

the charge and the defence, yet they are not satisfied. They are of the opinion that there is an object on each side. On the one hand they believe there is an object in the charge which has been made, while also they see an object behind the defence, and, they think there is some truth in the charges. This opinion is not confined to one hon. member, nor do I think it will have been confined to four or five before the debate closes, from what I have heard; and I do say that the matter should be investigated and even if the hon. member for West Toronto does not formulate his charges and ask for an investigation, I think the Government will be justified in the circumstances in having an investigation in order to satisfy the people that this commission is doing its work, that it may have made some slight mistakes, but not such mistakes as have been charged against it.

Now, I gave expression in this House last session as to the manner in which I thought this Civil Service Commission might operate. I said at that time that I was opposed to the patronage system as being antiquated, and that we should get away from that. Hon. members do not want to be bothered with patronage. I said, if the Civil Service Commission is going to work out to the satisfaction of the people generally and to hon. members, it will be a godsend. But, I said, I thought there was a danger in the commission undertaking that work, in this way: There is a commission of three; there is a secretary, and there are deputy heads throughout the Civil Service. I was suspicious that the commission would not undertake all the responsibility; that some of it would be shifted to the secretary, who in turn would shift it to some of the deputies, and between the secretary and the deputies the whole matter would work to the advantage of some, and instead of being patronage to large numbers it would be patronage to a favoured few. That is about what I said last session, and judging by the statements made in this House it seems that that is the way in which matters have turned out. I said then that if that was the way in which it would operate I would not be satisfied with the Civil Service Commission; and I am not satisfied now, notwithstanding the defence put up so far. I shall not be satisfied until this matter has been investigated from A to Z. After that has been done, and it has been shown clearly that there is no justification for the statements that have been made, then I will be disposed to feel that the Civil Service Commission is the

proper means of administering the affairs of which it has charge. I think, therefore, that as the matter stands the Government should have an investigation, whether the hon. member (Mr. Hocken) desires it or not.

Another matter mentioned in the speech from the Throne is Women's Franchise. I agree with the suggestion that something should be done in the way of giving the franchise to the women of Canada. It has been stated on the floor of the House that the women of Canada have done a great deal towards the successful conclusion of the war; and I concur in the opinion that has been here expressed that we should recognize the part they have played in the struggle. I believe that from their own standpoint the women have done as much to win the war as the men. We know the nature of the work they have done, we are aware of the response which was made by the young women who were prepared to go forward and render every help in any direction in which they were desired to assist. They were prepared to become chauffeurs, to drive automobiles, transportation trucks and other vehicles, to assist in Red Cross work and to do many other things without which we could not have successfully carried on the war. They responded to the call from the farms, and we had farmerettes by the thousand in the Dominion, and credit is due them for the greater production which followed. If they have proven their case—as I think they have—that they were in every way equal to the occasion in every endeavour, then I think the least we can do in recognition of the noble part they have played in the war is to extend the franchise to the women of this country.

It was said by one hon. member on the other side of the House last year, when we were discussing this subject, that perhaps it might apply to one or two provinces, but that he did not think it would be found to be generally applicable. He was of the opinion that the women should be educated; that it was necessary to educate them before they could be capable of properly exercising the franchise. Well, I think we had some experience at the last election of the qualifications of the women of this country as voters. We do not need to educate them further. In my riding they voted by hundreds, and I never heard of a spoiled ballot, or of any confusion in any respect. In fact, I would pronounce them better voters than many of the men, and I think they should be congratulated on