

the feelings of hopefulness which the Speech has encouraged.

The reports of our leading bankers and business men, and the opinions expressed by students of our economic system, all seem to agree fairly well on the sound position of Canada generally. While there are local depressions and weak spots, as there always are, the general situation seems to be one of steady, gradual, healthy and permanent growth and improvement. Since 1918 all our resources, as well as our nerves, have been sorely tried, but when we review these years from a political and economic standpoint we find much to be thankful for. We have been consolidating our resources and laying a good foundation on which to build. Our national railway system has been almost revolutionized. A number of bankrupt and disintegrating systems have become a unit with restored morale. Lines of track which were in a bad condition from want of funds have been brought up to standard; rolling stock and equipment generally have been repaired and replaced; and we now have a well-equipped, well-manned system with good road bed ready for the traffic, which we expect to result from the generally expected growth and development of the country.

Hydro-electric development has been rapid all over the Dominion, and herein lies much of our confidence for the future. We have an abundance of this energy available in Canada: it seems almost impossible to over-develop: the demand rapidly overtakes or outruns the supply. The progress of mining goes hand in hand with hydro-electric development, and in this regard 1924 has been an eventful year. The possibilities of the future along this line stagger the imagination. The vast pre-Cambrian shield which covers so many thousands of square miles of Ontario, Quebec, and the Western Provinces, coupled with the use of the water-power which nature has so lavishly provided at hand, promise for Canada a mining industry which will be truly colossal.

And not mining alone, but all the industries, the home and the farm, the conditions and the cost of living—all are benefited by such hydro development, whether by government or by private corporations.

And so it is that, notwithstanding the financial difficulties of both governments and individuals all through these difficult years, Canada has been putting her house in order, and to-day her potential position is immeasurably improved over what it was but a few years ago.

Hon. Mr. ROBINSON.

To govern under post-war conditions has been a most difficult task. To carry on with the minimum of friction, and so direct the helm of the ship of state that in spite of adverse winds and turbulent cross-currents we may gradually approach nearer the desired haven, has been no ordinary task. For any government to succeed is almost a miracle, and without any undue flattery I may express the modest opinion that the present Government deserves some meed of commendation for having so far successfully avoided the reefs and rocks which everywhere lay in the course of our voyage.

In referring to hydro-electric development I want to take opportunity to refer to investigations that have been taking place during the past year at the confluence of the Petitcodiac river with the Memramcook river in the Province of New Brunswick. We have there a very important and interesting power possibility which is unique and unlike any so far constructed in the known world, somewhat similar to proposed Severn barrage which is at the present time engaging the attention of the Government of Great Britain, and on which investigation that Government is spending about half a million dollars. There is the difference that the physical conditions in New Brunswick and the extreme rise and fall of the tide, averaging around thirty-five feet, make the cost per horse-power developed probably a mere bagatelle as compared with the cost of the proposed Severn development. I believe that there are great possibilities there, and that the feasibility of a development in connection with the Canadian National Railways should receive most careful study at the hands of the Water-power Branch of the Dominion Government. It is too huge a proposition for a small Province, and is as important to the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canadian National Railways as it is to New Brunswick. There is no record of any large development of tidal power, and the opportunities for such development are very unusual. No question of watershed, storage dams or rainfall need to be considered. As an advertising medium alone it might be worth while for Canada, and what would it mean to the Maritime Provinces that sadly neglected paradise of the Atlantic seaboard, to feel the impetus and the throb of a new life on the release of 200,000 horse-power now lying dormant and ready to respond to the advances of any daring and courageous Government.

The proposed legislation having for its object the equalization of freight rates by land and sea gives promise of remedying a real political malady which is seriously affecting