

NAVAL RENDEZVOUS.

EMPIRE'S NEW NAVAL BASE AT MAR-
QUISE, NEWFOUNDLAND.

It is to be fortified to safeguard British
Interests in North American Waters—
Natives to be trained for the Navy—
Strategic Importance of the Station
—French Interests are Affected.

Great Britain has fully decided to establish a naval station in Newfoundland for the training of young fishermen for the British Navy and for the better protection of her interests in North American waters. The third-class cruiser Calypso, 2,770 tons, has been selected by the Admiralty for special service as a stationary drill ship and will be stationed in Placentia Bay on the south side of the island, at a place called Marquise.

The gradual conversion of Marquise into a great naval stronghold is only a matter of time and money. The place is destined to become the rendezvous for a large British squadron and the new scheme of Imperial defence provides a liberal estimate for its maintenance. A graving dock for the repair of warships will be built, a force of artificers will be stationed there and while the machine shops in St. Johns will probably suffice for present purposes the erection of others at Marquise must follow before long, and the establishment of such a plant would necessitate the port being garrisoned.

It will serve another important purpose in that it will be made a coaling station. At present there is no fortified port save Halifax in the British Atlantic provinces and there immense stocks are stored. Sydney, it is true, is the place where the coal is mined and there it is easy to procure stocks in summer, but for the winter months it is icebound. Placentia Bay contains many splendid harbors and is never blocked with ice floes. Marquise is situated on a splendid haven, forming part of Placentia Sound and enclosed between beetling hills, which rise steeply on every side. There is ample area to accommodate a large fleet and a narrow channel which could be easily defended against hostile cruisers by a submarine torpedo scheme. It is capable of being converted into a magnificent naval stronghold, where a squadron could ride and merchant steamers seek protection.

The strategic importance of the new station is illustrated by the fact that the bay opens out upon the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and thence upon the North Atlantic. The squadron stationed there could dominate a vast sweep of ocean, and control the water-borne commerce of Canada by way of the St. Lawrence to the westward. In fact the present scheme includes a plan for the virtual policing of the North Atlantic Ocean in the interest of British commerce. Shipping near the British coast would obtain two days' protection from the naval scouts cruising west of Land's End. The patrol operating off Cape Race would afford another two days' safety, and would then turn freighters over to the squadron off Halifax, to guard them to their destination. The only undefended portion of the route would be the one thousand miles of mid-ocean, and big cruisers of the Powerful type would assist considerably in reducing the dangers associated with its crossing. At present there is no protection whatever for shipping on the Cape Race route, and it is admitted that a hostile cruiser or two lying off the south coast of Newfoundland could tie up indefinitely the whole shipping of Canada.

But overshadowing all else, the es-

PASSED 15 WORMS. I gave Dr. Low's Worm Syrup to my little girl two and one-half years old; the result was that she passed fifteen round worms in five days. Mrs. B. Roy, Kilmanagh, Ont.

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Dec 21, 1900, dw&lyr.

establishment of the Newfoundland naval station points to the possibility of trouble between England and France, and the well determined intention of the former to capture St. Pierre and Miquelon the moment war is declared. The little group of islands known as St. Pierre lies off the mouth of Placentia Bay, and is within easy striking distance of Marquise. From Marquise to the Miquelon capital is but eighty miles, and as the latter port is undefended it could make no resistance, even to a ship of the Calypso type. The capture of St. Pierre would be one of the greatest strategic features of a war between France and England, since it would deprive the former of her only base of supply for coal in North American waters, cripple her cruisers and make Britain the undisputed master in those waters.

Of course the French Government is not blind to the danger, and a short time ago the French flagship on the North American station visited Placentia Bay, where Commodore Henrique and his staff landed at Marquise and inspected the situation of the proposed British station. They made a tour of the surrounding country and their launches sounded in the offing until they must have a good knowledge of the port.

At St. Pierre, too, they have made preparations for defence. The authorities have accumulated a large stock of military munitions there, and an effort has been made to enforce conscription among the adult males and drill them as a town guard. But as they are nearly all fishermen, who for seven or eight months of the year are away on the Grand Banks, the scheme is not very successful.

The new naval reserve movement is being very well received in Newfoundland, of whose total population of 200,000, fully one-third are directly engaged in the fisheries, and of these the Admiralty calculates to enroll in the reserve 5,000 young men. These fishermen are of a higher type of seafarers than the British naval recruits, for they learn their trade in the school of experience, constantly facing the most trying conditions of weather and coast line. The most liberal terms have been offered to fishermen to induce them to join the reserve, and as an additional incentive it has been arranged that their drills shall take place in winter, so as not to interfere with the regular fishing operations of the summer.

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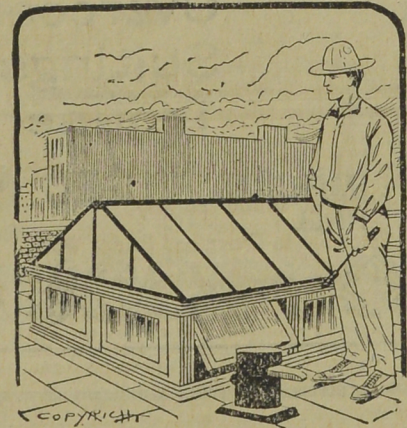
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