

year the lives of Her Majesty's subjects should be risked in that way? It is true that on the occasion to which I refer that vessel made her passage in a very few hours, but circumstances might have occurred—circumstances had occurred in previous years—which would have kept her out in the Gulf, perhaps shut into an ice field for three or four days; and I simply ask what would have become of that crowd of passengers who had scarcely standing room on the decks, if such an event had happened? Of course it must be attended with very great suffering and inconvenience to them if nothing else, but hon. gentlemen who perhaps may recollect an accident which occurred in Ontario in the summer time on a river, and how that accident was attended with frightful loss of life, may easily conceive how much greater loss of life would ensue should such a vessel as the "Northern Light," crowded with passengers, be caught for any length of time in bad weather in an ice field in the spring. It is for this reason that I have called the attention of this House and the Government to this question; because I feel that if I failed to make these circumstances fully known in my place in this House, I should be responsible for any accident which might occur from want of making known the facts. I take it that this is by no means a necessity. The Government have built a vessel called the "Lansdowne" which was launched last November, a strong vessel, competent for navigating ice-encumbered seas, and that vessel, as was stated in reply to a question put by me during last session, was to be ready for service last Autumn—last October the leader of the Government stated. No doubt delays frequently occur as to the precise time at which a vessel can be launched and made ready for service at sea, and I am not disposed to find fault because that vessel was not where they promised she should be last Autumn; but I do solemnly appeal to the Government not to allow a repetition of such things as I have described, and which will infallibly occur again this spring under similar circumstances. I appeal to them to send the steamer "Lansdowne" to assist the "Northern Light," for the conveyance of passengers and their luggage and freight, as a consort to the "Northern Light." Hon. gentlemen might suppose that there

was a simple remedy for this by instructing the captain not to take more than a certain number of passengers on board. Well, that of course would be a remedy, but it would be a vast 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 in order to be able to live 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. I would now ask the question of which I have given notice.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—My hon. friend, as in duty bound, looks after the interest of the Island from which he comes, and he always speaks on this subject with great force. No doubt it is the duty of Parliament, and of the Government in particular, to see that proper security is afforded to life and property. It is evident however that this crowding of the steamer with passengers can only occur in exceptional times, in the spring when there is a great deal of travel and traffic across the straits in consequence of the usual winter stoppage. This exceptionally large traffic can only occur for two or three weeks in the spring and perhaps means could be devised to put on an additional steamer in the spring to assist the "Northern Light." I do not think that there is sufficient passenger and freight traffic there to employ another steamer for any extended time during the summer.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—I know the importance of the question to which attention has been drawn by the hon. gentleman from Prince Edward Island, and I am very anxious that every satisfaction should be given to him in regard to a subject in which he justly takes such a deep interest, as indeed do all the members from Prince Edward Island. My hon. friend will admit that it is a very difficult thing to maintain communication