

startling significance in these figures, and if our statesmen are not awake to the meaning of the change our commercial men and manufacturers ought to use the speaking trumpet.

As a matter of interest to merchants and manufacturers, we may note some of the items in which the three countries named still lead in the trade with Newfoundland. Canada led in exports there in the following lines: Live stock, fruit, belting, biscuits, bricks, brushes, butter and cheese, grain, cabinet ware, canoes, carriages, casks, eggs, flour, ships' dories, hair cloth, harness, hay, iron bridges, rough leather and leather goods, ships' masts, oiled clothing, picture frames, ploughs, saws, tinware, and wooden ware. The United States has now got first place in bicycles, blocks (ship) candles, canvas, certain lines of wagons and wagon and carriage bodies, wheelbarrows, spokes, springs, clocks and watches, feathers, boot and shoe findings, flag stones, groceries, hardware in certain lines, rubber goods, iron and steel bars, sole leather, locomotives, several classes of lumber, machinery under each of the three classes, dutiable at 35, 25 and 10 per cent. respectively, nails, of the class dutiable at 35 and 25 per cent., nets, staves and headings, window shades; Great Britain holds first position still in textile fabrics generally; cement, several lines of hardware, chemicals, china and earthenware, cordage, drain pipes, explosives, fancy goods, hats and caps, hoop iron, metal tubes, nails dutiable at 10 per cent, paints, wall papers, pianos, ready-made clothing, small wares, spirits and liquors, shaftings, some classes of steel, etc.

Writing on the development of United States trade, a special correspondent of the *Toronto Globe* who recently visited the island, says: "The alarming increase in the trade with the United States led me to a special investigation among the business men of St. John's. I was told that it was due largely to neglect on the part of Canadians and enterprise on the part of Americans. The United States Consul in St. John's, Mr. J. O. Cornelius, has, since his appointment some years ago, been indefatigable in working up trade between his country and Newfoundland. He is ever on the alert for new avenues of commerce, and, the better to do so he is constantly in communication with sub-Consuls in every fishing settlement throughout the island. He studies the requirements of the people, and watches, lynx-eyed, for new developments in the colony. Immediately he discovers an opening for trade he corresponds with firms in the United States. His reports to the Washington Government are frequent and complete. He is an energetic commercial agent. The result is that American firms, quick to respond, have not only sent down travelling representatives, but have opened permanent agencies here, by means of which a great deal of business has been turned away from Canada and Britain. On the other hand, there is no representative of the Canadian Government in this important centre of trade, and I am informed by hotel men that comparatively few Canadian commercial travellers come this way. When they do they frequently find that business has been already grabbed by their American competitors."

The same correspondent interviewed Hon. E. M.

Jackman, the Colonial Minister of Customs, who frankly expressed himself against confederation with Canada. "We would lose our political autonomy," he said, "and would become the fag-end of the Dominion." He went on to say that the colony was endowed with great natural resources, such as timber, pulpwood, iron, copper pyrites, slate and other minerals, and these were now being developed by the railway. In addition to these resources and its fisheries, the colony practically controlled the bait supply of the North Atlantic. In estimating the value of the last named asset, he said: "Some of your people may think we place too much value on the control of the last named asset, he said; Some of your people the French the privilege of purchasing bait from our fishermen, and they, receiving large bounties, were driving us out of the Mediterranean markets and ruining our people. We passed an act known as the Bait Act, the object of which was to prevent the French from either catching or purchasing bait in our own waters on the northeast or southwest coast. By a strict enforcement of the Bait Act we have crippled the French. In 1886, the first year we enforced the Act, their catch was 909,953 quintals, but it has been decreasing steadily ever since, and last year it only amounted to 418,307 quintals. This is the direct result of our refusal to give bait to the French. If we transfer to Ottawa the power to deal with these bait fishes and our general fishery laws, it may suit Canadian statesmen to use this leverage in their commercial treaties with France or the United States. It may be argued that Canadian statesmen would be jealous to safeguard the interests of this colony in this matter, but we feel that our interests in this respect are safer in our own hands than in the hands of the farmers of Ontario or our French-Canadian friends in Quebec. We can to-day control our own destiny, make our own treaties (subject, of course, to Imperial ratification) and are, as Kipling says, daughter in our mother's house, but mistress in our own. If we join the Dominion we lose our status as a self-governing colony and become, to use a localism, 'the back linney,' or lean-to, of Canada. The best policy for this colony is to remain independent and be in a position to have two great producing countries competing for our trade and placing their goods on this market cheaper than they will sell to their own people."

These reasons, it will be observed, are partly commercial, partly political, and partly sentimental. They are reasons which naturally influence a public man at a time of material prosperity, such as Newfoundland is now enjoying. But they are not of permanent force. A new generation of public men in place in a time of adversity, or face to face with problems that far outweigh questions of yearly revenue, or which, indeed, may have no connection with commerce at all, may view this subject in a wholly different light. Meantime, the commercial aspect of the case appears to be largely influencing public opinion in the colony, and we cannot blame the islanders for taking a restricted view of federation, when Canadian public men with wider experience have taken such a narrow view of this country's relations with Newfoundland in the past.