

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Beattie is not chairman of the board.

Mr. McQUARRIE: I beg your pardon; I thought he was. He was appointed as one of the members of the board.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Is not the chairman of the board Mr. Kirkpatrick, who was appointed by my right hon. friend opposite?

Mr. McQUARRIE: I believe that is right, and I apologize. I believe that he was retained for the time being, but it was reported at the time that he was to be removed, and that he was holding the chairmanship temporarily till he could tell the druggist something about his business. That was one of the appointments this government made under the old system—a druggist up in the interior appointed to the Vancouver Harbour Board. I suppose a druggist is presumed to know something about water, but I do not think this druggist had ever seen salt water before in his life. He had perhaps one qualification that I should not overlook, and that is that he had held the seat of East Kootenay in this House, the seat which my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works (Mr. King) now holds. He resigned his seat in this House to let the Minister of Public Works come in. I say nothing about that. Possibly it is a proper arrangement. I am not criticising it in any way, nor am I criticising Mr. Beattie's appointment. I am simply giving it as an illustration of the way appointments sometimes go under the patronage system.

The government appointed another man out there, and instead of going into the interior for a druggist, this time they went into a brewery and secured a book-keeper employed there in the person of Mr. Prenter. He was also appointed to the harbour board. I have not one word to say against him. He has lived in Vancouver a long time, and had seen the salt water for some years, so perhaps knew something about it.

Then the government appointed a director to the National Railways Board. They went up to Prince Rupert and got a grocer there for that appointment. I guess he is all right, but he did not know anything about railroading. Yet he was made representative for British Columbia on the National Railways Board, when we have in the province many of the most eminent railroad men in the world, some of whom might have been obtained for this position. I am not saying a word in criticism of these appointments, but I do say that is the way things go when you have patronage.

The Prime Minister is not perhaps as frank as the mover of the resolution, although he did congratulate the mover on what he had said and on bringing this resolution before the House. The Prime Minister said: No we do not want to get rid of the commission at all; that is not our idea; we never thought of such a thing, but Dr. Grant, the Principal of Upper Canada College has been saying that there is in process of formation a Civil Service Reform League, and consequently we will have a committee to investigate this whole business. I do not see the force of his argument at all.

The Prime Minister also said that the deputy ministers are not satisfied with the way the Civil Service Act is working out, and they would like to come before a committee and give some of their experiences. We heard the same kind of story in 1921, when we were told that the deputy ministers did not like the Civil Service Commission, and that they would say all kinds of things if they were brought before a committee. But if any hon. member will look up the proceedings of that committee and read the evidence taken at that time he will find that the deputy ministers came and said: The commission is all right, and with one or two exceptions the appointments are certainly up to the standard of previous years, and in some cases better. If, as the Prime Minister says, some of the deputy ministers are not satisfied now, what is responsible for their change of heart? Has all the trouble occurred since this government came into power, and if so, why is it?

I say that we have tried out this committee business before, and to my mind there is no necessity for going through the same painful process again. We know where it is leading to. It is too evident what the object of the government is, and I for one am opposed to this resolution, and opposed also to it in the amended form suggested by the Prime Minister.

Mr. W. D. EULER (North Waterloo): It was not my intention to intervene in this debate and I shall do so very briefly because of certain statements made by the right hon. leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen), following what I thought was a very reasonable suggestion advanced by the Prime Minister. I may say at the outset that I am opposed to the resolution as submitted by the member for Quebec South (Mr. Power). I think it would be a misfortune if we returned to the system of patronage such as we had prior to the act of 1918. But I would not say that the act is not capable of some improvement. I do not suppose that we have ever had a piece of legislation that was perfect, and I