

these applications are received they are forwarded to the various districts in order that the applicants may be examined by the local inspectors, who rate them; and the appointments are made in accordance with the ratings made by the district inspectors.

Mr. COLDWELL: I do not wish to speak at any great length on this matter; but in view of the fact that from time to time a discussion arises in this house with regard to appointments, and the hon. member for Témiscouata invariably gives us a dissertation on the advantages of the patronage system, perhaps in order to keep the balance some of us who feel very strongly against the patronage system should express our view.

I know that some of the ministers, including the Minister of Finance, have endeavoured to keep as far away as possible from the patronage system. I know that at the present time there may be difficulties in securing efficient help, even by advertising; but I believe that the further away we keep from the system of political patronage, the better it will be for the government of Canada. To me it has always seemed ridiculous that anyone should hold the view that when a Liberal government is in power the employees should be Liberal, and when a Conservative party is in power the employees should be Conservative. I hope the day may come when in our own country we shall develop the same sense of respect for our public service, the same efficiency in it, and the same freedom from political patronage, that have long existed in Great Britain. I believe the efficiency of the administration in that country is due to the elimination of political patronage; and those of us who know something of British history, particularly from the days of Walpole down to comparatively modern times, know that until political patronage was driven from the public service, that service was not efficient. I sincerely hope that the system which has been followed in Canada now for more than twenty years will be continued and expanded until the time comes when we shall have a civil service based wholly on examination and on merit; when every civil servant, irrespective of his position, will have the right to express himself in accordance with his rights of citizenship so that he may not be obliged, because his private views conflict with those of the government in power, to risk, by expressing them, a position for which he may be very well qualified.

Mr. SLAGHT: Was not Walpole the author of that dangerous doctrine, "To the victor belong the spoils"?

Mr. COLDWELL: I am hoping the time will come when the victor will be big enough not to look for any spoils of office. Feeling that way, and holding that belief, I think perhaps once in a while it is well to express that view, particularly when the contrary opinion is so forcibly expressed by the hon. member for Témiscouata.

Mr. POULIOT: The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart has spoken of the efficiency of the civil service in Great Britain. I wonder whether he has read "The New Despotism" by no less a person than Lord Hewart, lord chief justice of England, in which the faults of bureaucracy are described. Of course I know very well why the members of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation group are so strong for the merit system. It is for the reason that most of the school principals, who are asked by the civil service commission to conduct examinations, are their own men, belonging to their brain trust. Therefore, instead of receiving patronage from the minister, they receive patronage from the school principals who are Cooperative Commonwealth Federation men. It is in order to maintain that patronage that they are so strong for the so-called merit system which exists only in their imaginations, and not on their tongues.

That having been said, I hope that any illusion created by the word "merit" will be dissipated. I see I have almost convinced hon. members in the far corner of the house, and if I have not I am sure that excellent book by Lord Hewart will finish the job. At first it was an expensive book, costing a little over a pound. After the first edition was sold there was a reprint selling for 5 shillings. I do not know if it is available now, but if it is I strongly recommend it to any hon. member. It will be surprising to hon. members to find that other countries, like this one, can march on, in spite of the fact that they are carrying with them such a heavy weight of bureaucracy.

Section agreed to.

On section 60—Agreement with provinces as to values, etcetera.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): What does the minister expect to accomplish from this section?

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not know. We may get the provinces to do some work for us. We do work for five of the provinces in connection with income tax collections.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): It is a pious hope.