

members and an Executive Council of not more than seven, appointed by the Governor. The first premier was P. F. Little, who had co-operated with the Catholic Liberal party in their efforts to obtain responsible government. The first ministry had a majority of Roman Catholics, but the growing strength of the Protestant population demanded a share of political power. Electioneering riots, particularly in 1861, brought to a head the struggle for sectarian ascendancy in politics, and it was recognized that some compromise must be made. From that date began an effort to make a fair adjustment of political patronage on a denominational basis—a practice that has continued in Newfoundland ever since.

First Confederation Talks.—When the question of federation of the British North American colonies was first raised in 1858, Newfoundland showed some interest. Newfoundland was not invited to the Charlottetown Conference in 1864, which, while originally called to discuss only a union of the three Maritime Provinces, later developed into a conference of all the mainland colonies. At the Quebec Conference later in the same year, called to discuss the larger union of all the colonies, Newfoundland was represented by a bi-party delegation consisting of F. B. T. Carter and Ambrose Shea. The delegation had no power to commit the Newfoundland Government but both Carter and Shea became enthusiastic supporters of union and after the Conference spoke publicly in favour of it on a lecture tour of the cities on the mainland.

No decisive action was taken by the Newfoundland Government before Confederation became effective. Accordingly Newfoundland, like Prince Edward Island, was not represented at the Westminster Conference of 1866 when the British North America Act was drafted. Sections 146 and 147 of the Act, however, expressly provided for the admission of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia should they decide later to join.

The Quebec Conference evidently recognized that the general financial arrangements provided in the scheme of union would not quite meet Newfoundland's needs. In any event, the proposed terms provided for a special additional payment from the Government of



Sir Ambrose Shea, Newfoundland delegate to the Quebec Conference, 1864