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Takes more trouble than many others
NEWFOUNDLAND.

An Historical and Geographical Survey.
In 1497, John Cabot, a Genoese born Englishman, financed by Henry VII, captained an expedition to the Americas and discovered Newfoundland. In his report he described the island as having a fine fishery long before Gilbert's possession of the island in 1583, many fleets from foreign countries were making huge profits from the islands fishing grounds - submerged hills which were once a continuation of the Appalachian Mountain system. Gradually these banks have been built up by deposits of sediment trapped by icebergs when they melt in the warm currents from the south.

French, Spanish and Portuguese fleets greatly outnumbered the English at the time of Gilbert's possession, and it was frequently doubtful who should have the rights of ownership, even though Newfoundland was first discovered by an Englishman and first claimed for England by royal warrant. Adding to the doubts of ownership, England was very slow colonising her territory and even by 1650 1/2 centuries later, the population was only 2,000, inhabiting the south south shore in fifteen small
settlements.

During summer the small population was
troubled by fishermen, who made the island their
temporary home, while they dried and salted the
the season's catch.

Up till the 17th century foreign fish traders
did their utmost to keep the permanent population
of the island at about the 2,000 limit, so as to
keep a monopoly in fishing and to retain the
shares and coes for their exclusive use.
Two laws were passed in order to retard the
population of the island.
Firstly there was to be no settlement within two
miles of the coast, and secondly, no fisherman
was to remain in winter without a special license.
Later, after nearly two centuries contest, the settlers
had those laws abolished.

In the early days of the colony, as in all other
parts of the empire, there was much rivalry between
England and France. This quietened down in 1713,
when by the Treaty of Utrecht, the French fishing
fleets were restricted to the northern coast, now
known as the French Shore.

About the same time, Newfoundland waters were being used by the British Navy as a proving ground for their recruits.

Geographically she is a rough and broken country about three quarters the size of England and Wales, with good filitary forests, yet only limited areas of fertile soil. Although consisting of 42,000 square miles, twenty times the area of nearly Prince Edward Island, she possesses only one fifth of the croplands. Most of the cultivated soil is thin gravelly loam, which, when built up with fertilizers, can produce bountiful grain and fruit crops. The soil in the west is far superior to that in the east, but due to the lack of population, few agricultural pursuits are carried out. Around 1850 the government gave a bonus of twenty dollars per acre for cleared land in an attempt to increase agriculture.

Long Range, about 4,000 feet high is the highest land, and is situated in the west facing the two
mile wide, Strait of Belle Isle, which separates Newfoundland from Canada. Parallel to this range are smaller, barren and denuded ranges which are very rich in minerals, especially iron and copper, which play an important part in Newfoundland’s exports.

She has an abundance of iron deposits throughout the island, the largest two being at Bell Bay and Conception Bay, but only a few fields can be worked profitably. At the Bell Island works is one of the world’s largest red hematite iron ore deposits, but due to the high percentage of phosphorous, is far too costly for high grade steel production.

As they have no smelting or processing works of their own the main market for their ore has been Sydney (Nova Scotia), England, and before the war, Germany. Another large deposit of hematite ore is situated in Labrador near Quebec province, but so far has not been exploited because of the transport difficulties.

In the Buchans area, ore considerable
deposits of lead-zinc-copper ores, while in the
cast are found small bodies of gold, silver and
lead.

Fluorspar, coal and limestone are also small
mining enterprises. Fluorspar is exported to
the United States and Canada for use in
stel and aluminium production. Limestone
and coal are used on the home market, the
latter being mined at St. George's Bay, Conbray
and an district round the great lakes.

Copper is by far the most valuable of minerals
in Newfoundland, as up till 1900, twelve million
dollars had already been exported in copper ore
to foreign markets.

Although Newfoundland's timber reserves are
very low, she has magnificent pulp forests,
covering an estimated 15,000 sq. miles. There
are 500 timber mills operating, employing a total
of 10,000 workers. The Newfoundland forests are
practically worthless for timber, but excellent for
paper pulp, which nets twenty million dollars annually.
Of the eight hundred mills in operation, two are immense concerns owning practically all of the Grand Falls and Corner Brook areas, totalling nearly 11,000 square miles. Grand Falls is much higher than Niagara, and will be a huge Electric scheme.

Completely opposite to the modern pulp industry is that age old craft, which has been in operation since the earliest days of the colony. From the Grand Banks comes many an adventure story of the hectic eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

When France was defeated in the Napoleonic War, the colonies fishermen had a monopoly in the fisheries. The value of fish trebled, wages rose, and in 1814, seven thousand immigrants settled in the country. There was a boom in fishing, and the population rose to eighty thousand.

In 1765 Labrador was put under Newfoundland's jurisdiction, and sailors went further north up the Labrador coast in search for cod, herring, seals, whales and halibut which were caught off the coast during summer.

Whale oil, seal skins, cod liver oil, dried cod...
to Brazil and Spain) salmon, herring, and salted
cod, bring in an annual return of thirty million
dollars.

Modern methods of fishing are comparatively safe
but during the late nineteenth century, although
they were producing the most fish, the industry was
not flourishing, because of the high expenses and
the high death rate.

Always associated with fishing in Newfoundland
are the hazardous fogs, which are caused by the
warm Gulf Stream drift coming in contact with the
frigid Labrador currents from the north.

Since 1939 she has been exporting large
quantities of frozen fish to the United States by
bulk transport. Large canning factories are
springing up, but because of the competition
from Canada, Iceland and Norway, where expenses
are lower, the herring and frozen fish industries
are becoming increasingly important.

The main exports are sea products, paper, pulp,
copper and iron ores, returning a total of sixty-six
million dollars annually.
Newfoundland's greatest trading problem is, that her main exports must be sold in a competitive market, while the bulk of her imports come from a varying market in Canada.

St. Johns, the capital, is claimed to be the first settlement in America. The old wooden city has been demolished five times, twice by the French and by fire in 1816, 1846 and 1892. The last fire, causing fifteen million dollars damage and making eleven thousand people homeless. With a present day population of well over forty thousand, St. Johns handles five thirds of the country's shipping. During the wars of 1812 and 1939-45, St. Johns has been a strategic position and the headquarters of the British fleet in the North Atlantic.

Because of the narrow entrance to the harbour and the high surrounding hills, the capital is often called the "Gibraltar of the Americas." Linking to the Basques in the west to St. Johns is a fine transcontinental railway totalling 836 miles of track.
As Newfoundland is the closest point in America to Europe, the trans Atlantic cables from Ireland, land at Trinity Bay, and after crossing a small isthmus leaves Conception Bay for Canada and the United States.

Cape Race, in the far south east tip is the trans Atlantic signalising station, where steamer are warned of impending foos, or iceberg flaws.

A suspension of Newfoundland's status took place in 1933, when it was placed under the government of a royal commission. Newfoundland took the status of a crown colony because it was nearly bankrupt and needed financial support from England to keep her going. Her position without dominion government was an advantage of the other dominions because of finance for investing, and for opening up natural resources.

Previous applications had been made for Newfoundland to become affiliated with Canada, but were refused as Canada was unwilling to
Take over the national debt of sixteen million dollars.

A union would assist Canada by assuring her of control of all its North Atlantic frontier, and would greatly help Newfoundland by settling her financial troubles.

In October 1948, the Newfoundland people returned a vote in favour of affiliation with Canada. The terms of union were signed in Ottawa on December 11, 1948. Britain passed the "British North America Act 1949," and on March 31st of the same year Newfoundland became the tenth province of the Dominion of Canada.
BOOKS USED.

Geography of the British Empire .... C. B. Thurston.
The Encyclopaedia Britannica.
The Historians History of the World.

The notes on the Union came from the newspaper:
"The Mercury."