

THE UNIFICATION OF CANADA

TO ONE glancing over the external features of the Dominion, the geographical conditions must appear unfavourable to the growth of national unity. There are serious barriers which separate section from section. North of New Brunswick are stretches of forest dividing the Maritime Provinces from Quebec. West of Quebec, and between Ontario and Manitoba, lie large regions of uninviting country. Not until Winnipeg is reached, half way across the continent, do we enter the borders of what bids fair to become one of the thickly settled parts of the Dominion. Then, as one threads one's way in and out, hour after hour, through the passes of the mountains, one realizes how the western sea-province, without artificial means of communication, would be cut off from the plains of central Canada. The Dominion has length but not great habitable breadth.

Nor does the initial situation with regard to race and language seem to be much more favourable. Quebec stands between the English-speaking Maritime Provinces and Ontario. In the newer western provinces, though the predominant population is drawn from the older provinces and from Britain, there are large settlements of people whose ideals differ widely from the prevalent customs and thought of their neighbours. In fact, the situation of the Dominion racially and geographically as it is to-day must to the outside observer present almost insuperable obstacles to a permanent national sentiment. Manifest destiny fifty years ago would not have pointed in the direction of a line of provinces welded into a unity across the continent.

But, as so often, the unexpected has happened, and to-day Canada is unified by a strong national spirit. Travel