

Conference Between British and Nfld. Members of Empire Parliamentary Association

The second session of the conference between the delegates from the United Kingdom and Newfoundland branches of the Empire Parliamentary Association was held yesterday in the Council Chamber opening at 10 o'clock a.m. Capt. H. Douglas King, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P., presided. Before the formal business was taken up, the President of the Legislative Council announced that Colonel Crookehank had made a valuable contribution to the Library in that he had made a presentation of a valuable work of which he himself was the author entitled "Print of British Military Operations." This announcement was received with much applause, and on the motion of the Prime Minister and Mr. Morine a hearty vote of thanks was extended to the Colonel for his kindness.

Capt. King then formally opened the Conference with a brief but fluent address, saying in part:

CAPT. KING PRESIDES.
Capt. King, I think it is a happy inspiration that it should have been arranged that one of the delegates should preside at this morning's meeting. It is in keeping with the hospitality of this country and it shows the spirit that we want fostered between the branches of this Association. This branch has recently restarted and I am glad to see that it is in line with the aims for which the Association stands. I have a great belief in the Empire Parliamentary Association. It is only by this means can we come to understand the real needs of the Empire.

We as your guests appreciate the help you have given us to realize the conditions of your country. I should like, especially, to thank Sir Patrick McGrath for the arrangement of our visit. It entails a lot of work and deserves a large amount of thanks. Yesterday Mr. Morine welcomed us in an address and it would not be inappropriate to read a letter from our Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin.

10 Downing Street,
Whitehall, S.W. 1,
August 5th, 1925.

My Dear King,
I write to you as the Chairman of the Parliamentary Delegation, which is to visit Newfoundland this summer as the guests of the Branch of the Empire Parliamentary Association in the Newfoundland. I am glad to ask you to convey to the delegation and Newfoundland Parliament the best wishes of my Government for the success of the visit.

I trust that the Conferences between the delegates and the members of the Newfoundland Legislature, and the visits of the Delegates to the various parts of the Island, will have the effect of bringing before the minds of representative men in this parliament a thorough appreciation of the needs and aspirations of Newfoundland and the possibilities and resources of the country.

I regret that owing to the industrial difficulties in this country it was not possible for a member of the Cabinet to make arrangements to head the delegation, but I am sure that you will do so and satisfactorily represent the Government on this important mission.

I shall look forward to hearing all the news of your visit.

Yours sincerely,
STANLEY BALDWIN.
Capt. H. Douglas King,
C.B.E., D.S.O., M.P.

This letter shows the interest our Premier and our Government take in this visit. This Association is non-party in its character. I am sorry that there was not a Cabinet Minister with this delegation as leader. To obtain one at the time was impossible. I can quite understand that you would appreciate having one come

or four years an earnest and vigorous effort has been made to reach a settlement. At the end of 1923, the Newfoundland "Brief" or "Case," was ready for submission to the other side, but a delay of 18 months ensued through various causes in Canada before the Canadian lawyers were able to have their "Brief" ready. The cases were exchanged a couple of months ago and preliminary work on the "counter-cases" has now been started and will be pushed forward as speedily as possible. The Minister of Justice and Sir Patrick McGrath, who have been dealing with the case, will leave shortly to proceed to England in connection with the matter and we hope that before many months have elapsed the "Counter" cases will be completed and ready for exchange in the same way; once this has been done no further obstacle will exist to the submission of the matter to the Adjudication of the Privy Council. Suggestions were made to this Government last fall with a view to a conference in Canada looking to a settlement by agreement rather than by legal processes, and a delegation consisting of the Colonial Secretary, the Minister of Justice, and myself, with Sir Patrick McGrath as Advisor, visited Montreal and conferred with representatives of the Ottawa and Quebec Governments, but the parties were too far apart for any settlement to be reached. Reports have appeared in the press from time to time since, Quebec, purporting to represent the views of the Government of this Colony, but they are entirely unwarranted and unfounded.

Canada has recently held a Conference with representatives from the West Indies, and arrived at a mutual understanding for trade preference and closer relationship. The Legislators of Canada and the various Islands will shortly be called upon to ratify these agreements, which if put into effect will be detrimental to our interests in these West Indies Islands where we market, more particularly, a large quantity of salt codfish. In the agreement arrived at, Clause VIII provides that there shall be no interference with the granting of any future preference by the Dominion or by any of the said Colonies to any other part of the British Empire, or with any existing preference or the granting of any future preference by the Dominion or by any of the said Colonies to any other part of the British Empire, or with any existing preference or the granting of any future preference by the said Colonies among themselves. We must immediately take steps to protect our interests in this respect and make our own agreement with the West Indies.

The total value of our importation from the British West Indies is \$850,000, and the total exports from Newfoundland to the British West Indies is \$780,000, or a balance in favour of the West Indies of \$70,000. Our largest importation is from Barbados, from whom we buy over \$550,000 worth of molasses every year. Our imports from Canada in 1924 amounted to 11½ million dollars, and of that amount nearly three-million dollars worth was admitted duty free. Our exports for the same period amounted to less than 2 million dollars, and three-quarters of this was made up in iron ore and limestone, quarried, mined and exported by Canadian Corporations and in codfish taken by Canadian merchants in return for supplies on our West Coast.

The balance of real trade is in favour of Canada by nearly eleven million dollars, so it will be seen a mutual agreement as to trade relations is more necessary to Canada than to us. Spain is the only foreign country to whom we give a preference tariff on onions and fruit, very little of which we import from there, and the preference is given in exchange for a preferential tariff on our dry codfish, the trade in which is very considerable.

OTHER SPEAKERS.
Hon. E. A. Harney was glad of these conferences so that many viewpoints could be exchanged. He likened the discussions to the building of a foundation on which will be reared, he hoped, a structure which would command the attention of statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic. Touching on the Labrador question he discussed briefly the relation of the Privy Council to the Dominions as touching domestic affairs. As far as that particular question was concerned it would come before an impartial tribunal, and a decision would be given which would command the confidence of everybody. He preferred not to discuss the merits or demerits of the case as it affected a sister Dominion as vitally as it affected Newfoundland. Regarding the question of the export of iron ore to Great Britain he felt that even though the chemical properties were not what they should like to have for English manufactures yet experts could be trusted to fix that matter to the satisfaction of both seller and purchaser. He considered the making of a treaty between Canada and the

West Indies without consultations with the other colonies as somewhat of a "dog in a manger" policy, and thought that the British Government in an advisory capacity could and would see to it that there would be no discrimination or preference to the detriment of Newfoundland trade.

Hon. A. R. Morine stated that Canada had not made an agreement with the West Indies which debared other Colonies from doing the same. As a matter of fact a clause had been inserted in the treaty which especially stated that other colonies would be at liberty to make the same treaty if they saw fit to do so. As regards to relations of the Privy Council to the Colonies he felt that there was absolute confidence existing in that body. It was regarded in Newfoundland, as for the most part in Canada, as one of the great pillars of the British Empire. He suggested that one good turn could be done for Newfoundland, and that was for the Mother Country as soon as possible to acquire for Newfoundland the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. It would save endless trouble for Canada and Newfoundland and be very beneficial to both. American rights on the West Coast were lucidly discussed, and a decision as to the liabilities of Newfoundland there was. He trusted that the seed sown in these conferences would in the near future come to full flower in the discussions that would take place in the British House of Commons when Newfoundland affairs would be discussed.

Mr. Wm. Lunn thought that this topic was the most delicate and the most difficult of the three to discuss. The speeches of the Prime Minister and Mr. Morine were particularly interesting to him. The speech of the Prime Minister breathed a spirit of generosity in characteristic Newfoundland fashion. It showed a spirit to compromise as regards the dispute between Newfoundland and Quebec rather than have litigation. The effort had failed but the spirit was magnificent. He discussed the protocol and said he was in favour of the Colonies of the Empire being consulted in all matters affecting them when any treaties or agreements were being made by the Mother Country. The interest of the whole Empire should be considered when dealing with External Affairs and not any one part alone. Newfoundland should assert her views, and he assured the members that they would receive favorable consideration and be backed by the present delegation of members from the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. Lawson thought the subjects of yesterday and to-day were interwoven, especially from an economic standpoint. He was in entire agreement with the viewpoint taken by Mr. Lunn that the colonies and Dominions should be consulted on Foreign agreements that affect the Empire, but he could not help pointing out that consulting meant responsibility which also meant the sharing of burdens. He was loyal to the British Empire, and pleased to see that Newfoundland could express itself in terms of outstanding loyalty as had been witnessed on every hand. He belonged to the Labor party (and by the way was Financial Parliamentary Secretary to the war office in the MacDonald administration) but he could not help but say that the standards of that party had undergone a complete revolution in the last five years or since he became a member of the House of Commons in 1919. He discussed labor conditions at Corner Brook and spoke in terms of appreciation of the way the company was looking out for the interests of their employees. The conditions on Bell Island were not so encouraging. The standard of living there left much to be desired and the social conditions in connection with housing, etc., were much to be regretted. He saw conditions on Bell Island that he could not endorse. He thought it poor business on the part of the company that much attention was not paid to these matters.

Mr. Galbraith, K.C. said he had had an interview with the Chief Justice this morning in connection with matters as they pertained to the standing of the Privy Council in Newfoundland. This was a mission that had been entrusted to him by the Bar of England and he was pleased to say that the Chief Justice had received him very courteously and he had been able to obtain all the information necessary and would report to the Bar of England immediately on his return.

Sir Patrick McGrath. It was stated at the dinner last evening that I was a purveyor of information and it is in this capacity that I rise to make a few remarks. I will deal first with the subject of migration and settlement which I could not discuss yesterday, as I was acting as Chairman.



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With reference to the question raised by Mr. Galbraith yesterday as to the quantity of ground suitable for farming, it may be said that in 1898, a committee was appointed to inquire into this matter. Its Chairman was the late Bishop MacDonald, a Cape Breton Scotchman, with a great knowledge of such matters. They found that there were 5,000 square miles of land in this country, suitable for agriculture. There has not been another estimate made since. As to the cost of clearing land the Thorburn Government offered a bonus to any one clearing land, of \$20.00 an acre. The cost of clearing land was about \$80.00 an acre but where there is timber on the land it pays for the clearing in most cases. The same Government built some roads for the purpose of opening up a market for the products of these farms and they helped to make them a success. When the Bond Government came in it built a model farm, and brought down an expert on the subject, but a great deal of criticism and discontent was shown and this policy was abandoned. The Morris Government of 1910 inaugurated an agricultural policy and gave the same price for an acre. It was estimated that the cost of clearing was \$100.00 an acre in those times. That policy might have continued but for the war. In 1920 the Squires Government took another step forward and built a model farm with Hon. Dr. Campbell in charge. There had been agricultural societies formed but because of the unrest following the war these collapsed. We import about 40,000 barrels of potatoes and grow about 500,000 barrels. There is thus not the development possible in regard to potatoes which some speakers thought. With regard to emigration and the difficulties in the way, we should note the geographical peculiarities of our country that make us different and apart from other countries so that ordinary methods will not apply. Our square mileage is 42,000 and our population is about 263,000 but we should bear in mind that our population is situated on the coast. You will understand better if you know that there are 8,200 miles of coast line. On this there are 1,560 settlements of which over 1,100 are composed of less than forty families. The difficulties of administration and transportation will be seen more easily, therefore. The most these people can do is to grow enough for themselves. Though it is our practice to deny our possibilities I might say that I know of one settlement where, in the old days, say about 50 years ago only one family had a horse and cow; now, however, every family has them and practically all the other requirements of the farm as well. This I know from a man who speaks from knowledge of such things. The suggestion is that we import too much of farm produce available here, but when all things are considered, I do not think we have done badly in fifty years. Although the neighbouring provinces of Canada have decreased in population, Newfoundland has held its people. Take the case of Prince Edward Island. It is termed "The Garden of the Gulf." Stone has to be imported to build the roads and the soil is as rich as in any part of Canada. Despite these facts the population is smaller than it was at the time of Confederation. Fifty years ago the population was 92,000. Thirty years after 110,000, and now it is down to 88,000. Nova Scotia has the same proportion to face. There the increase is only 2 per cent the past ten years. The explanation is that emigration is flowing to the United States and Western Canada. New Brunswick is the only Maritime Province that is increasing its population. There the increase is 8 per cent, due to the fact that the French Canadian families are overflowing from Quebec into that province. The population in 1870 in Newfoundland was 147,000 and fifty years later 263,000, or say about 90 per cent, and that of the Maritime Provinces in 1870 was 768,000 and the same number of years later 1,001,000 or little better than 40 per cent. In comparison with this we have nothing to be ashamed of.

I turn now to the question of our external relations, which is scheduled (Continued on 8th page.)

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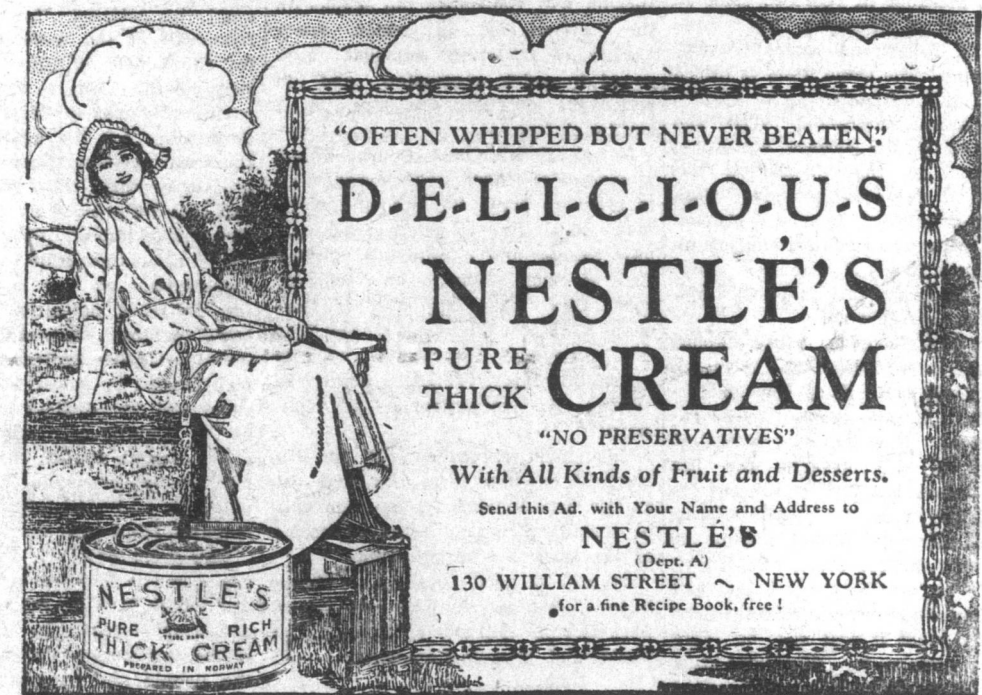
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