

THE SPOILS SYSTEM

The great need for civil service reform advocated by the Liberal party is seen when attention is turned to the course pursued by the Whitney Government since coming into power in 1905. They summarily dismissed all the Justices of the Peace, License Inspectors, but three, and License Commissioners in the Province, and appointed their own friends, to the number of thousands, to fill those offices. It is true that a very few Grit Justices of the Peace were re-appointed but not in excess of 2 per cent. of the new appointments.

The Whitney Government came into power in February, 1905. A careful review of the "Official Gazette," commencing February 18th, 1905, to the end of that year shows that, in this period of ten and one-half months, there were 662 appointments to office by the Government, exclusive of Coroners, Justices of the Peace, Notaries Public, and Commissioners for taking affidavits. This notwithstanding that there were only thirty-five vacancies from death or other normal causes. There were 105 Boards of License Commissioners; 76 Division Court Clerks; 117 Division Court Bailiffs; 76 License Inspectors; 6 Provincial License Officers; 38 Police Magistrates; 6 Registrars of Deeds, etc. In fact, throughout that year, not one week passed without the removal from office of some official, to make place for friends of the Government. And further, it has been stated that, throughout that year, there was no meeting of the Executive Council at which some official was not decapitated.

The Government have been in power three years and two months and we find, in what is strictly the civil service, that there are now 113 more officials than there were on December 31st, 1904. There are now 817 civil servants of whom 324 are appointees of the present Government. One hundred and sixty-five of the total of 704 officials in office on December 31st, 1904, were dismissed, or resigned; if there is any distinction between these words under the present administration. (These figures are taken from Sessional Paper No. 73 of 1908.)

Whether or not these changes are in the public interest, or are made merely to provide offices for party friends may best be judged by reference to the case of Chief License Inspector Hastings, Toronto. Shortly after coming into office, the Government dismissed the old License Commissioners for Toronto and appointed three prominent citizens of the highest standing, J. W. Flavelle, Col. J. I. Davidson, and Col. J. P. Murray. The old License Inspectors were continued for nine months when they were dismissed under circumstances set