

force justice from the Mother Country? I should regret exceedingly to believe that either is the correct conclusion, for both positions are entirely non-British.

Why should this Colony be forced into a union that she considers would be incompatible? Why should she become absorbed if she prefers to retain her autonomy? If she takes a pride in her position as the oldest Colony in the realm, why should she be robbed of that pride? If she prefers to work out her own destiny under the genius of the Constitution, why should she be thwarted in so doing?

Has Newfoundland Shown Herself to be Unworthy of the Constitution she Enjoys?

If she has, then there might be some excuse for pressure being brought to bear upon her to relinquish it. But has she shown such unworthiness? It will not be difficult to prove the contrary. For centuries the people of this Colony have been handicapped by the operation of treaties along two thousand miles of her coast line—treaties made in the interests of the Empire—treaties that were oppressive at the time of their ratification, and that have become obsolete and doubly oppressive by reason of the altered circumstances of the times in which we live. The national bounties of France and the protective duties of America have placed Newfoundland in a most unfavorable position and subjected her to unfair competition. Hundreds of French vessels have come into our territorial waters and subjected our people to a species of competition in which the advantages were all on one side, yet in spite of this, the manner in which she has extended her fisheries, the hardy, independent race she has reared upon her coast, the value of her shipping and of her exports, speak volumes for the enterprise and industry of her people. Wonderful as has been Canada's progress, Newfoundland is now keeping step with her. In the past six years Canada's commerce has increased 25 per cent.; Newfoundland's commerce has shown an advance of 30 per cent. within the same period. During the same period Newfoundland has had a yearly surplus of revenue over expenditure aggregating \$480,000. 28 per cent. of that surplus has gone into a reserve account to meet unforeseen demands that may come upon the Treasury through the stress of bad times, and 72 per cent. of surplus has been returned to the peo-

ple in additional grants for public works. During the same period the reduction of taxation has amounted to \$670,000. I know of no Colony in the Empire that has displayed a more heroic policy in relation to railway enterprise, and I think I am correct in stating that, with the exception of Australia, the Government of this Colony has built and owns to-day more miles of railway according to population than any other part of the Empire. The credit of the Colony abroad stands as high as that of the most prosperous Colony of the Empire, and its securities are as eagerly sought after. From this brief summary I do not believe that it can be successfully contended that we have shown ourselves unworthy of such privileges as we enjoy under Responsible Government.

Again, if there be advocates for a coercive policy being applied to this Colony in respect to Union with Canada, are they quite certain that the Government of the Dominion would take in an unwilling partner? I am quite certain that the present Government would not. Sir Wilfred Laurier is far too able a statesman to admit within the circle of Canadian influence any element which would bring about discord. I also feel quite confident that if union ever takes place between this Colony and the Canadian Dominion it will have to be a marriage of the affections. To attempt to force this Colony into a union that she does not desire would be worse than useless. I do not believe that any such motive prompted the treatment of which we complain; neither do I believe that it is necessary for this Colony to enter into Union with Canada in order to obtain justice from His Majesty's Government. I prefer to believe that that great diplomat and statesman, Lord Dufferin voiced the sentiments of every man worthy to be called a British statesman, when, as Governor-General of Canada, he declared in addressing the people of British Columbia:—

"Your numerical weakness as a community is your real strength, for it is a consideration that appeals to every honest heart. Far-
 distant be the day when an acre of soil over which floats the flag of England mere material power, brute political preponderance, should be permitted to decide such a controversy as we are now discussing. Who, outside the Government or the statesman who, because its inhabitants are few in number and politically of small account, should disregard the issue or carelessly dismiss the representations, however bluff, boisterous or downright, of the feeblest of the distant colonies."

The great British statesman who uttered these words of wisdom and warning is dead, but the measure of justice that he contended