

too many railroads for the population, there is far too great a mileage, and some plan ought to be worked out in the future by which we could greatly lessen the cost. It may be that a government made up of groups will yet take up this problem and find a solution for it. There never was such a fine, complete and well organized system as the hydro-electric system of Ontario. There is not a bit of graft in connection with it. Some mistakes may have been made but no graft has been shown. There has been an amortization of the whole cost and the people get electricity for light, heat and power at a very low rate. It is the greatest public ownership service in the world. Another fine example that is attracting a great deal of admiration is the street railway system of Toronto, which the people there now control. It is the best street railway system owned by the people to be found anywhere.

I want to point out to the Minister of Railways that all the steam railroads of the United States have their plans made for the electrification of their systems by the development of electricity from steam. They have their plans and estimates and are going to do it. Plans have been made for the same thing in Britain. But we in Canada are in a position to be there first. With the transmission lines of the Canadian National Railways we will be able to put power into the Maritime provinces and into the western provinces, to say nothing of British Columbia. We can develop all the electric power we want and can move every railroad train in Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, by electrical energy generated either by coal or by water-power, and cut the cost of transportation in two. That is the way relief will come to the farmers of the West. Perhaps when they get some electrical energy for distribution out there they will cultivate some new industries and may ultimately become protectionist to some extent—because farmers have turned protectionist before—and will come to view the question in the same way that I do. At any rate I throw out the suggestion.

I will not detain the House any longer. I should like to have followed my hon. friend from Sherbrooke (Mr. McCrea) to a greater extent, but coming right back to the issues of the day that confront us here, I want to know if the policies of the Liberal party and the Farmers' party are the same. If that is the case why do we see the "rough riders," the several hon. gentlemen that I have named, riding up and down this House. At any rate the two parties have found a way to get together even if that

[Mr. W. F. Maclean.]

was brought about by an elopement. There has been an elopement and there may be fusion now but perhaps there will be disunion later on. If the young Lochinvar is going to ride again my advice to my hon. friends on this side is "Watch him and look your prettiest."

Mr. HAROLD PUTNAM (Colchester): In common with other hon. members of this House, I am sure I enjoyed the interpretation of the hon. member for York (Mr. Maclean) of Lady Heron's song. We on this side of the House consider it distinctly complimentary that the Lochinvar from the West should come to this quarter for his bride. It is absolutely true, even on the hon. gentleman's own showing, that the lover who was not a laggard in love and a dastard in war, passed over completely the old-time Tory party. In that particular respect the party at the head of which the hon. member for York (Mr. Maclean) sits to-night, reminds me of a title of a play on a billboard. I have not seen the play but the title is "The Unwanted Child."

Now, Mr. Speaker, to be a little more serious, I know that just now we have superior critics who are apt to regard the whole debate on the budget as a rather academic, lame or rather useless affair. I do not share that view. I think at no time in the history of the country was it more important or useful that we should have, as we have been having, a fair and intelligent debate upon the issue of high protection on the one side or of lower protection upon the other side, and I have comfort in the fact that as yet we are to be followed by the great leaders on each side, belonging to each group; and that therefore we who are private members will find ourselves in the good company of the leaders who are taking this discussion seriously, and who are regarding it as useful, or of course we would not hear from them at all.

Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to pay my humble tribute of congratulation to the Acting Minister of Finance upon the manner and the clarity of method with which he presented the budget this session. As that occasion approached we on this side at least were almost prone to think that a budget deliverance in these latter days of Liberal rule without the great Fielding would be something like the notable play of Hamlet without the central character of Hamlet himself. All the Empire knows, that, overshadowed as he is to-night by an illness which we trust is temporary, there is only one Fielding, and to-day Canadians in general know and realize