

In these precincts, which one feels to be free of partisan feeling, shall I lay myself open to accusations of party spirit if I offer to the Prime Minister of Canada the expression of my personal homage? Who would dare criticize me for greeting here the one who took command of the ship of state, at the very moment when it was already rocked by the storm? And yet, his faith and courage were never shaken, nothing could disturb the ship, not the fury of the destructive elements which threatened it, nor the number of reefs in its way, nor the doubt expressed concerning its future.

His arduous and unceasing labours have been an example to the nation. His confidence in the vital forces of the country and his determination to overcome the difficulties of the hour have everywhere given birth to new courage and strength.

Generously and without counting the cost, he gave himself to his noble and heavy task, and it is not an exaggeration to say that if valour, if love of country and trust in its destinies were to disappear from Canadian soil, it would be possible to rediscover them in the heart of the Right Honourable Richard Bedford Bennett.

And to-day, when the storm is abating and one may read in the speech which His Excellency offers to our consideration that "the grip of hard times has been broken," that "conditions show marked improvement," that "employment is increasing," that "our trade is expanding," and all these statements are based on facts, as I shall try to show briefly later, I believe it would be sheer ingratitude not to say to such a captain: Bravo and thank you.

Honourable senators, since we parted last July, the year 1934 ended its course and gave us many reasons for rejoicing, as well as many reasons for strengthening our courage, and for tempering anew our faith in the future. This time last year, the threatening clouds of war overhanging old Europe as well as the whole world, ready to break and by means of the horrors of the new discoveries of science to spread ruin and death on our modern civilization, were the cause of great apprehension among us. We realized fearfully that distrust, hatred and international rivalries were an ever rising tide. We deplored the failure of the League of Nations.

What is 1935 offering to us? It is true that the clouds have not all vanished. The great nations have not yet solved the problem of disarmament, but certain events have decreased—to quote the Speech from the Throne—"the political tension and unrest in Europe

Hon. Mr. COTE.

which have intensified rivalry in armaments and economic restrictions."

The agonizing problem of the Saar basin is being settled. The plebiscite is over. The results were awaited with great interest, but the solution of the grave problem which it raised had already been found in Geneva, before the polling. Europe owes this conspicuous success to the efficient part played by the League of Nations, its Council, and the Committee of Three. Thanks to the Committee, a settlement was reached concerning economic and financial questions, a settlement satisfactory to the French as well as to the German interests.

Russia has joined the League of Nations. The Union of Soviet Republics has modified its foreign policy; has given it a new orientation which becomes a significant indication. The Russian authorities were for ever criticizing the League of Nations, they suspected all its actions and openly expressed scepticism as to the usefulness of its work. They have turned entirely around. If you leave aside its revolutionary theories on society, Russia has become to a certain point a power for peace in international affairs.

She has been obliged to admit that her problems, as far as international relations are concerned, are the same as those of other countries, and that common action is the most likely solution to these complicated problems.

I must say a word concerning the eminent service rendered by the League at the time of the double assassination in Marseilles. If it had not been for the unanimous and immediate decision of the Council of the League, the diametrically opposed views of Yugoslavia and Hungary must have started a conflagration, and it is only just to admit that the peaceful solution arrived at by the Council saved us from war.

It is therefore not temerity on my part to believe that this honourable House will not hesitate to endorse the statements from the Speech from the Throne, and that it will recognize that if our fears are allayed to-day, it is "largely as a result of the renewed determination to make use of the agencies of conciliation and co-operation provided by the League of Nations."

It seems therefore that not only is the danger of war removed, at least for the moment, but there is even the possibility of European accord.

Canada will no doubt benefit through the economic rehabilitation which this accord will bring forth and we may confidently expect—provided of course we do not forget the co-