

AND so a further effort is to be made to bring about political union between Canada and Newfoundland.

This effort differs from its predecessors in that it is being made a part of a general Imperial scheme for consummation after the war. The abortive attempts hitherto made were conducted direct by the representatives of the two countries.

When in 1864 the representatives of the then separated provinces met in Quebec to consider Confederation, Newfoundland was represented by two of her statesmen. But while the Canadian provinces continued between that time and 1867, to carry on negotiations, the Newfoundland Government decided to drop the matter. They preferred that while the Canadian provinces were working out the experiment they would watch the game to see how it worked.

In 1868 a further attempt was made to corral Newfoundland. Representatives went to Ottawa to discuss terms. Both branches of the Newfoundland Legislature passed resolutions endorsing the scheme. But the voice of the legislature was not the voice of Newfoundland. In the general election of 1869 the Government was bowled over on the issue of Confederation.

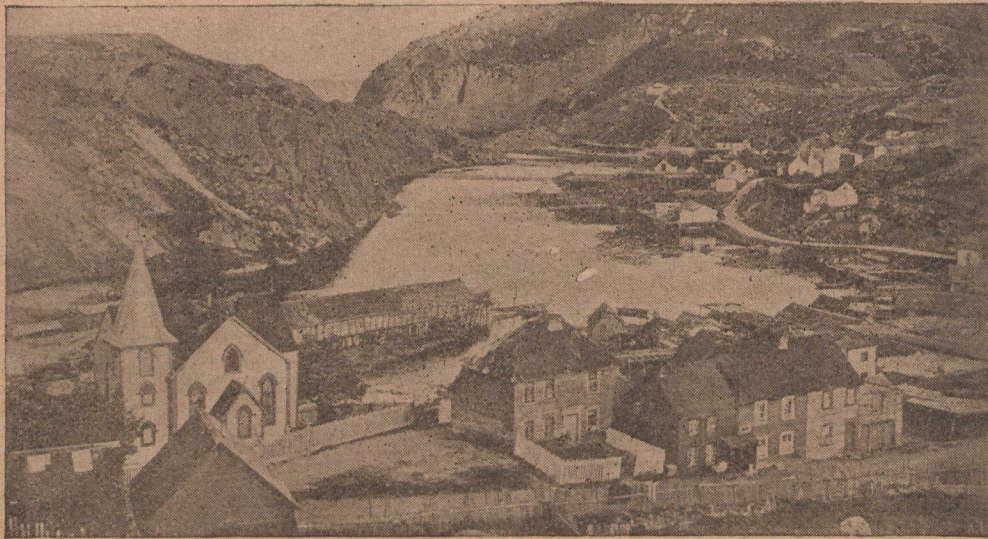
Naturally the pride of the young Dominion of Canada was somewhat ruffled by this decided rejection. The suggestion was made in one quarter that, willy-nilly, Newfoundland should be brought into the Confederation by Act of the Imperial Parliament. But Sir (then Mr.) John Macdonald promptly put his foot down on a proposal so drastic. He was keenly disappointed at Newfoundland's action because, as he said in a letter to the Governor-General, it postponed "the completion of the Imperial policy to unite all the British North American possessions under one Government." While there was no doubt in his mind that the Imperial Parliament had the power to force Newfoundland into the Union, yet he held it would be "very inadvisable" to exercise it. His experience with Nova Scotia was too recent and too unpleasant to warrant the coercion of Newfoundland, no matter how much he might have favoured it. "John A." not only knew how to play the game of politics, but he knew how to profit by experience. He was too canny to invite a storm which would probably be worse than that created over Nova Scotia being brought into the Confederation without the formal consent of the people. At any rate he felt, as he expressed it in the letter above quoted, that Canada could afford to wait with "patience for the inevitable reaction that must take place in a year or two" in the attitude of the people of Newfoundland in regard to Union with the Dominion. But nearly fifty years have passed since then, and the pronounced signs of "the inevitable reaction are still wanting."

TWENTY years after Confederation, Sir Charles Tupper, on his way to England, dropped off at St. John's, Newfoundland, for the purpose of feeling the pulse of the Government on the subject. He felt it so well that a delegation was started on its mission to Ottawa for the purpose of reopening negotiations. But such a storm was raised when the object of the mission became public that the delegates were recalled before they had travelled beyond the borders of Nova Scotia.

The nearest approach we have had since 1867 to the consummation of Union between Canada and Newfoundland was in 1895. At that time trade and financial conditions in the Island were precarious and it was generally felt that the only way of salvation was Union. A conference was held at Ottawa. This time the representatives of the Dominion put a crimp in the negotiations by refusing to agree to the additional sum of \$54,000 which the Newfoundland delegates asked for in the way of a subsidy.

This refusal of Sir Mackenzie Bawell and his fellow

SHALL WE ADOPT



NEWFOUNDLAND?

What Canada Missed for \$54,000 in 1895

By WILLIAM LEWIS EDMONDS

delegates to concede the additional \$54,000 demanded by the Newfoundland delegates has become known in history as "the blunder of 1895." And blunder it undoubtedly was, although it did not appear to be as much so at that time as it does to-day.

After this abortive conference Newfoundland began to smile again over a marked revival in trade and an industrial development bigger than anything dreamed by even the most optimistic of Islanders. In the very year that the conference at Ottawa failed, work was begun on the iron ore mines of Belle Isle, which now rank among the most important in the world, considerably over a million tons being exported annually. Nearly all the ore used by the iron and steel furnaces of Nova Scotia comes from Newfoundland, out of the 1,595,995 tons imported by the Dominion last year 811,513 tons being from that colony.

The paper and pulp industry, which has sprung up within the last dozen years, is probably of even greater importance to the Island than its iron mines, producing as it does materials having an annual value of three million dollars or more. The railway, which twenty years ago was in little better than an embryonic state, now traverses the Island from end to end, leading in turn to the development of its lumber, agricultural and mineral resources. At the time of Confederation, Newfoundland possessed no railway. To-day she has a total of a thousand miles, on the basis of population the largest mileage of any country in the world. According to a speech delivered in London a few months ago, Sir Edward Morris, the Premier, stated that the earning power of the people of Newfoundland has doubled during the past twenty years, in other words, since a matter of \$54,000 stood in the way of the consummation of Union with the Dominion. The fishing industry, which is still the most important, having an annual value of about \$7,000,000, is now no longer the Island's only source of support.

Since the failure of the Ottawa conference the external trade of Newfoundland has increased by about two hundred per cent. It now imports between fifteen and sixteen million dollars worth of merchandise compared with less than six million dollars twenty years ago. Its exports approximate closely to its imports in value, whereas twenty years ago they ran between five and six millions.

Canada's exports to Newfoundland have a little more than doubled since 1895, being now valued, according to the returns for the fiscal year 1916, at \$5,071,000. But had not the paltry \$54,000 been allowed to stand in the way of Union the annual value of our sales to the Island would undoubtedly have been much larger. As it is at present, we do not even rank first in Newfoundland's imports, that position being occupied by the United States, which

during the calendar year 1916 exported \$8,324,000 worth of merchandise to the colony, whereas five years ago it was \$5,258,000 worth.

"In my humble opinion," declared Hon. P. J. McGrath, a member of the Legislative Council of Newfoundland, in concluding an address before the Canadian Club at Toronto four years ago, "if Confederation should ever be brought about in the future, it must be through the influence of one of two circumstances: either a complete transformation of conditions in the eastern part of British America, which we cannot see in prospect at the present time, so that Newfoundland would consider it to be of advantage for financial or other reasons to come in; or the menace of foreign domination might force her to do so. But at the present time our country is too prosperous, our people are too contented, the outlook is too promising for us to consider any proposal for union on the part of the Dominion, even if the Dominion were disposed at this time to make one."

Since Hon. Mr. McGrath uttered these words some changes have taken place in the situation. More than anything else the war has influenced this change. With Britain in command of the sea the "menace of foreign domination," to which Mr. McGrath referred to, has perhaps not been very imminent. But it has been, and still is, a possibility—considering Germany.

THE Confederation of the Provinces of British North America was the result of the recognition of the fact that none of them could hope, as long as they existed as separate colonies, to achieve national greatness, either politically or industrially. It was a recognition of the same fact that brought about the creation of the Australian Commonwealth, in 1901, and of the Union of South Africa in 1909.

Canada certainly needs Newfoundland not only in order to complete the Confederation of fifty years ago, but, and what is more important still, in order that the gateway which commands the entrance to her great inland system of waterways may be under her own control. The trade and commerce and the natural resources of the Island, important and all as they undoubtedly are, rank but secondary in importance to the strategic necessities. Strategically, Newfoundland is fully as important to the Dominion as Gibraltar and Malta are to the protection of Britain's possessions in the Near and Far East. Newfoundland, on the other hand, needs Canada in order that her natural resources and industries may be more readily developed and in order that her position, geographically and politically, may be strengthened and assured.

Newfoundland is the tenth largest island in the world, having an area of about forty-six thousand square miles, and confederated with the Dominion would enormously increase Canada's prestige as a sea power, for with the island fortified and a navy at her command, which she naturally will have in the course of time, she would dominate the sea-going traffic of the Western Ocean.

There is no longer any doubt regarding the success of the Canadian Confederation. Neither is it possible for unprincipled politicians to go up and down the Island as they did fifty years ago and stir up antagonism against Confederation by declaring the sons of the simple fisher-folk would be used as gunwads for Canadian guns; that their fishing and bait industry would be sacrificed to Canadian interests; that they would be over-burdened with taxation, and that Newfoundlanders in general would be hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Canadian people. These prejudices, like those which at first existed against the construction of the railway, have now largely vanished under the influence of education and experience.

Financially, Canada is already largely interested (Concluded on page 10.)