

or only break that has taken place in the Cornwall Canal since it was opened nearly half a century ago. To explain the matter to the House and to the country in a manner that will be satisfactory to them, I shall be obliged to quote largely from the records to show that at no time, since the construction of the canal until to-day, has it been safe for the purposes of navigation. We all know that any serious breach in the Cornwall Canal must be attended with the most disastrous results to the commerce of this country. The last break which occurred, it has been estimated, cost not less than five millions of dollars to this country, and for that reason I feel that it is my duty to bring before Parliament the present state of the canal, the plans which are proposed by the chief engineer, the contracts which have been let, and the alternative nature of the plans which are now before the Government for the prevention of any further such accidents to this canal. No change of location, no plan for the strengthening of the banks, which does not put beyond peradventure any further breach of this kind, is one that can be accepted by the people of this country. The Boards of Trade, the Mariners' Association, the ship-owners, all view with alarm the present proposed plan of improvement, and they are all anxious that the attention of the Government shall be closely directed to the present contracts. The works proposed are, unfortunately, under contract, and it may be objected that, being under contract, we ought to allow the contracts to be carried out. But I, for one, hold—and I am not alone, for the most practical men in this country, and men of high scientific attainments, are of the opinion that the plans are not satisfactory—that they are not plans which will make the Cornwall Canal secure, that they are not plans which will prevent any further interruption to commerce. It must not for a moment be supposed that, in the criticism I am about to make, I am in any way censuring the Government of the country. The Government acts upon the report of its chief engineer, a man of high attainments, of long experience, who for more than a quarter of a century has been advising all the Governments that have held power in this country, and he has held that confidence up to the present. I do not impute to that gentleman any ulterior designs in the plans which he has proposed, but I do say, from all I have been able to learn, from the enquiries I have made, from what has been said to me by practical men and by scientific men, that his plans are not at all what they ought to be. This leads me to say this: that as the plan which he proposes to follow now is the plan which was adopted at