

*The Address—Mr. Ashbourne*

speeches they delivered as mover and seconder of the motion which is now under discussion. As yet it has not been my privilege to visit Vancouver, but after listening with rapt attention to the address of the member for Vancouver South, I feel that, as soon as I can conveniently do so, I should like to visit that part of Canada.

The visit of His Excellency the Governor General and Viscountess Alexander to Newfoundland was greatly appreciated by our people. This visit afforded many of them an opportunity of meeting the representative of His Majesty the King, whose health we trust will continue to improve. I sincerely hope that the welcome accorded to the governor general, and the repeated desire expressed by the people of Newfoundland for a return visit by His Excellency and his good lady, will promote an early return so that the places not yet visited by them may have an opportunity of greeting them.

We were honoured by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), who, practically speaking, ended his election campaign tour in Newfoundland. I feel sure that the remembrance of the deep interest displayed by the right hon. gentleman in the province of Newfoundland, and his constant efforts to bring the union of Newfoundland and Canada to a satisfactory consummation, was in the minds of the people of Canada.

Since I had the honour of being elected by the people of Newfoundland to be a member of the national convention which met in St. John's on September 11, 1946, I can speak with a certain degree of personal knowledge about the work of that convention. It happens that I was also a member of the delegation elected by the national convention to come to Ottawa in the summer of 1947 to confer with representatives of the Canadian government about the possible terms of union. I want to pay tribute to the ex-Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, who welcomed us at that time, as well as to the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent, who acted as chairman of the meetings that were held at that time.

We arrived in this city on the 24th day of June, the day on which the people of Newfoundland were celebrating the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of John Cabot upon the shores of that province. The delegation remained here for a period of three months, during which time meetings were held, concluding on September 29, 1947. One month from that day the Prime Minister of Canada wrote to His Excellency Sir Gordon, now Lord Macdonald, the Governor

of Newfoundland, enclosing a statement of terms believed to constitute a fair and equitable basis for union with Canada. Those terms were discussed at length by the members of the national convention and were before the people in the referenda which followed.

The national convention had been elected by the people of Newfoundland to examine the financial and economic condition of the country and to make recommendations to the British government as to the forms of government to be submitted to the people in a national referendum. The first referendum was held on June 3, 1948, the results of which are as follows: for continuation of commission of government for a five-year period, 22,311; for confederation with Canada, 64,066; for restoration of responsible government, 69,400. As no form of government had received a majority of the votes cast, a second referendum was held on July 22, 1948. This resulted in confederation with Canada receiving 78,323 votes as against 71,334 votes for responsible government.

I should like to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. F. G. Bradley, the Secretary of State for Canada, was the chairman of the delegation that came to Ottawa in the summer of 1947. When we returned to the convention in Newfoundland both of us, in common with fourteen other members of the convention, felt that the people of Newfoundland should be afforded an opportunity of voting upon the matter of confederation with Canada. I can assure you we were very glad when the British government decided to place it upon the ballot paper. Confederation, I am happy to say, is now a *fait accompli*. On the 15th day of September, 1949, when this twenty-first parliament assembled, we saw the representatives of Newfoundland seated in this chamber with the representatives of the other nine provinces.

We are proud and happy to take our places in this great land, and delighted that at long last the representations, discussions, conferences and negotiations have borne fruit. As a result of the choice of the people, on whose judgment we can safely rely, I am happy that we are now part and parcel of this great dominion which is, if I may be allowed to say so, greater now that the resources of Newfoundland have been pooled with those of Canada. We can appreciate the fact that the majority of the people are never far wrong when their voice can be heard or when an opportunity is given them to express their considered will on issues concerning their future and their welfare. As time goes on, and as the needs of Newfoundland become