

and because of this, and of its blocking the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Island enjoys a singularly important and valuable strategic position.

It really is the key to the control of Canada's water-borne commerce, and were St. John's, the Capital, fortified, it could dominate the whole of the sea-going traffic of the Western Ocean. St. John's is about midway between Liverpool and New York (1,640 miles from Cape Clear, in Ireland), and forms a half-way house for them, being a haven of refuge for most of the crippled crafts that navigate "the herring pond," while the near-by section of coast is also the landing place for most of the trans-Atlantic cables. It was at St. John's too, that Marconi received his first wireless ocean signals, and when the first ocean airship voyage is made this will probably be the land-fall or departing point.

The area of the Island is about 46,000 square miles. Its coastline is of varied and in places picturesque character, deeply indented all round by bays and inlets, some with scenery striking as Norwegian fiords; while so broken is its outline that the seaboard has a total stretch of 6,010 miles, as calculated by Professor Howley, the Newfoundland Geologist.

In size it is only one-fifth smaller than England; it is 11,200 miles larger than Ireland; three times as large as Holland; and twice as large as Denmark. Compared with its neighbours in North America it is twice as large as Nova Scotia, one-third larger than New Brunswick, and nearly equal in area with the three Maritime Provinces of Canada; while it is also about the size of the State of New York.

Because of its fiords it is admirably fitted as a home for a fishing people, for every creek and cove teems with fishes, and there are innumerable splendid harbours where not alone the toiler's smack, but the largest argosies of commerce can ride undisturbed by storm or tempest. Until recent years the Island had not a settlement beyond sight and sound of the ocean, since