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Special Articles

Affairs in Newfoundland.

From a St. John's Correspondent.

The Paucity of Prizes.

By J. W. MacMillan.

Government Ownership and Control of Railways.

By W. W. Swanson.

Conditions in the West.

By E. Cora Hind.

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Newfoundland and Confederation

WE publish to-day, from a correspondent at St. John's, a very interesting review of affairs in Newfoundland, which shows that the ancient colony is enjoying a large measure of prosperity. Although the developments of recent years have given Newfoundland a greater diversity of interests than formerly prevailed, the fisheries are still the great industry of the colony. Abundant catches and good prices are the factors which always make for prosperity in the island, and both these have been present in recent months. The revenue returns are so flourishing that the Finance Minister of the colony feels able to look with indifference upon the loss of \$400,000 of Customs duties through the adoption of a prohibitory liquor law, which will come into operation at the beginning of the new year. An incident that has occurred very recently has to some extent checked the enthusiasm of the Newfoundlanders concerning the markets for their fish. Portugal is a large consumer of Newfoundland fish, and, like other countries needing the goods, has been paying high prices for them. Recently news has come that as a war measure Portugal has fixed maximum prices for fish, and as these prices are materially below those which have lately prevailed, merchants who bought the fish with the expectation of selling in Portugal at the market prices are likely to lose heavily, and further shipments to the Portuguese markets will probably be much curtailed. This phase of the commercial situation, however, while causing much anxiety among those immediately concerned, will hardly affect the general condition of prosperity so well described by our correspondent.

Probably the most interesting feature of our correspondent's letter is that in which he tells that a very marked change is noticeable in the feeling of the people on the question of Confederation with Canada. In the past the hostility to Confederation has been so strong that at every general election the rival political parties have vied with one another in their anti-union pronouncements. Even yet, it does not appear that any political party is ready to assume the responsibility of declaring in favor of Confederation. Each, we imagine, will desire to watch the other and sound public opinion before committing itself. But among the people generally, our correspondent says, there is a decided disposition to view the idea of union with more favor.

It has long been the policy of Canada—a wise policy we believe—to make no move towards the bringing in of Newfoundland, further than to let the fact be known that whenever the people of the old colony are disposed to take up the question they will find the Canadians willing to meet them in a friendly spirit. The

last negotiation between the Dominion and Newfoundland failed because of difference of opinion respecting the financial terms. When the moment arrives for a renewal of negotiations it is to be hoped that no such difficulty will again occur. It will not, if on each side the question is approached in the right spirit. For either party to assume that union is necessary to the other, or particularly in the interest of the other, would be a grave mistake. Union is not necessary to either party. Each can live and flourish without the aid of the other. Neither party is in a position to dictate unreasonable terms. But there are broad Imperial reasons which favor the union of all British North America under one government. Canada, when the right moment for action arrives, will be willing to give Newfoundland as favorable financial terms as are given to any of the Provinces now forming the Confederation.

Unwise Speaking in London

SOME of the Canadian representatives abroad might do well to remember the old maxim respecting the un wisdom of too much speaking. A London cablegram reports that at a reception given a few days ago to representatives of the Overseas Dominions, the new Agent-General of British Columbia, Sir Richard McBride, in referring to Imperial problems, "went so far as to hint that if the Overseas Dominions were not treated as they had a right to expect at the hands of the Mother Country, the solidarity of the Empire would be endangered." In thus speaking Sir Richard was repeating with increased emphasis something that had been said a few weeks before on a similar occasion by Sir George Perley, the acting High Commissioner for Canada. We are certain that the public will agree with us when we say that such minacious utterances as those attributed to Sir Richard McBride do not represent any considerable volume of public opinion in any part of Canada. They imply a discontent with the present British connection. No such discontent exists. It is one thing to desire that all parts of the British Empire shall be brought into close relations. Every patriotic British subject must entertain that wish and be willing to listen with interest to every proposal that may be offered—at a proper time—for the furtherance of that good end. But it is a very different thing—and we think a very reprehensible thing—for men in official position to threaten the British Government and people with pains and penalties unless they adopt some scheme of union which nobody has ever been able to put into definite form. Discussion of that kind, which would be regrettable at any time, is par-