the time of the said Union has the service provided by the Dominion Government been efficient, or the communication with the mainland continuous.

"3. The Dominion Government having shown no sufficient disposition to fulfil their obligation towards the Island in this matter, we are reluctantly compelled to approach Your Majesty, as one of the parties to the articles of Confederation, and pray Your Majesty's intervention to obtain for us that justice to which, as a Province of Canada, we are entitled by the terms of Union.

"4. Prince Edward Island is separated from the mainland Provinces of Canada by the Strait of Northumberland, and during the winter season, which generally begins about the first of December and lasts until the end of April, the harbors and rivers are frozen, while the passage of the Strait is impeded, though at no time wholly prevented, by floating ice. Previous to the Union the only connection with the mainland during winter was by means of ordinary boats, dragged across the drifting ice and propelled by oars through the stretches of open water between Cape Traverse and the Island, and Cape Tormentine in New Brunswick—a distance of nine miles.

"5. During the first winter after Confederation (1873-74) no attempt was made by the Dominion Government to provide such steam service. During the two subsequent years (1874-75, 1875-76) an old wooden steamboat, which had for years been engaged in ordinary navigation, but without a single qualification to fit her for the winter navigation of the Strait, was placed upon the route between Georgetown, one of the Island ports, and Pictou, in the Province of Nova Scotia; and, as was to be expected, she utterly failed in the service required of her. At the commencement of the winter of 1876-77 a new steamer called the "Northern Light" was placed upon this route. This steamer was not constructed for the service, but was designed for another purpose, and therefore her work can be regarded only in the light of an experiment.

"6. The service performed by the "Northern Light" has been most unsatisfactory, her trips being irregular and the accommodation she afforded has been neither continuous nor efficient. According to the official returns for the last four years, there has been an average in each winter of sixty-four days during which she has been entirely laid up. Nor does this furnish any idea of the irregularity of her trips before she entirely ceased running in each of these years, but only of the continued period when she was laid up and inoperative. At times she has been ice-bound for periods ranging from ten to twenty-four days, to the imminent danger of passengers and mails. Upon one occasion, four years ago, some of the passengers—among them women and children—were forced, after remaining on board several days, to leave her and walk a distance of many miles to the shore, when night overtaking them they received injuries from cold and exposure which resulted ultimately in the death of one of the party.