

A Commission Demanded.

Both in the 1911 and 1914 election campaign the Liberals advocated on the platform a thorough investigation by a non-partizan Commission of the whole of the rural problem of Ontario, the establishment of suitable schools of Agriculture, increased attention to Agriculture in rural schools. They also favored demonstration farms throughout the Province, and the development of co-operative methods.

The resolution voted down by the Government during the session 1914 was as follows:—

“That in view of the serious decline in our rural population, as disclosed in our last decennial census, accompanied by a decline in the strength and vitality of the rural school and the rural church in many sections of the Province, and in the view of the general scarcity of farm labor throughout Ontario, which for some years past has caused grave concern to the farmers of the Province and contributed to a material diminution in the Agricultural production of the Province, this House is of the opinion that a non-partizan Commission of practical men should be appointed to inquire into the conditions of agriculture and of rural life in the Province, and report to this House the facts with their recommendations as to steps which can and should be taken to remedy or improve existing conditions.”

In the year 1880 very fine results were obtained as the result of a similar investigation by the Mowat administration at that time. In that year a Commission of representative and practical men, interested in the problem of Agriculture was appointed to study the Agricultural condition of the Province of Ontario. This Commission made a most thorough and comprehensive investigation and presented its conclusions to the Legislature in the year 1881. The work of this Commission marked a new era in the Agricultural development of the Province. In order to make provision for more adequate attention toward supervision of the great work of Agriculture in the Province, Sir Oliver Mowat introduced a Bill in the year 1888, for the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture (this was opposed by the Conservative Opposition). The Government, notwithstanding opposition went ahead, and the Department was created, and under Hon. John Dryden great constructive measures were introduced and carried forward for improving the condition of Agriculture in the Province.

In addition to the motion already referred to, calling for a non-partizan Commission, which the Liberals presented in 1914, a further resolution was introduced in 1915, as follows:—“That