

attention of the Federal or Provincial Parliament to have the matter settled either way. You ask why that trouble and expense? Well I can recall a conversation had with a prominent government official at Quebec during the late Mercier premiership, who assured me that English capitalists had been considering the possibility of "filling in the Straits of Belle Isle with a view to connecting Newfoundland with Labrador, and thus securing railway connection all the way from Quebec to St. John's, N.F." Is that notion within the wide limits of practical politics or capitalist enterprise? That question may not be answered off-hand. Exigencies of Empire building of even the near future, or of Empire necessity at a later stage, may require the doing of just that same thing—the filling in of the Straits of Belle Isle. Railway communication, vastly important as an Empire auxiliary as it assuredly would be, would not be half the real benefit that would accrue from another aspect of the same subject.

Close up Belle Isle, shut out its Arctic waters and ice from our Gulf, let the big bergs from Davis Straits take, as they naturally would, a south-easterly direction that would relieve Newfoundland of their presence; and the stopt up waters would swerve round Newfoundland's banks and drive into the Gulf Stream. Then see what a happy condition of things would result! Newfoundland would be relieved of thousands of icebergs and their piercing cold, and our Gulf would be freed from both the bergs and the sea of icy cold water, which would then join the current presently coursing around Newfoundland, and being increased in volume and energy would plunge transversely into and cut a great swath out of the Gulf Stream: as it floats like a large burden of light water voluntarily borne abaft by the counter current counter flowing towards the equator. That Labrador current might, perhaps, give a slightly more easterly trend to the Arctic movement at the point of junction, but that a more extensive area of Gulf water would be diverted westerly and inshore ways I am convinced.

And the result? That the result to Newfoundland, the Gulf and River St. Lawrence would be beneficial and great would naturally follow—would be inevitable. In addition to a continuous line of railway to St. John's, N.F., that city would become a winter port for the All Red Line, with Halifax and Quebec for commerce. Commercial intercourse with Europe would lose its present frenzied rush spring and autumn, business would assume an orderly all year regularity, and our waterways and railways connecting the Pacific with the Atlantic for commerce, for touring, and in time of war for military quick transit, winter navigation up to Quebec being established by means of the waters of the Stream warming up and keeping the way free of ice. That accomplished Canada would become the hub of the great British Empire. Question, does a branch of the Gulf Stream now enter the St. Lawrence.

R. MACAULAY.

Life Assurance as an Asset.

An excellent tribute to the value of life assurance as proving often the most directly available asset in the estates even of deceased rich men, was paid recently by a Michigan lawyer, Mr. G. Clapperton, of Grand Rapids. This gentleman, in an after-dinner address, said:

"We read of the wealthy men of the country, like Wannamaker and others, carrying large life assurance policies, and wonder why men, who apparently have so much wealth that they know not what to do with it, still appear to be reaching after more through this method. But when we come to know more about the business affairs of this class of men we realize that they are not only seeking the advantages of safe investment of accumulated means, but are casting anchors to windward. How frequently the wealth of men when they die consists of ledger balances, the excess of credits over debts. And so provision is often made through life assurance to protect their fortunes and estates after they are gone in the settlement thereof. In this way is provided the sure and ready money that will safeguard estates and protect their families in their heritages.

But with the ordinary policyholder the advantages and benefits come still closer to their lives and affections, and are of still greater importance to those who were dependent upon them in their lifetime. How frequently is the result that a policy a man has devoutly carried in his lifetime with sacrifice and effort, will keep the fatherless children in school and complete their education; will lift the incubus of the mortgage from the home and insure to the family the protection thereof. To this class life assurance becomes associated with the most sacred things of life. So let me say that the life assurance business of the future will continue to be a great, lucrative and honorable business."