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A BAD YEAR FOR TORIES.

THE Roblin Conservative Government in Manitoba has resigned in disgrace. It quits office leaving behind a record of fifteen years of maladministration culminating in an inglorious rush for cover under a cloud of proof of criminal extravagance, if not worse. The whole Conservative party of Canada must share the odium. It is but a few months since the Premier and Leader of the Conservative Government of New Brunswick was compelled to resign his office following the finding of a Royal Commission that he had been guilty of grave irregularities in office. In British Columbia the Government of Sir Richard McBride stands convicted in the public mind of an utter and callous indifference to the rights of the people and every sign points to an early day of reckoning. The year 1915 has been anything but auspicious for Conservative governments in Canada.

AS TO PATRONAGE.

IT may be recalled that just before the close of the recent session both Premier Borden and Major General Sam Hughes declared that there had been no "patronage" in the awarding of contracts for war supplies for the Militia Department. But there is proof.

It was on April 9th, before the Public Accounts Committee that the proof came from the one man best able to tell the truth. Mr. H. W. Brown, Director of Government Contracts testified, in answer to direct questions:

"From 1906 to 1911 there was not very much in the way of a patronage list; I was given a pretty free hand and I bought without much reference to any patronage list.—There is now a patronage list; we buy from that list; it is a very large list now—it has been entirely renewed since 1911—I suppose we have 8,000 names on that list."

The people of Canada will be disposed to accept this sworn statement in spite of anything to the contrary that members of the Borden Government may choose to airily assert.

A STRONG GOVERNMENT.

THE result of the provincial by-election in Shellbrook, Sask., is striking testimony to the great popularity of the government of Hon. Walter Scott. In a three-cornered contest the straight Liberal candidate E. S. Clinch, was elected with a majority of nearly 1000 over a straight Conservative candidate and an Independent-Liberal put in the field chiefly by the liquor interests to test the feelings of the people on the new liquor legislation in Saskatchewan. The result is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that Shellbrook has been consistently a Conservative seat, the by-election having been rendered necessary by the resignation of S. J. Donaldson who took the Prince Albert seat in the Federal house.

IF CANADA HAD CRUISERS.

THE sinking* of the Lusitania with the loss of hundreds of lives of noncombatants, an act of piracy and dreadfulness without example in the history of the world, lends further point to the recent observation of a Canadian newspaper which said:

"What Canadian would not feel an inch or so taller to-day if we had a half dozen smart cruisers helping those of the Old Land to make scrap iron of the submarines which have been sinking merchant ships and drowning passengers and crews in the Irish Sea and the English Channel?"

SINS OF COMMISSION.

REFERRING to the boasting comment of Major General Sam Hughes that the Militia Department had paid a commission of 10 per cent to the P. W. Ellis Co. of Toronto for the purchase of binocular glasses for Canadian officers, and the characteristic exclamation "I wish it had been twenty per cent," the Toronto Telegram said on March 29th:

"An individual or a firm is said to be underpaid with a commission of ten per cent in return for the services of a principal or an employe who assists the Militia Department, and gives up his time and talent for a few days in order to help save the country's money.

Wives and fathers and mothers do not claim a commission in return for the services of husbands and sons who assist the Militia Department, and give up their lives in order to save the country's life."

AGAIN DEFERRED.

THE question as to whether Canada is to be embroiled in a general election in the near future is still unsettled, although recent signs indicate that the forces within the Government ranks which have been agitating for an election have once more been stopped by the weight of public opinion. In the latter part of April an election seemed a certainty and Conservative papers close to the Government went so far as to even name the probable date.