

HYDRO-ELECTRIC POLICY ATTACKED

Opposition Members Criticize Securing of Easements.

LEADERS CROSS SWORDS.

Lively Exchange in the House During Budget Debate.

Premier Whitney Charges Opposition Leader and His Friends With Lying Awake at Night Trying to Block Cheap Power Policy—Hon. Mr. MacKay's Retort.

The Budget debate, which was further advanced in the Legislature yesterday, was enlivened by a sharp attack on the conduct of the Government Hydro-electric power policy from the Opposition speakers. The allegation of the Premier that certain of his political opponents were "lying awake at nights seeking to devise some way to block the project of cheap power for the people" was met by vigorous declarations from the Liberal speakers that they were heartily in accord with the aim of the project, but took issue with the methods the Government had adopted in working it out, notably that which characterized the securing of easements over farm lands for the purpose of constructing the transmission line.

Mr. McEwing and the Students.

Mr. J. McEwing, Liberal member for West Wellington, in the course of his address on the Budget on Tuesday took occasion to severely criticize what he termed the rowdy outbreaks of the students at the University of Toronto. Last evening the Wellington man received a profane and abusive note purporting to be from a University student. Mr. McEwing said he would probably take opportunity to lay the document before the House, with a view to emphasizing his allegations in reference to the character and conduct of some of the students.

The House Enjoys a Laugh.

It is not often that a member of the Legislature is greeted with applause from both sides of the House when he rises to speak, but Robert John McCormick of East Lambton is one of the few whose popularity is always in striking evidence when he plants himself squarely on his feet and clears his throat. The addresses of the veteran Liberal from the floor of the House are noted for their brevity, but the member from East Lambton knows what he wants to say and says it with all the native humor, yet withal shrewd common sense that his Celtic ancestors have given him.

Yesterday afternoon he arose to reopen the debate on the Budget, and for fifteen minutes kept the members convulsed with laughter. Premier Whitney beat a steady rat-a-tat, tat of applause on his desk, while Hon. J. J. Foy became red in the face with merriment.

Mr. McCormick, after expressing his regret that the Hon. Mr. Matheson was unable to be in his place in the House, started out by putting in a good word for the farmers, and he hoped that the Government would

see fit to give the increase that the deputation from the Fairs and Exhibitions Association had asked for. He thought that the Hon. Mr. Duff had the interests of agriculture at heart.

The Best of the Lot.

"The Minister of Agriculture is the best Minister in the whole Cabinet over there," he declared, amid laughter, in which the Cabinet Ministers joined heartily.

Mr. McCormick brought up the troubles of the townships in their elections. "I think," he suggested, "that it would be a good thing if townships were divided into wards to elect their Councils."

It would not have been Robert John McCormick if he had not drawn the sword in the cause of the lost model schools. "I said before that they should not have been taken away," declared he, "and I say it again now." Mr. McCormick claimed that the children of poor country people had now no chance of becoming teachers.

Wants the Model Schools Again.

"If we continue cutting education in pieces as we have, the Province won't be a success," he declared. "I think those model schools should be given back."

Mr. McCormick, referring to the Government assessment act, observed that the principle should be taxation on the land, not on the improvements, and thus provide an incentive to landholders to improve their properties.

The closing words of the member for East Lambton were as unexpected and humorous as the rest of his speech. "I think I've said enough," he concluded, abruptly, as he sat down. "So I'll be getting out of your road."

The Needs of the North.

A plea for the further opening up and development of the great north lands of Ontario was the keynote of the brief maiden speech of Mr. R. T. Shillington. The member for Temiskaming expressed the appreciation of the people of the north for the visit of the Legislative members last year. He hoped the good words then spoken would be followed by good works. He advocated the building of a spur line of the T. & N. O. Railway from Charlton to Sudbury.

Mr. Shillington deprecated the existing method of appointing fire rangers under the members' patronage. "I have known men to come up there," said he, "who could not sit in a canoe." He advocated that the appointments be left wholly with the Minister and the other experts of the department. Mr. Shillington counselled the establishment of a system of trunk colonization roads, and concluded by declaring that Ontario's opportunity to compete with the fertile

agricultural development of the western Provinces lay in her vast north lands.

The Increased Expenditure.

Mr. J. C. Elliott (West Middlesex) emphasized the hardships experienced in rural districts by the abolition of the model schools. Touching the finances of the Province, the speaker declared that the present Government had increased the expenditure more during its short term of office than it had been during 33 years of Liberal administration. The revenue, upon which the Government congratulated itself, was built up on legislation of their predecessors.

Touching upon the power problem, Mr. Elliott declared that he subscribed to the propaganda of cheap power, but proceeded to criticize the legislation under which easements for the building of the transmission line were secured. He reiterated his position last session, that new by-laws should have been submitted again after the change of the scheme.

"Mistaken," Says Hon. Mr. Beck.

Hon. Mr. Beck—The hon. member is mistaken in stating that the scheme was changed.

Mr. Elliott—But the electors were led to believe that they would get power at the price stated in these by-laws. He thought the progress of the power project was characterized by a maximum of vexation and a minimum of speed.

"An Experience Meeting."

Mr. J. A. Ross (Monck) likened the Budget debate to an "experience meeting." He replied to the criticism of Mr. McEwing concerning the stu-

dents at the University by reminding the House that the majority of the students at that institution were from the farms. As to the abolition of model schools and the substitution of normals, Mr. Ross maintained that it made for greater permanency and efficiency in the teaching profession.

Referring to the power policy, Mr. Ross declared it to be one of the most popular projects, because it was conceived and carried out solely for the public welfare. He quoted Hon. Clifford Sifton in endorsement of it. Throughout the speaker's district, he declared the farmers had been fairly and generously dealt with, and were among the warmest supporters of the policy.

Combines and the Government.

Mr. W. Proudfoot (Centre Huron) ridiculed the Government and the Conservative speakers for taking unto themselves credit for the prosperity for which Providence alone was responsible.

The member for Centre Huron found fault with the Government's policy in giving grants to assist in road construction, and urged that the desired result—the construction of a system of good roads over the Province—would be brought nearer if the Government would take certain roads and construct them upon regular plans.

The slowness of the Attorney-General's Department in following up the prosecutions of the combines started by the Crown Attorney of Toronto was made the subject matter of an able criticism by Mr. Proudfoot.

A Bargain Store Job Lot.

Passing on to a criticism of the school book contracts Mr. Proudfoot said it was quite evident they were a "bargain store job lot."

"The books are published by a departmental store and sent out by a departmental store. The Manitoba Government refused to grant a contract under similar conditions."

"And it wouldn't be so bad," continued Mr. Proudfoot, "if the books were any good. Take the primer; in over forty schools in my riding they bought them and threw them away."

A Lively Passage.

"What is the matter with them?" chorused a number of Conservatives. "The teachers say they are no good," answered Mr. Proudfoot.

"Other Provinces have asked us to assist them to get similar books," added the Premier.

The Conservative members pressed Mr. Proudfoot to say what was wrong with the primer. "Have you read it?" asked Mr. J. W. Johnson (Hastings).

"I have it here," retorted Mr. Proudfoot. Continuing he said that an inspector had said the primers were no good.

"Did more than one inspector say that?" asked Mr. Musgrove (North Huron).

"The Government ought to be able to tell that," rejoined Mr. McDougal (East Ottawa).

The Premier's Statement.

"I may tell the hon. gentleman," said Premier Whitney, rising, "that the Government does not know of one inspector who has condemned the book, and I may say further that another Province of this Dominion intends to shortly publish a set of books based upon ours, with a view to obtaining similar prices."

What Was the Whole Cost?

Mr. Proudfoot persisted in his criticism of the books. "It is true that they got the books cheaply but they do not say what they paid in preparing the matter and getting the plates."

Expressing his approval of the scheme to secure cheap power for the people of the Province Mr. Proudfoot, reiterated the criticisms of other Liberal members directed against the clause which allows the electric commission power to take a right of way over a farmer's land without giving him the right to take his case to the courts.

The Leaders Cross Swords.

Referring to the opposition to the power project, Mr. Proudfoot said it was not confined to "Grit politicians."

Political friends of the Minister of Power in London were opposing it.

"Encouraged by the leader of the Opposition during the election campaign," observed Hon. Mr. Blake.

"The hon. gentleman doesn't know what he is talking about," declared Hon. Mr. MacKay.

"Let me say this," stated the Premier, rising, "that the leader of the Opposition and certain of his friends were lying awake at nights trying to