

THE BROAD FACTS.

Heretofore the development of the country's water-stretches has been viewed chiefly as a subject for the consideration of the engineer, but to-day it is recognized that these are commercial problems first and engineering problems afterwards. Business men ask concerning any project, "Will it pay?" Unless it has withstood the acid test, they do not consider that the project merits public approval or governmental expenditure.

In September, 1912, in a casual conversation with one of the four government engineers whose report on the Georgian Bay Canal forms the basis of that project, the President of the Waterways Union named some of the objections which he, as a layman, saw to the enterprise. The engineer replied: "As an engineering proposition, it is perfectly feasible." Mr. Detweiler then asked, "Is it commercially practicable?" The reply was, "It is not," and at this point the engineer in question drew attention to the fact that in the engineers' report itself it is stated (page 320, according to the original, not the reprinted, report) that as against a 22 foot St. Lawrence development the Georgian Bay project would give no saving in time of transit.

The estimated cost of the Georgian Bay project, as already stated, is now virtually acknowledged by its own supporters to be 175 millions, an amount which experts say must be increased to two to three hundred millions.

These are the broad facts. If we judge the temper of the country aright, our citizens will not saddle themselves and succeeding generations with this huge debt to no purpose. The Dominion government is in the happy position of being able to finance large undertakings, but it is wholly desirable that there should be no waste and no experimentation on public undertakings the commercial impracticability of which is conceded and apparent.

Great Waterways Union of Canada.

Berlin, Feb. 14, 1913.

WATERWAYS UNION MEETING.

A general meeting of the Waterways Union was held on February 14, 1913, in Concordia Hall, Berlin, Ontario. At the forenoon session the President of the Union, Mr. D. B. Detweiler presided. In the afternoon Mayor Euler of Berlin gave an address of welcome and occupied the chair.