

Recent Changes in The Election Act

Dominion Parliament at Last Session Made Substantial Amendments

At the recent session of Parliament much attention was given to amending the Dominion Election Act. The majority of the Amendments deal with the administration of the enabling clause of the Act. One judge who acted as revising officer in a city declared the work of revision and the result was heartrending, and Hon. F. B. McCurdy, after his election in Colchester, N.S., also had some suggestions to make on the administration of the Act. These and many other intimations were duly weighed by the chief electoral officer, O. M. Biggar, K.C., and the main features of the representations made embodied in a memorandum to Parliament by him. This memorandum was referred to the Privileges and Elections Committee of the House of Commons. When the committee met Hon. Hugh Guthrie, K.C., M.P., chairman, stated he had read the Election Act several times and was bound to say it was difficult to make stand and still more difficult to make it clear to others. The chief electoral officer said that to make the Act readily intelligible would necessitate the rewriting of the whole Act, but his duty was in the administration of the same and it was not for him to suggest changes in the underlying principles. The committee, however, unanimously suggested that Mr. Biggar in the next handy consolidation of the Act embody as an introduction explanatory pages.

This Mr. Biggar readily agreed to and he has compiled about one hundred pages of explanatory notes covering each branch of the Act. Those who will have to do with administering a branch will be supplied with the notes on the branch in booklet form on the eve of the election or

immediately after the writs are issued.

It may be stated generally that any British subject 21 years of age, resident in Canada for one year and in the constituency two months may vote provided he or she satisfies the details of the Act, especially as to being seized with the requirements necessary to be allowed to vote on election day.

Bearing on the administration clauses of the Act some important changes were adopted, one of these bearing on the nomination form or paper. At the meeting of the committee Alexander Smith, barrister, Ottawa, was introduced to submit such interpretations as he might deem helpful. It was subsequently announced on the floor of the House by the Solicitor-General that the amendments to the Act were in consequence of suggestions by Mr. Smith. It has been stated at the meeting of the committee by the chief electoral officer after the attention of the committee had been called to the nomination form as printed that if a person were nominated in accordance with that form and objection taken to such nomination the same could be rejected and the person so nominated would not be allowed to be a candidate.

After the committee made its recommendations members of the House of all shades and groups took up the consideration of other features of the Act which by interviews with Mr. Smith and others during the past year had been dealt with in the press. This resulted in other substantial changes in the Act. The discussions for these changes were conducted on the floor of the House by all parties. The amendments adop-

ted were demanded by Opposition speakers and successfully moved by Government supporters. One amendment adopted at the recent session greatly reduces the number of naturalized persons who have to obtain a voting certificate before being entitled to vote. The only naturalized persons now required to obtain such a certificate are alien women born outside of North America who are the wives or unmarried widows of British subjects, natural born or naturalized, but any of these who are entitled to vote under the War Time Elections Act of 1917 do not require a certificate.

The new Election Act of 1920, before being amended this year, made it necessary that the thousands of persons who became naturalized by process of law simply because their fathers were naturalized, should before voting obtain a voting certificate from a judge. This has been abolished.

CLERK'S NOTICE OF FIRST POSTING OF VOTERS' LIST

Township of Warwick, County of Lambton

Notice is hereby given that I have transmitted or delivered to the persons mentioned in Section 8 of The Ontario Voters' List Act, the copies required by said sections to be so transmitted or delivered of the list, made pursuant to said Act of all persons appearing by the last revised assessment roll of the said municipality to be entitled to vote in the said municipality at elections for members of the Legislative Assembly and at Municipal Elections; and that the said list was first posted up at my office in the township of Warwick, on Monday the 11th day of July and remains there for inspection.

And I hereby call upon all voters to take immediate proceedings to have any errors or omissions corrected according to law, within 30 days of the first posting up, the said last date being August 10th, 1921.

N. HERBERT,
Clerk of the Township of Warwick.

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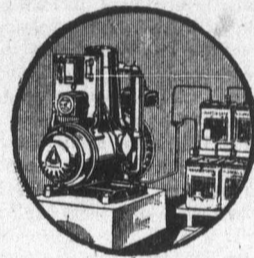
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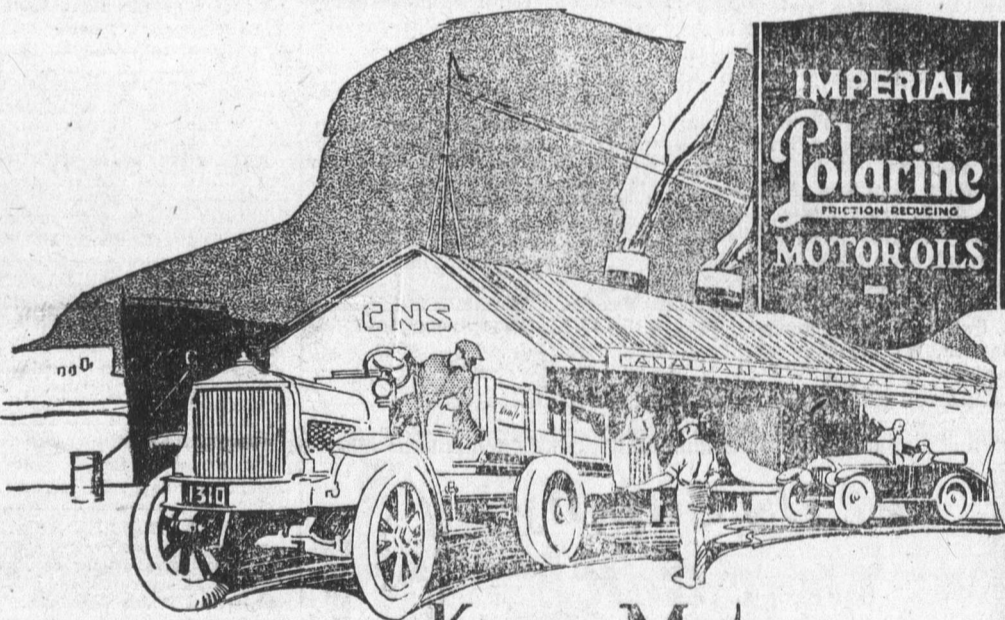
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