

the great systems of the continent. She hesitated; she refused the proffered terms; she went on house-keeping on her own account. She prospered wonderfully, too, under her low tariff, but she was not at peace. The seductive tones of the suitor were ever in her ear; she listened; and in 1873, as we have said, entered the Union on special terms—she was to be put on an equality with the rest of Canada, to have an uninterrupted channel of communication through which the life of the nation would flow to her unerringly.

The terms of the union, as drawn up by the representatives of the Dominion and our own, contain this important condition:

"The Dominion Government shall assume and defray the charges for efficient steam service for the conveyance of mails and passengers, to be established and maintained between the Island and the mainland of the Dominion, winter and summer, thus placing the Island in continuous communication with the Intercolonial Railway and railway systems of the Dominion."

Sir George Etienne Cartier, Sir John A Macdonald's First Lieutenant and strong right arm, was particularly desirous that we should enter the Confederation; without doubt, and for obvious reasons, Sir John himself was equally solicitous; but to Sir George Etienne the overtures were confided; and the zeal which he manifested had much to do with the result. "Come in, come in now", he intreated our representatives, promising them the most generous treatment. But they were suspicious—all small, independent states are; and so they required the most explicit assurances. As to communication, the vital matter, they could not see their way clear: how were they to get the continuous daily steam communication with the Mainland which would place them in close connection with the Intercolonial and other continental railway systems? Sir Etienne was equal to the occasion. "There is nothing impossible to the Privy Council of Canada," he insisted; "Trust us to do it." Under these influences; with these assurances, Prince Edward Island—prosperous, fertile, independent little colony that she was,—threw in her fortunes with the rest of Canada.

And what is the story of her provincial struggles ever since? It is writ in one great word across her life, "UNFULFILLED COMPACT,"—on the part of the strong partner.

Without the unit of communication all provincial life is paralyzed; the little industries even are killed out; agriculture languishes, trade is unsteady and uncertain, subject to frequent crises. The country may be the best in the world—it is really the most fertile spot under the sun—but in such circumstances no adequate progress, no permanent prosperity, is possible. At best the buoyant