

the survivors of such a catastrophe without mentioning the bolt of lightning, as abuse civil servants "who loaf half their time," without stating the **cause**. What is the **cause**?

The simile chosen to illustrate the reason for civil service inefficiency is inappropriate in one respect; that lightning is accompanied by reverberating thunder while the cause of ineffective public service, like the stiletto, is silent and subtle. It is known as the **Patronage System**.

What is the Patronage System?

The patronage system is not a peculiarly Canadian institution. It is common to all *civilized* countries, whether Democratic or Autocratic. Its greatest shame is discovered in countries enjoying free institutions. The struggle for civil liberty has been attained by means of the noblest and the most unselfish sacrifices of which the human race, in its efforts for light and freedom, has ever given evidence. The ballot was born the day civil liberty was achieved. The handmaiden of noble impulse and disinterested patriotism presided at its *accouchement*. The story of the once pure and undefiled ballot, under the Patronage system, may be read in contemporary history. The fruits of public office, of public contract and of public favour as a reward to those who take part in the battle of ballots has brought about at one stroke, corrupt elections, and an ineffective public service.

The Proof.

The political pamphlets of the parties to the election of 1908 fairly illustrate the effect of the Patronage System on the morals of a people who have prizes held up as the rewards of success in elections. These pamphlets might have issued from the printing presses of Sodom and Gomorrah. They are submitted to *Saturday Night* for calm and philosophical study in analyzing the frailties of public service. Later

illustrations of the demoralizing effect of money prizes in political elections are the echoes of the Saskatchewan, Macdonald and Richelieu elections. Millions of dollars worth of prize money in the shape of government positions are dangled, under the Patronage System, before the eyes of the contestants and workers in a political campaign. The players in the game are not animated, by clean instincts of sportsmanship and the distribution of the prizes, as the records plainly show, are but the reflection of the style of play.

A Case in Point.

Not long ago a financial dept. needed a civil servant to complete its working staff in the outside service. The office was in the gift of a **Patronage Committee** of 35 men. This Committee decided that the department did not need anybody. This was because they could not agree upon a nominee. Then they decided that the man required should not be one with the qualifications indicated, but with qualifications of a much lower standard. It developed that the Committee did not know what work was being performed in the office concerning whose staff it was the dictator under the Patronage System. The Committee finally nominated a bricklayer, without education, or any previous financial training to the vacant position.

The department expressing a preference for a man of higher educational qualifications, the committee declined to acquiesce. After many months had passed, a vacancy occurred, through death, in another department and this nominee who had no educational qualifications was appointed, under the Patronage System, to a clerical position. Then and then only did the original department, after much inconvenience, get a man to fill its vacancy. In another case, the head of an office in the *Outside Service* having died, a Patronage Committee