

is, we believe, the New York Board of Trade and Transportation. And it does so on the false assumption that the treaty "is a surrender of most of the rights of American fishermen." The object is of course to prevent the ratification of the treaty, against which, in form, the board enters a protest. Never in any previous crisis of the fishing dispute has the public temper, either in the United States or Nova Scotia, been as moderate and reasonable as now. The Halifax Chamber of Commerce welcomes an arrangement defining by mutual consent the rights of the two parties; while it feels "a little reluctant in yielding to a modification of the fully established theory of the headland and three-mile limit." This moderation contrasts strongly with the intense fervor with which Nova Scotia, in former times, contended for the maintenance of the extreme view of the headland question; and the corresponding moderation which generally prevails in the United States ought to insure the amicable settlement of the question by the ratification of the treaty.

Sir Richard Cartwright has, it appears, taken upon himself the responsibility of moving, in the House of Commons, in favor of Commercial Union with the United States. He proposed to admit free into each country the natural products and manufactures of the other. Canada, he contended, would have been better off as part of the United States, though he was not an annexationist. He dealt much in hypothetical statistics, in which there was, to say the least, much uncertainty and exaggeration. Many of his alleged facts and figures are open to question, and some of them capable of complete refutation. In the absence of Sir Charles Tupper, who was confined to his room by illness, Mr. White, the Minister of the Interior, replied. He argued that, on economical grounds, the measure proposed would not be beneficial to Canada. Sir Richard Cartwright's resolution will, we think, be rejected by a large majority.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND CANADA.

Steps are once more being taken for the admission of Newfoundland into the Canadian confederation. The opinion is expressed, on the part of Canada, that there will be little difficulty in arranging the terms; and this is no doubt true, on the supposition that both parties are willing. The objection to union has hitherto come from Newfoundland, and if it has been overcome, the task of arranging details would not be likely to prove insuperable. The proposal to negotiate, following so closely after the Washington conference, suggests the probability of Sir Charles Tupper having informally talked the matter over with the representative of Newfoundland, who was sent to Washington to watch the negotiation and to present to the British commissioners the views of the island on the proposed fishery treaty. The first step taken to bring the question of union officially under discussion is taken by the Canadian Government, in the shape of an invitation to the government of Newfoundland to send delegates to Ottawa for that purpose.

Whatever may come of it, there is scarcely a doubt that delegates will be sent to Ottawa in response to the invitation. But that there are still difficulties in the way of union need not be denied. The executive council of the island is said to be divided in its views of the desirability of annexation; three members being in favor of it and two opposed, without counting Premier Thorburn, who was away from the island when this intelligence came. Should he join the two dissentients the government would be equally divided; but, if he should prove not to be averse to discussing the question, a conference will take place. The Ottawa authorities are anxious that the opposition in the island, as well as the government, should have a voice in the deliberations. This is a wise precaution; for it would be far better that no union should take place than that Newfoundland should give a doubtful or halting consent. Local merchants who fear that union would bring competition, banks and local manufacturers for reasons of their own, though what they are it would be difficult to guess, are reported to be opposed to sending a delegation. Should disunion in the ministry lead to a resignation and a general election, the question would go before the country in a way to obtain a decisive expression of opinion upon it. At some stage of the proceedings a popular vote of the islanders would have to be taken. Canada should absolutely refuse to admit the island, except on an explicit expression of a desire of its inhabitants for union. We want no surly province, pouting like a child, lamenting its cruel fate, and threatening to retire as a means of extorting blackmail.

That the admission of Newfoundland might be mutually advantageous we do not deny. At the same time it is not difficult to conceive grave objections to its admission. The population consists of Roman Catholics and Orangemen, who do not always live harmoniously together. Within a recent date their dissensions have led to serious riots, and there is no guarantee that these unhappy disturbances will not be renewed in the near future. The two factions would become make-weights in Dominion politics, with what result it is not easy to foresee. The Island has but one industry, and when that is prosperous all goes well; but when failures in the fishery occur, and at some points they occur very often, the local government has to vote large sums for relief. Whatever might be the terms of admission, however well guarded against demands for "better terms" the treasury of the Dominion might appear to be, appeals would not fail to be made to Ottawa for relief in periods of distress. Newfoundland, from the nature of its industry, cannot create any considerable municipal resources to fall back upon in times of disaster. The fishermen are not rooted in the soil, farther than being permanent residents. It was long the policy of England to prevent the growth of a resident population in the island. The attempt to prevent colonization there had for its motive the desire to make the United Kingdom the domicile of all persons engaged in the fishery, that

their services might the more readily be commanded in the British fleet, in case of need. To form a nursery for British seamen was for many years regarded as one of the chief objects of the fishery; and the idea still lingers in connection with the French fishery there, though it is no longer universally entertained in France. In spite of the discouragements of the settled policy of Great Britain, a permanent colony settled down along the coasts of Newfoundland, but not till 1832 was any plan of internal government formed. The laws of England alone were available for the government of the colonists; and the judges having to decide new questions for which these laws did not provide, virtually assumed the functions of legislation. A change would have been made sooner than it was, had it not been for the obstinate opposition of the colonists. There was one advantage in waiting till the year 1832 for the creation of a Legislative Assembly and a Legislative Council: the inhabitants escaped the bitterness of the controversy over the control of the public revenue which proved so disastrous in Lower Canada. From the moment legislative powers were conferred on Newfoundland, the appropriation of all the public revenue, levied under any parliamentary authority, became the exclusive prerogative of the local authorities. And we believe they did not abuse their trust.

The paucity of municipal institutions in some parts of the Dominion compared with their full development in others, gives rise to a dissimilarity in the local institutions greatly to the disadvantage of the provinces where this backwardness exists. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick do not know their financial strength. Nova Scotia was kept in leading strings and nurtured in financial dependence to a late date, the British Parliament providing for all the expenses of her government, greatly to her injury. The unused powers lost much of their vigor; and the province is now suffering from the absence of a general system of municipal taxation, such as Ontario possesses. So long as common roads and bridges are built at the cost of the province, the local treasury will feel the depleting effect of mere parish demands, and discontent will prevail. So long as the provincial treasury feels the burthen of parish calls, from which that of Ontario is free, so long will the local government be likely to appeal frantically to the Dominion treasury for aid. A repetition of this unpleasant experience, there is reason to fear, would come from Newfoundland after its union with Canada. There is no reason, in the nature of things, why the best of municipal institutions should not grow up in Nova Scotia; but the exclusive fishing community of Newfoundland, whose home is literally on the deep, can never develop a general municipal system. There is but one hope. If railway communication should open up an extended agricultural area in the island, what is now impossible would then become possible. In its isolation the island has not been able to establish extended railway communication. The terms of union would probably provide for railway communication across the