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THE sudden death of Hon. J. B. Plumb, on the 12th inst., at his home in Niagara, removed from the field of Canadian public life one who was for a time a somewhat conspicuous figure. Mr. Plumb was of English descent, but was born in the State of Connecticut, and did not come to Canada until A.D. 1845, when he was about thirty years of age. It was not till nearly thirty years later that he threw himself actively into Canadian politics. He was elected to Parliament in 1878, for Niagara. That borough having been done away with in the redistribution of 1882, he ran for North Wellington, but was defeated. He was shortly after appointed to the Senate, and in 1887 became Speaker of that body. Mr. Plumb was a gentleman of fine culture and considerable literary ability. He was remarkable for the extent and variety of his attainments, and the accuracy of his knowledge. These acquirements, combined with polished manners, good address, and fine conversational powers, made him useful in public and genial in social life. It is unnecessary to add for Canadian readers that he was an ardent Conservative, and a devoted follower of Sir John A. Macdonald.

THE announcement of the appointment of Hon. G. W. Allan to the Speakership of the Senate cannot fail to give general satisfaction. The appointment is one of the very best that could have been made. Senator Allan is highly qualified for the position by education, by experience, by dignity and force of character, and by the breadth and moderation of his views. He is one of Toronto's oldest and most respected citizens, having been born in "Little York" in 1822. He was educated at Upper Canada College, and admitted to the Bar in 1846. In his younger days, when the facilities for foreign travel were very different from those now offered, he travelled extensively in Europe, Asia Minor, and Africa, and gained the honour of a Fellowship in the Royal Geographical Society. He has in the course of his life occupied many posts of honour and responsibility, among them the Mayor's chair in Toronto, and the Chancellorship of Trinity College. He was a member of the old Legislative Council of Canada, and since Confederation has discharged the duties of a Senator with faithfulness and ability.

It is understood that an agreement has been virtually concluded between the Dominion Government and the Directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the extinction of the monopoly privileges

claimed by the latter in Manitoba and the North-West Territories. According to the newspaper correspondents the consideration to be given the Company is the sum of five millions of dollars, to be expended in establishing a fast Atlantic steamship service. In the absence of an official announcement it would be premature to comment upon the specific terms, or to raise the question whether such an arrangement would give competing steamship lines legitimate ground for complaint. But assuming, as we may with a good deal of confidence, that the railway monopoly had no legal basis in the Province of Manitoba, or at least the older part of it, it was still highly desirable that the whole question should be settled at once and finally. It may or may not be correct that the construction of the Red River Valley road and other competing lines in Manitoba would render the monopoly practically valueless in the Territories. If so, the claim of the Company to compensation would perhaps be sound in equity if not in law. It could certainly be claimed, with much plausibility, that the spirit of the compact had not been observed. But in any case, to leave the monopoly clauses of the contract still in force in the Territories, would be but to raise the whole question anew at an early day. The feeling of reluctance in Parliament to make another large contribution to the funds of the Company which has already been so liberally subsidized, and to add some more millions to the public debt, will no doubt be very strong. But all must see the necessity of keeping faith with the Railway Company, and few could expect to have the monopoly extinguished at a less cost than the sum named. The main objection will no doubt be raised on the ground above indicated, the non-existence of the monopoly right in Manitoba, and the non-necessity of its present removal in the Territories. The radical blunder was committed when a great monopoly was created by Act of Parliament. The practical question now is, What is the easiest honourable way out of the obligation?

CONSIDERABLE interest has been excited in political circles by the announcement that the Government of Newfoundland have been invited by that of the Dominion to send delegates to Ottawa, with a view to the discussion of the terms on which the Island would be willing to enter the Confederation. Newfoundland has hitherto sturdily refused to cast in her lot with Canada. It is but nine years since people at the polls gave their voice very decidedly against union. What change of circumstances or opinions on their part has come to the knowledge of the Dominion Government to lead them to hope now for a reversal of the judgment does not appear. The rumour that it is proposed to effect the union through the agency of the local Government and Legislature, without appeal to the people, seems highly improbable. The Nova Scotia experiment has scarcely resulted so happily as to warrant a repetition. Moreover there is no indication that the present Government of the Island is a unit in favour of the change. On the contrary its members are said to be about equally divided on the question; while the Premier, to whom rumour assigns the casting vote, does not seem, according to a reported conversation with an *Empire* correspondent the other day in Halifax, to be enthusiastic in favour of Confederation. He seems to think, however, that there will be no harm in ascertaining what terms Canada can offer, and that the question of union will hinge entirely upon the nature of these terms. This coolness on the part of the Islanders will give their delegates a decided advantage in any negotiations that may be entered into, since the Canadian Government having taken the initiative will be naturally averse to failure. It is suspected, with a good deal of probability, that the action of the Canadian Government is taken at the instance of the British Ministry. That fact, if such it be, should not prejudice Canada against the union, neither should it lay her under obligation to purchase the adhesion of Newfoundland at too great cost.

THE recent action of the United States Senate in regard to the new extradition treaty should bring to the front for reconsideration the whole question of "asylum." It must be felt by all concerned that the two nations are now playing at cross purposes in the matter of surrendering each other's criminals, to an extent which is as absurd as it is mischievous. It is surely a gross perversion of the ancient and honourable traditions of national hospitality which converts each country into a refuge for the other's rogues, swindlers, and embezzlers. In *The Canada Law Journal*, Mr. William Houston argues forcibly in support of the view that no treaty