

to the cost that the historic mouse has borne to the mountain.

The next thing the government has "in mind" is:

The further development of our magnificent inland water transportation.

But the extent that their minds have progressed along this line is merely to make further inquiries, and they deem that this is progress sufficient to announce in a Speech from the Throne.

A further interchange of correspondence has taken place between my government and the government of the United States with reference to the St. Lawrence waterway.

We might have taken that for granted. The government will continue the correspondence, and I fancy we shall be at the correspondence stage when the House meets again, if this government is in power.

The important subject of marine insurance as affecting our ports; the permanent equalization of the rate on Canadian flour—

What does that mean?

—and the removal of the discriminations in ocean rates on other Canadian products are receiving attention.

These are "receiving attention" too. The attention reservoir of the government is evidently very full. What is being done about it? What is meant by "the equalisation of the rate on flour"? I asked one hon. member, a member of long experience in parliament, and he said he thought it meant procuring the same western rate as eastern rate. But this subject is under the Railway Commission. Does it mean the same rate on flour as on wheat? I do not know what it means. I venture to think the government does not know itself. But evidently those charmed words "stabilization" and "equalization" are now taking the place of "co-ordination," as they are to be found in several paragraphs of the Speech from the Throne.

The amendments made to the Bank Act. . . their wisdom has already been abundantly apparent.

The House will await with very considerable curiosity to know just what the fruit of this legislation so far has been. I have not observed any. I am not criticizing the amendments; what I am criticizing is the struggle of the government to boast of achievement. As regards all these paragraphs which I have read, may I ask what place have disjointed ruminations of this sort in a Speech from the Throne? At best, they are only a collection of hopes, mixed in with some zig-zag philosophy—the twilight musings of hon. members of the government before their last long sleep.

[Mr. Meighen.]

Then there is, as well an intimation of free farm implements, which intimation I venture to say will, in the next few months, do Canada more harm than the most ardent advocate of the change at least on the opposite side of the House, hopes will result of good from it in the next ten years. The harm is already taking place. How does this government expect that there is to be any progress, any extension of Canadian plants, any investment of capital of this Dominion, any widening of the area of labour, any stability, confidence and progress while this sword is, year after year, held over industry in this Dominion? Does the government not witness already the result of this constant threat which it has been holding out against industry ever since it attained the seats of power? Are the consequences not in evidence in the exodus returns from our border? Are the results not in evidence in our contracting plants? Are they not in evidence from the three or four thousand failures every year? I want to know who is getting the advantage—and where any advantage can be shown.

The consequence of all this is reflected, I think, in public opinion in some electoral manifestations that we have seen in the year 1923. We had a contest in Essex. It was won by the administration across the floor,—though I do not hear them venture any applause at its memory being brought back. No, the means of winning North Essex were in part revealed at the last session—I say, "in part", designedly. But a majority of 7,195 a year before was reduced to a majority of 1,072, or a fall of something over 6,100 in one year. Just two years ago last spring the present Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) was wont to read very important lessons from results like that. He thought a government in such a condition should dissolve parliament at once. Then came a by-election in Cape Breton. A majority of 3,339 a year and a half before was reduced to a majority of 632, less than one-fifth of what it was in the general election. And this majority was secured by the clever contrivance, I presume, chiefly of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Macdonald) which brought in a Labour candidate. Or probably he consorted with others to bring a Labour candidate into the field. This Labour candidate took most of them from the Conservative candidate, some 1,600 votes.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): My right hon. friend is making a statement that is wholly untrue.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is the main credit I have seen given to the hon. member in