

TORIES KEEP THEIR PATRONAGE PLUMS

Vote Down Liberal Motion to Abolish Bad System

**Hon. I. B. Lucas, Attorney-General,
Makes Amazing Admission, but
Refuses to Support Move for a
Change to Better Things.**

The Ontario Government yesterday rejected a motion by Mr. William Proudfoot (Centre Huron) calling for the abolition of the patronage system, the creation of a Civil Service Commission to make appointments and promotions in the civil service by merit, for the purchase of all supplies for the public service on a business basis regardless of the political or personal affiliations of the vendors, and for purchase by tender in open competition.

Mr. Proudfoot in his speech gave figures to show the growth of the civil service, and contended they would get better employees by putting them under a Commission that would appoint them on merit, regardless of political pull. He urged an examination for all classes, and desired the reform to apply to both inside and outside services.

Pleased With Themselves.

The motion was debated at considerable length in the Legislature, the discussion ending with the members of the Government, on motion of Hon. I. B. Lucas, Attorney-General, passing an amendment congratulating themselves on the high standard maintained in connection with appointments and promotions in the civil service. The amendment also expressed the opinion that a Civil Service Commission was unsuitable, and would form a barrier which would prevent returned soldiers from getting Government positions.

Test for a Sheriff.

There were some humorous incidents during the debate. Hon. I. B. Lucas, Attorney-General, wanted to know if Mr. Proudfoot would have a Civil Service Commission decide appointments for the outside service, and Mr. Proudfoot said he would.

"What test would you have for a Sheriff, a hanging?" asked Dr. Jessop (St. Catharines).

"Doctors would be able to qualify for that position," remarked Mr. Dewart (Southwest Toronto).

Wrong System, But --

Hon. Mr. Lucas said if they could show him how the evils of the patronage system could be wiped out the discussion would be worth while. Everybody recognized, more or less, the evils of patronage. The evil effects still existed at Ottawa, even with a Civil Service Commission appointed by the Liberal Government. "You can't determine a man's ability by competitive examination," he said. Anyway, Ontario had not enough civil servants to make it worth while. The Attorney-General declared there was no spoils system in Ontario, and supplies were purchased by open competition.

Different Under Sir Adam.

Mr. Sam Carter (South Wellington) declared that in many cases where positions were vacant a man had to be a Conservative before he could secure the appointment. Sir Adam Beck, however, had bucked the Government in connection with appointments to the Hydro-electric Commission. If an electrician is needed, a man has to be an electrician, whether he is a Conservative or a Liberal, before he can secure a position with the Hydro-electric Commission, said Mr. Carter.