

ments of the present age, the mover or the seconder, or both of them, were to take it into their heads to express what sometimes, I fear, is in their hearts—their own honest opinion of the policy and the personnel. I shall not live to see that startling innovation, nor is it likely that any of us at present in this House will.

In undertaking to make a few observations about the speech in hand, I am not going to enter into details. My remarks will be general and discursive, and whether or not they will hang upon any consistent thread throughout, I cannot at the present time make a promise.

There is an atmosphere which surrounds the action of a parliamentary body at any critical stage of its history, and that atmosphere is especially pronounced as surrounding its deliberations under the conditions as they now present themselves to us. We live in a changed and changing world. If a well equipped and intelligent citizen of the world had dropped to sleep about fifty years ago, like another Rip van Winkle, and had awakened, say, yesterday afternoon, what would have been his state of mind in comparing the world of his awaking with the world as it was when he went to sleep? Imagine what would be his astonishment, and how hard it would be for him to adjust himself to the changed conditions. Through research and science, invention and mechanization, mass production and the wonderful speeding up of methods of communications and transport, the world within half the time covered by our memories has changed essentially, and this of necessity calls for changes in manners and methods of conduct; individual, social, political, and international. So it is that to-day the foundations of religious beliefs, the canons of individual conduct, the conventions which society has established for its governance are all called into question and subjected to rigorous examination. Different conditions have demanded new attitudes and methods of procedure, which inevitably and necessarily tend to fashion the development of the individual, of society and of the state.

The same is true of methods of production and distribution and commercial, banking and financial operations. In every line of enterprise and activity conditions have arisen which necessitate different methods of policy and action.

I mention this simply to show that methods and policies well adapted to deal with conditions long ago existent in matters political, national and international, call for revision in these later days of entirely different conditions, and that there is no unchangeable

principle to which we must rigidly adhere. Difference of conditions requires a different attitude of approach for their solution.

My next observation relates to the pressing gravity of the present situation. I wonder if we really are sufficiently impressed with the particular difficulties that we face at the present time, and whether we really do give ourselves to the task of considering carefully the situation which has developed, and our attitude with reference thereto. I do not need to make an extended list of all that enters into the situation of to-day. In the falling off of our transport returns, in our decreasing revenues and rising expenditures, the burden of our debts, national and international, in our heavy taxation and in the drop in values of our natural products, the situation which confronts the Government and Parliament is to-day one of special menace and gravity. That, I think, we must acknowledge; and I hold that a very considerable portion of the responsibility for finding a solution rests upon both branches of the legislative body. We are too apt to throw the entire responsibility upon the Government. That, however, is neither fair nor just. In both Houses of Parliament we, as legislators, have our responsibilities. We are called together to seek a solution of the serious questions which are to-day confronting the Canadian people. I am not one who believes that the whole remedy lies by any means in legislative enactments. I hold that now largely, and more and more as the years go by, we must look elsewhere for relief. The great questions of production, of distribution, of economic and commercial exchange, will be solved less and less by legislative enactment and more and more through the expert co-operation and agency of business men and scientific advisers, who in future will play a more conspicuous part than they do now. But with reference to its own nation and matters of international concern, the legislature has duties which it must be prepared to carry out.

Let me make brief reference to the spirit in which we as members of the Senate, and our confreres in the other House, can best approach the present problems. I shall exercise my imagination for a moment or two. Suppose that we should read in the evening journals that the Prime Minister and the leaders of the Opposition have had a protracted conference to-day with reference to handling the existing situation, and that it is confidently expected that an important agreement will be announced later. What interest that would cause in the two halls of our national legislature! What a buzz would go through the clubs and business