

usually a sign of slow growth,  
although the flowering may seem sudden.

#### GETTING DOWN TO IT.

While the House of Commons has been engaged in a more or less academic discussion of the Government's supposed sins of omission in the field of national economy the Senate has been dealing with practicalities, and the appointment of a special committee of the Upper House to study the railway question from the standpoint of unification is a long step in the direction of relief for the taxpayer. There is special significance in the fact that unification has found so strong an advocate and so able an advocate in the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, and it is at least noteworthy that the Opposition leader in the Senate branch of Parliament has adopted a policy which the party leader in the House of Commons has condemned. Senator Dandurand, Government leader in the Senate, still questions the accuracy of the estimated savings through unification, but those estimates have not been modified by the expert railway men responsible for them, and it does not matter much whether there is to be, or has to be, a variation of a few millions one way or the other, provided the committee can be shown that substantial economies can be effected. That such economies are not to be had through co-operation, as recommended by the Duff Commission, has been demonstrated.

Co-operation between competitive systems is a contradiction in terms, and the principal value of what has been accomplished, through what has been necessarily a limited co-operation, is in the evidence which it affords that very much larger economies are possible through unification, which is co-operation carried to its logical conclusion. The principle of unification was established in the composition of the present Canadian National system and what is needed now is that its application be made complete, but with this difference: in the creation of the Canadian National there was a physical consolidation of component properties. There was amalgamation. Amalgamation is not contemplated or implied in the projected unification of management. The Canadian National would still be public property, but the two systems would be co-operative rather than competitive and the financial advantages would be shared equitably.

Unification has been successful in other countries wherein the principle has been adopted, and it is now being advocated in the United States as the most promising if not the only remedy of railway ills present in the Republic. Senator Dandurand makes the statement that the grouping of English railways is not analogous to the Canadian railway situation because, among other things, there is no railway monopoly in England, but, curiously enough, Mr. Dandurand upsets his own applecart by referring to the consolidation of constituent roads now incorporated in the Canadian National system and saying that "we are thus further advanced already in matters of consolidation than they are in England." If Canada has "advanced" by reason of this consolidation, why not advance further? Why not leave the limits of consolidation where they are and extend the application of the principle, through unified management, since the principle is admittedly sound? Senator Dandurand would have us believe that promised large-scale economies have not been realized through the grouping of British railways. He is ready to admit, however, that the economies effected, though not spectacular, have been "worth while." Senator Meighen's view of the English achievement is more moderate and therefore more satisfying. "If," he says, "we ever get as far toward the solution of our problems as England has got toward the solution of hers, I shall be happy and consider the problem something that belongs to the past." And Senator Meighen is correct in his contention that co-operation cannot be very productive while the management of the Canadian National system is answerable to the Government.

Mr. Meighen, at the outset of his address on Wednesday, endeavored to disabuse the minds of the Senate of any impression that an attack had been made upon the Canadian National management. None has. That management is composed of trained and able railway executives, men who have a thorough knowledge of their business and who are doing, not only their best, but as good a best as could be done by any other personnel under similar conditions. It is the conditions that are under attack.

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