

amending the electoral laws. No such bill was introduced. I criticised their inaction and moved a resolution, which was voted down by the usual government majority. The substance of that motion, which I submit to you as an essential article of conservative policy, is as follows:—

More effective provisions to punish bribery and fraud at elections, to ensure thorough publicity as to expenditures by political organizations, to prevent the accumulation of campaign funds for corrupt purposes and to prohibit contributions thereto by corporations, contractors and promoters, to expedite the hearing of election petitions and to prevent collusive arrangements for the withdrawal or compromise thereof, to provide for a thorough investigation of corrupt practices and if necessary to appoint an independent prosecuting officer charged with that duty, to simplify the procedure therefor and to enforce the laws so amended.

ANOTHER PLANK FOR OUR PLATFORM.

What I have said concerning appointments to public office leads me to submit to you another article which should find a place in the conservative policy, and it is this:

A thorough and complete reformation of the laws relating to the civil service, so that future appointments shall be made by an independent commission acting upon the report of examiners after competitive examination.

I need not dwell upon the importance of this. Of necessity some appointments must be left to the responsibility of the executive. Appointments to the judicial bench and certain other high public offices are of this character, and the people have it in their power to compel an honorable and decent performance of this great public duty. There are also many minor appointments which could not for the present be brought within such a system.

But for the rest I prefer a competitive system of appointment to the present partisan system.

Three-fourths of the time of members supporting a government is occupied in dealing with matters of patronage. Party patronage and party service have more weight than character and capacity. The public service is cumbered with useless officials. I am convinced that we shall perform a great public duty by establishing in this country that system which prevails in Great Britain, under which a member of parliament has practically no voice in or control over any appointment to the civil service.