

51. In connection with the foregoing digest of the genesis of Confederation it is proposed to give from year to year, biographical notes of those who took part in the conception and development of that great idea, so that the people of Canada, and especially the young people, may have a vivid realization of the fathers and grandfathers of Confederation.

NOTE 1.—Francis Nicholson came under the favourable notice of King James II., and when, in 1686, a couple of companies of soldiers were sent to the North American colonies, Captain Francis Nicholson was in command of one of them. They landed in Boston in the month of December, 1686. In April, 1688, Captain Nicholson was commissioned Lieutenant-Governor of New England, and accompanied Sir Edmund Andros, his superior officer, to New York, and was left in command when Andros went to Boston to thwart movements, then in progress, calculated to bring on an Indian war.

The changes which resulted from the death of James and the accession of William and Mary caused Nicholson's removal. He went to London and so successfully presented his case that he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia. He took an active part in the affairs of the colony, instituted athletic games, and so powerfully supported the efforts to provide Virginia with a college that the College of William and Mary sprang into being. He performed his duties so well that the Assembly voted him a gratuity of £300, which the Crown allowed him to accept.

In 1692 he was superseded and returned to England. In 1693 he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Maryland. At the close of his term of office there, in 1698, he was appointed Governor in Chief of Virginia. He carried things with a high hand, till at length the Council wearied, with the continual strife, petitioned in 1703 for his removal, which was ordered by the home authorities. Nicholson went to London in 1705. Notwithstanding these evidences of Nicholson's unpopularity, his co-operation was sought when the colonies were in great straits on account of the incursions from Canada, and in 1708 the Governments of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, East and West Jersey, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island addressed him, urging him to take command of all their troops. Nicholson accepted the position, went to England, secured promises of troops, and returning to Boston, set about the task of providing a well drilled colonial contingent. The English troops, however, were needed in Portugal by the exigencies of the European situation. The attempt to curb Canada by way of Lake Champlain failed, and Nicholson, who was in command of the Lake Champlain contingent, had to dismiss the 1,500 troops he had collected, after burning the transport vessels he had built on the lake.

At the request of the several colonies he sailed for England, commissioned to procure assistance for the reduction of Port Royal (now Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia). The fates being propitious, he succeeded in obtaining from the English authorities the ships of war and the men required, and in September, 1710, the armament sailed from Boston. It consisted of thirty-six vessels. The French Governor, Subercase, made a spirited resistance, but after some days' fighting, surrendered.

After the conquest of Port Royal, which he renamed Annapolis Royal, in honour of Queen Anne, Nicholson went to England. He was recalled in 1711 and given charge of a second land expedition to move