

Mr. WELDON. The tender was only \$29,000, and surely that vessel was not completely finished, hull and spars, or she was different from any vessel that is launched, and the amount of the tender was paid up to \$900.

Mr. McLELAN. The inspector reported that she was completed according to the specification, which was very full, in hull, and spars, and rigging and sails. The inspector's report was that she was all finished, with the exception of about \$300 of expenditure.

Mr. WELDON. Who is the inspector who reported?

Mr. McLELAN. Mr. Coker, I think.

Mr. WELDON. I do not recollect seeing any return from Mr. Coker brought down.

Mr. McLELAN. If it has not been brought down, if the different reports from the inspectors at different stages have not been brought down, I will see that they are brought down.

Mr. WELDON. I moved for the payments to Mr. O'Brien and the certificates on which they were paid. I do not think that has been brought down.

Mr. McLELAN. I will see that it is brought down. That is the condition of the matter. The inspector reports that the vessel was completed, except about \$300; the contract was for \$29,000, and \$29,000 was paid. The expenditure on the machinery and boilers makes it up to about \$45,000.

Mr. WELDON. I observe that in the tenders and specifications, and in the contract, there was no place mentioned for the delivery of the vessel. I have understood from persons who tendered that they were under the impression that they had to deliver her in Halifax. It made a serious difference in the tenders, as anyone can see by looking at them. They range from \$64,000 down to \$29,000—I exclude Clarke's tender, which was \$25,000. Some of the tenderers were men whom I know to be perfectly qualified as to the building of a vessel, but the amount was small and a man could hardly build a vessel for that amount, and some were under the impression that they were bound to deliver the vessel in Halifax.

Mr. McLELAN. I think not—the wharf at St. John. You refer to the first contract?

Mr. WELDON. Yes.

Mr. McLELAN. That was at St. John.

Mr. WELDON. That made a vast difference, because it was a comparatively easy task to bring the vessel down to St. John, and a safe one; but it was very different to take her to Halifax at that season of the year, and if the contractor had to insure her, he would have had to pay an enormous premium. It seems to me it was a very great risk going around to Halifax, and it was a most extraordinary proceeding, when the tug *Hercules* went for the boat that she was not towed to St. John and put in order. The Minister stated before that he was guided by Captain Guildford and Mr. Brown. I do not think either of them was acquainted with the Bay of Fundy, not as well as the hon. gentleman himself, because Captain Guildford was employed between Halifax and St. Pierre Miquelon; Brown was an officer in the Navy, and neither of them had the slightest experience, nor, may I say, had there ever been a Bay of Fundy pilot on board the *Newfield*.

Mr. DAVIES. What is to be the intended draft of the vessel that is going to assist the *Northern Light* in keeping communication open to the Island?

Mr. McLELAN. I cannot give the draft at present; she will have much less draft than the *Northern Light*.

Mr. McLELAN.

Mr. MACDONALD (Kings, P.E.I.) With regard to this vessel that is to replace the *Princess Louise* that is lost, I understand she is to be much less draft than the *Northern Light*. I think it will be a mistake for the Government to build a vessel of much less draft than the *Northern Light* for ice purposes, because the screw will be so near the surface as to render the vessel unfit for forcing her way through the ice. The great merit of the *Northern Light* consists in her great draft enabling her to carry the screw so far below the surface that it does not come into contact with the ice. I am glad the Minister is going to put the *Northern Light* in a good state of repair for the coming season; and I hope they will give her a thorough good overhauling and make her as strong as she was at first, perhaps—at least make her fit for the service that she has been fairly well carrying out until the present time. In connection with that point, I may suggest to the hon. Minister that he should take some steps with respect to assisting the crossing at the Capes by providing a strong tug to be placed there during the winter to enable the crossing to be done more satisfactorily and regularly. I have had a little experience of that sort of thing myself this winter in coming here to Parliament, when I was detained eight days waiting for a crossing, and if there had been a steam tug it could have made the connection with the mainland almost every day. The trouble is the open water that intervenes between the ice and the board, and a small boat cannot make the connection between the board and the running ice. If a small tug was placed there, it is my opinion it would very materially assist communication at those points. It would not cost the Government very much to put on an ice boat as an experiment for one season, and if they found the idea a good one, they could supplement her service by placing a boat on each side, which would certainly accomplish a much desired object. I trust that when the Supplementary Estimates come down, the Government may see fit to provide for getting a boat for this purpose. She can be very safely taken care of at Cape Progress, where a wharf is now being constructed, and can be worked out to the edge of the board ice as it forms, and can be safely docked at the edge of the board ice, where she can be at all times utilized and connected with the running ice in the Straits. In that way I believe there would be more good done in facilitating our winter communication than in any other way.

Mr. PAINT. I wish to correct one statement made by the hon. member for St. John in connection with Captain Guildford. I understood the hon. member to say that he had not the slightest experience of the Bay of Fundy when he was appointed to tow that vessel round. Now, Sir, we have not got a better sea captain in the Dominion.

Mr. WELDON. I said he had no experience in the Bay of Fundy.

Mr. PAINT. His reputation dates back to 1860, when he was employed as pilot on the *Great Eastern*, from New York to Halifax, and he has been sailing round our shores ever since. Besides that, he was engaged to lay cables in the Bay of Fundy, and within the now last past three or four years, so he could not be a novice in that bay since that time. His reputation and character as a seaman are of the highest standing, and cannot be impeached in any sense.

Mr. WELDON. I said with regard to the Bay of Fundy, and I say so still. A man may be a good seaman enough to cross the Atlantic or to run between Halifax and southern ports, but I think he requires a good knowledge of the tides and currents of the Bay of Fundy channel, in order to navigate it safely, and an experience which only persons accustomed to navigate it at regular periods can acquire.