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THE RAILWAY SITUATION

The announcement made by the N. S. & T. Ry. on Saturday that extensions and improvements would be started almost at once that would run into an expenditure of upwards of half a million dollars invites a review of facts in connection with railway and civic matters in this city.

It will be recalled that last year, while occupying the office of Mayor, the editor of The Journal had, as a policy, a plan to secure considerable extensions in the local system in what he considered the interest of St. Catharines, providing the N. S. & T. could be induced to carry the program out. Many weeks were spent leading up to a tentative understanding by which a line was to be laid down Lake St. to Russell Ave., or Carleton St. a belt line along the north end of the city from Ontario to Niagara St. the erection of a fine new station on the west side of Ontario St. and the construction of a short line to Merriton to cut off a good deal of time to Niagara Falls. The eye sore adjacent to St. Paul St. high level bridge would have been converted into a revenue producing property, the offer being made by Mr. Hanna, president of the National System of \$2500 a year rental, but the Mayor felt that \$5000 per year was a fairer figure. However, the negotiations, brought up to the point where the National Board was willing to spend several hundred thousand dollars were all negated by the chairman of the then railway and industrial committee, Ald. Riffer, who brought a report which declared that in the committee's opinion nothing should be done because of a franchise clause. A lengthy debate ensued and Sir Adam Beck was brought to the city and asked what the Hydro Electric Power Commission was prepared to do if the scheme with the National Railway Board were abandoned. Sir Adam was cleverly elusive. He fenced with the issue but gave no assurances. He advised the council not to enter into an agreement with the N. S. & T. Ry. because if it did and the Hydro were later to take over the road the people in the Hydro zone would have to pay heavily for the franchise. The Mayor read correspondence from Hon. Dr. Reid, Minister of Railways and Canals, stating positively that the Dominion Government would not charge for such franchises in case of a sale. This cut away the foundation from under the feet of the chairman of the Hydro Electric Commission, who had supposed that the franchise would be calculated as worth a good deal.

Nevertheless, after all the facts were brought out and there seemed no sound reason left why the people of St. Catharines should not get the extensions and improvements if they could, at no cost to themselves, the municipal elections came on and the public opinion was poisoned by reports spread around that if the city entered into such an agreement with the National Board it would be giving away a birthright. The Hydro would come along almost at once and do all that the citizens wanted.

The position of the Mayor, supported by one member of the council, Ald.

Nash, was that the N. S. & T. was owned and operated by the people of Canada and that so long as there was no charge for the franchise there could be no harm in getting the improvements and letting the Hydro pay for them at cost price if at any time in the future the Commission on behalf of the municipalities were to take over the N. S. & T. It was pointed out that it would be two or three years before the Hydro would likely be in a position to build the belt line and make other purely local improvements that the citizens of St. Catharines need.

What has happened since that time? The present Mayor of the city in his pre-election speeches recognized the immediate importance of railway development but has conducted no campaign to get improvements. The long oars are still being held out in front of a waiting people for hydro radial construction but the horse is always kept just as far away as ever. The population north of Welland Ave., which could have been served by new lines, continues to walk and will still walk for months to come.

Without any urging from the present council which is supposed to have initiative in the interests of civic and industrial development, the officials of the N. S. & T. get money allotted to the total of nearly half a million for various improvements.

The editor of The Journal feels gratified that these expenditures are being made in refutation of all the twaddle and prejudiced nonsense that was published last election. He regrets though, that many other developments such as those outlined above and which could have been easily secured were all thwarted and defeated without sound reason and for no good purpose.

Time is showing conclusively that the large railway development programme as outlined by the Mayor of last year was business like and in the interests of the public. It will come about regardless of the narrow vision of those who allow election clamor to becloud their judgment.

Growth Shows Desire To Extend Army Work

Commissioner W. J. Richards, chief of the Salvation Army in Eastern Canada, has completed his fifth year in that capacity. During that time the Army has seen one of its greatest periods of usefulness. This period takes in the "war years." The great war had been under way since August and new problems presented themselves to the organization when he assumed command. These problems required a large measure of initiative to overcome. The task of rendering

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the highest and most efficient service was shouldered and Canada paid tribute to the success which attended those efforts by over subscribing the amount asked for during the Red Shield Drive.

Commissioner Richards is a forceful man. He is a man of few words. He believes in doing things. During the five years, more than 11,000 persons are recorded as having sought salvation. Notwithstanding the losses due to war, there are today nearly 2,000 more names in the Membership

Roll than there were in this territory five years ago.

In July, 1915, Canada East was separated from Canada West, the dividing line being Port Arthur. Even in view of this, there are now only forty one fewer officers in active service in the Eastern territory alone than there were in the combined territories five years ago.

In the Field Report two very striking indications of financial growth are given. In 1914, the Self-Denial total for the combined territories was \$43,726. In 1919, for Canada East alone, it was \$75,591. Harvest Festival returns have been doubled.

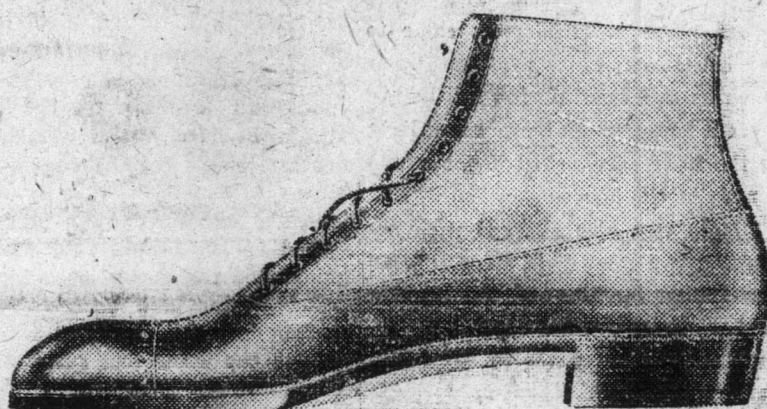
Shows Solid Growth.
In all the various departments the corded. This shows that as often as humanly possible every opportunity has been seized for the advancement of every branch of the organization inasmuch as every act of service means the welfare of somebody, the same rate of growth has been reposition which the Salvation Army occupies today indicates tremendous increased service to the community.

This service has been rendered under the leadership of Commissioner W. J. Richards. His five years in Canada have been five big years for the Salvation Army in Canada, and give great promise for the future.

ADVERTISE IN THE JOURNAL

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Thorold Branch—S. H. Falkner, Manager
Niagara-on-the-Lake Branch—F. W. Wilson, Manager

BENEFICIAL ECONOMY

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