

must declare it not to be so and having said that they will not be able to vote for it. I think it a rich man's budget and I am in the splendid position of saying that I do not like it and of voting in accordance with my views. So also are those hon. members who sit around me.

The hon. member for South Huron (Mr. McMillan) extended an invitation to me to join up with hon. members opposite and so find entrance to the promised land. I should like him to amplify his invitation. I should like to know if the promised land is entered through proper approach to one of the three bachelor leaders, or through the Liberal party, or both. I agree with what he stated as to the conditions which confront the farmers of Ontario to-day. I think he described the actual conditions as they will be found by anybody who takes the trouble to go out and investigate them. With the rest of the hon. gentleman's remarks I do not agree.

Agriculture is still the main business of the Canadian people. The nation's prosperity depends on a bumper crop. It has been well said that the agricultural returns are the barometer of national prosperity. The following words were used by Aristotle:

The first attention should be paid to that which is in accordance with nature; for by nature agriculture is first; next come all those things which are derived from the earth, such as mining and other arts of like kind.

Or as has been often said, "The well-being of the people is like a tree." Agriculture and other primary industries are its roots, manufacturing and commerce its branches and its life; if the root is injured, the leaves fall, the branches break away and the tree dies.

The roots of the tree of Canada's national life have been injured. We have, for a young and rich country, a depleted and impoverished agricultural industry. In this young country agriculture has not held its own people, nor its power of place and influence. I regret it, but it is true. I do not think anyone in this house will care to deny that our educational, religious, business and political policies have been framed, not with rural needs in mind, but rather, whether consciously or unconsciously, directly antagonistic to those needs. The result is clear to anybody who cares to look around, namely, that our people are leaving the land in numbers that would worry any government, even this one. It does not seem to go further than worry with them, but still it worries them. This great mass of people is disappearing from the open spaces into crowded places which we call cities in either Canada or the United States. To my mind one

[Miss Macphail.]

of the saddest things is that the individual is lost in the great mass of human beings, and so this constant robbing of the open places does not enrich the cities to the extent that it robs the country. The individual is lost; people who have been a power in a local community will after they have spent five years in a city, show by their personality the great loss they have suffered. It is quite true that many people who leave the land and come to the cities give leadership to city enterprises and gain for themselves a place of power and possibly of wealth; but again the country is robbed of very much needed leadership and the places in the country that have been vacated are being taken by citizens of other lands. As a matter of fact we are striving to bring people in from other places to fill up the places vacated by our own people.

Country life develops thoughtful, wholesome and genuine people, to a greater extent than any other life, and I think it is true that in the last analysis the conscience of the nation lies in the country. I think we can all bear testimony, if we care to, to the fact that in cities and towns the conventions of life veneer even the ways of our friends and it is in the country that we find the beauty of simplicity and sometimes the bluntness of unaffected candour. Country living makes for character and because of the need of character in all national undertakings, and because of the importance of agriculture in our national life, we see how disastrous the results must be if people continue to leave the land. Aside from the economic consequences, it heralds the approach of the time when the country will no longer furnish that leadership in business and public life which has been so influential in shaping the course of events.

The rural problem is a many-sided problem and I am not one of those who think that governments are so important that they altogether make the problem or, to any great extent, solve it. I know there are many other forces which operate. It would take too long—and I never wanted to speak for forty minutes until I could not speak any longer—to go into all the phases of this question, but I should like to mention one thing that I think has done much to aggravate our rural problem and that is our educational system. It is true that the whole educational trend is towards the city. Our educational system in Canada has acted simply as a "gangway" to life in urban centres. If I had time I should like to quote some leading educational authorities, corroborative of this view, but I think I can ask hon. members to look around their own counties; if