

February 26

PATRONAGE OUT FUTURE J.P.'S MUST QUALIFY

Appointment of Justices of the Peace in Ontario in future will be on a basis of required qualifications, and not political preference, it was strongly intimated in the Legislature yesterday by Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell.

His bill amending the Justices of the Peace Act was one of eight Government bills which passed second reading in a brief 45-minute House session followed by adjournment until Monday at 3 p.m. The Throne Speech debate will be continued Tuesday afternoon, with Premier George Drew being followed by Liberal Leader H. C. Nixon.

Mr. Blackwell told the House that under the amendment persons considered for appointment as Justices of the Peace will be examined as to their qualifications for the office by a county judge or other competent authorities. "The practice heretofore," said Mr. Blackwell, "has been that any number that seemed desirable for political purposes" were appointed J.P.'s.

Replying to a question by Roland Patterson (L., Grey North), the Attorney-General said the amendment would not be retroactive, and that present incumbents in office would not have to submit to examination. He told William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David) that no appointees had "got in under the rope" before the August election.

Legitimacy Act.

Amendment to the Legitimacy Act to permit mothers of illegitimate children to inherit where there is no legitimate issues, and vice versa, Mr. Blackwell explained, would apply only in intestacy. J. B. Salsberg (L.P., Toronto-St. Andrew) raised the question of illegitimate children with illegitimate issue. Mr. Blackwell agreed that the amendment did not completely solve the problem, but went as far as it could in view of public policy. Further extension would, he feared, open possibilities of blackmail.

C.C.F. Opposition Leader E. B. Jolliffe said the bill deserved support of all parties in the House as an effort to do away with discrimination against those who had no responsibility for their position. It did unfortunately perpetrate discrimination against some but, though he would not like to see it done, he did not feel that the difficulty could be overcome.

A bill to extend the Moratorium Act, which passed second reading, would prevent the bondholders for one year from foreclosing on the Abitibi Power and Paper Co. property, the House was told.

Prepare for Expansion.

Premier Drew explained that it could be terminated if a settlement were reached. It was important that the company have full opportunity to prepare for future expansion of the forest products industry generally, he said. There was no intention to use the inherent power to suspend the act by Order-in-Council unless a satisfactory settlement could be reached with the bondholders to take the company out of receivership.

Other bills included amendments to the Trustee Act, the Law Society Act, Nurses' Registration Act, and the Mortgagors' and Purchasers' Relief Act which was extended for another year.