

## NEWFOUNDLAND: A NEW PROVINCE.



SOME years ago, a gentleman visiting Winchester Cathedral, desired to be shown Jane Austen's grave. The verger, as he pointed it out, asked; "Pray, sir, can you tell me whether there was anything particular about that lady; so many people

want to know where she was buried?"

Somewhat similar was the position in which we Canadians found ourselves when the Newfoundland delegation came to Ottawa to arrange terms for the admission of their sea-girt island into the Canadian Confederation. We regarded Newfoundland as a barren and rugged land—a huge rock left over after the formation of the American Continent, wrapt in the gloom of a perpetual fog, and inhabited by a scanty number of fishermen, who plied their trade for a few months in the year and then departed to their homes. We were told that Newfoundland was an out-of-the-way place, staggering beneath the burden of a heavy debt. Then again, the Nemesis of a French fishery treaty served as a bugbear to warn us off from the shores of Newfoundland.

When we turn the search-light of truth upon these specious objections, we find they fade away like the phantom forms that frighten children by night. The greatest length of the island is 317 miles, and its greatest breadth 316 miles, and its area is about 42,000 square miles.

The coast of Newfoundland presents a very picturesque appearance, with its numerous bays, some of which run into the mainland 80 miles, studded with islands covered by green forests. The depth of water in the bays is so great that the largest ocean-going vessel can run close to the shore, and be unloaded by placing a plank from the side of the ship to the dry

land. Until late years little or nothing was known about the interior of the island, but recent surveys have shown that the valley of the west coast alone contains almost 15,000 square miles of the choicest meadow-land. This vast prairie is unshorn save by the reindeer and caribou; and the "solemn stillness" is broken only by the bark and growl of the wolf and bear. Its extensive forests abound with game that would bring joy to the heart of the most ardent sportsman; and its sparkling streams are literally alive with salmon, trout and many other kinds of fish.

The prevalent idea that Newfoundland is only a land of fogs is as Mr. Bond said "as erroneous as the French minister's expression that Canada was but a few acres of snow."

True enough a small fraction of the coast of Newfoundland is enveloped in fog part of the year but "one swallow does not make a spring." The winters are not nearly so severe nor are the summers so hot as we have them in Canada. Rarely does the thermometer fall below zero in the winter and it ranges from 70° to 80° in summer.

Formerly one of the greatest difficulties towards union with Canada was the Gulf but at the present time, with a steam ferry, Newfoundland is distant only two hours and a-half from Canada or about sixty miles. This short interval is as naught against the achievements of electricity and steam and every student of commercial geography knows that transportation is much cheaper by water than by land. The question of separation then which blocked the way to confederation in '67 is not worthy of serious consideration to-day, when we remember that Newfoundland is the *rendez-vous* of the great cable lines over which the business of two continents is flashed in a paltry moment.

In our humble opinion, the most seri-