

The advantages of the union of these islands with Canada may thus be briefly summarized:—

1. It would give to Canada an increase of territory amounting to 113,000 square miles, and of population 2,300,000,* thus adding considerably to the importance and influence of the Dominion.

2. The tropical products available in the new territory would make the Dominion more self-contained and would give us practically all the advantages of a diversity of climate and products which are afforded to that great Republic by the southern portion of the United States.

3. The importance of sea power would become so obvious under new conditions as to leave little room for argument to the contrary.

4. Confederation would afford a broader market to our manufacturers and producers which must result in a very large development of trade, as we produce precisely what they require, and *vice versa*.

5. It would balance the accessions which will accrue to the other self-governing dominions at the termination of the war in the only way in which it is possible for Canada to obtain an equivalent, and thus to some extent compensate the Dominion for the sacrifices she has made in the defence of the Empire.

Let us now briefly consider some objections to the scheme:—

1. First and foremost is the **negro question**.

"I suppose there is no island or place in the world," said Chief Justice Cockburn in his celebrated charge to the Grand Jury at the Central Criminal Court in 1867, "in which there has been so much insurrection and disorder as the island of Jamaica. There is no place in which the curse which attaches to slavery, both as regards the master and the slave, has been more strikingly illustrated."

The population of Jamaica according to the latest available figures is in the neighbourhood of 850,000. Of these only about two per cent are white.

With this vast preponderance, it is not unlikely that under confederation the negroes would clamour for larger political privileges than they at present possess under the direct control of Great Britain. To admit them forthwith to the full measure of self-government enjoyed by our provinces would be out of the question. What then would be their status in the Dominion? The problem presents grave, though not necessarily insoluble, difficulties.

Possibly some such system as obtained in early days in the Northwest Territories, or at a later date in the Yukon district, might be devised. Those distant regions were presided over by a Lieutenant-Governor (or in the case of the Yukon by an officer styled The Commissioner) appointed by the Governor General. This Lieutenant-Governor, or Commissioner, was assisted by a Council, all the members of which, in the first instance, were likewise appointed by the Governor General. As time went on a modification of this system took place under which a certain number of the Councilors were chosen by the people—the Council thus becoming partly nominative and partly elective. Still later the nominated element disappeared and the Council became wholly elective, subsequently developing, in the case of the Northwest Territories, into a Legislative Assembly with limited powers, and ultimately attaining the full measure of responsible government enjoyed by our provinces to-day.

This development was a gradual and slow process, regulated by the growth of the Territories and the proved fitness of the people for self-government. Some such system might be tried in the West Indies. The question of the franchise would have to be very carefully considered when the time came to make the experiment. There should be a property qualification, such as for example the restriction of the franchise to freeholders, to begin with, and an educational standing as well, high enough, at the outset, to exclude a very considerable proportion of the black population.