

Preferential Ballot Used by Lethbridge Voters

Commission Form of Government also in Operation

By F. J. DIXON

Lethbridge is the second city in Canada to adopt the commission form of government. Under this system the old style council composed of aldermen elected from separate wards is abolished and the civic affairs are administered by a board of commissioners, each of whom is elected to be the head of some specific department.

For example, there are three commissioners serving the citizens of Lethbridge—Mayor Hardie, commissioner of finance and public safety; A. H. Reid, commissioner of public utilities; and A. M. Grace, commissioner of public works. Each commissioner is responsible for the department under his control and is subject to the Recall if he fails to satisfy the electors.

Direct Legislation

The Initiative, Referendum and Recall are essential to the successful working of the commission form of government. Without these safeguards the system would tend towards despotism owing to the concentration of power. With them the people are in control all the time.

Lethbridge has all the essential modern improvements which are necessary to make the new system a success.

St. John, N.B., the only other city in Canada under the commission form of government, adopted the system in March, 1912. There are five commissioners in St. John. The only important point of difference between the Lethbridge system and that in vogue in St. John is in the method of voting.

The Preferential Ballot

What is known as "the preferential ballot" was used for the first time in Canada at Lethbridge during the last municipal election. This system does away with the necessity for primary

elections, or the second ballot by allowing the voter to mark his first choice, second choice, third choice, etc. Below is a sample ballot:

BALLOT FOR FINANCE COMMISSIONER AND MAYOR

Instructions—Place crosses (X) in the squares opposite the candidates of your selection in the order of your choice. Do not vote more than one choice for the same candidate.

Names of Candidates	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Adams, Elias				
Downer, F. W.				
Hardie, W. D. L.				
Lovering, J. E.				
Wilson, E. H.				

The clause in the Lethbridge charter dealing with instructions to the voter reads—

"The voter will go into one of the compartments and with the pencil provided in the compartment make a cross (X) in the square in the appropriate column according to his choice, at the right of the name voted for. The voter shall vote first choice in first column, second choice

in second column and so on till he has voted one choice for all candidates on the ballot except one. Do not vote more than one choice for one candidate as only one choice will count for any candidate by this ballot. All distinguishing marks make the ballot void. Each voter may vote for as many candidates as there are offices to fill and for as many choices as he is entitled to."

Counting the Votes

The method of counting the votes is very simple, altho it takes longer than counting the ordinary straight ballot. This extra time is well spent, because the system of preferential voting reflects with mathematical precision the wish of the electors. With this system in vogue there is no danger of a man getting elected by a minority of the voters as sometimes happens on a straight ballot in a three-cornered contest. The clause in the Lethbridge charter dealing with the counting of ballots reads:

"At the close of the poll the presiding officer will count up the first choice votes. He will then take the ballots to the office of the returning officer where the count will be completed. In completing the count the returning officer will proceed in this manner. He will sort out the ballots according to the first choice votes for each candidate, no heed being paid to the other choices. If any candidate has then a clear majority of first choice votes he is elected and the count goes no further, but if there be no majority, then the candidate who has the small number of these first choice votes is declared out of the count and his ballots are distributed among the other candidates in accordance with the second choices thereon. That is, each candidate gets the ballot on which his name is marked as second choice. If this gives any candidate a majority,

then such candidate is elected. If not, then the lowest of the remaining candidates is excluded and his ballots are similarly transferred. When any ballot contains as second choice the name of the candidate or one of the candidates already out his name is passed over and the ballot goes to the third choice and so on until one candidate shall have a majority, and the candidate having the largest number of votes shall be elected. Wherever the word "majority" is used it shall mean more than one half of the total number of ballots cast."

A slight complication arose at Lethbridge in the case of A. M. Grace owing to the provision that the word "majority" means more than one half of the ballots cast. After five counts, altho he had a clear majority of 184 over his nearest opponent, he lacked 11 votes of the number necessary to constitute more than one half of the ballots cast. There were no more ballots in sight so Mr. Grace was declared to be elected under another clause in the charter, which states that when the final count is reached between two men the man having the greater number of ballots shall be declared elected.

This was the only complication. Mayor Hardie was elected on the fourth count and Commissioner Reid on the first.

It was naturally expected that a large percentage of ballots would be spoiled. The fact that only five per cent. were rejected proves that the voters had taken pains to inform themselves about the working of the new system.

During the past four years over 300 towns and cities in the U.S.A. have adopted the commission form of government. The successful operation of this system in St. John and Lethbridge will be a useful object lesson to other towns and cities thruout Canada.

Co-operation for Livestock Men

By W. W. THOMSON, B.S.A.

Director of Co-operative Organization of the Province of Saskatchewan

Within the past three decades the application of co-operative principles to the agricultural industry of Europe has produced what is practically a revolution in rural life and methods. Under this stimulating influence, up-to-date, scientific, cultural and business methods have been introduced; specialized production has been encouraged, the quality of all kinds of farm produce has been improved, the cost of fertilizers, implements and supplies has been reduced and the educational and social status of the agricultural community has been materially raised.

In Saskatchewan, co-operation has been successfully practised for a number of years in connection with the production and sale of dairy produce, and more recently the co-operative marketing of grain has been inaugurated on a large scale and is proving eminently successful, as is evidenced by the ever increasing number of co-operative elevators and the substantial dividends distributed each year. These two lines, however, embrace practically all of the agricultural co-operative undertakings in the province. Apart from these creameries nothing has been done in the way of co-operative production. Only in rare and isolated cases has the co-operative marketing of farm produce other than grain been attempted, and the whole field of co-operative purchasing is still undeveloped.

It is high time that further organization should be brought about in our agricultural industry, particularly in the commercial end of the enterprise. In this connection there is, perhaps, no field in which there is greater need for organization than in the marketing of live stock, and certainly none which can

be organized with less outlay or with greater assurance of success.

The Live Stock Industry in Saskatchewan

Much thought and energy have been expended in an effort to build up the live stock industry in this province. In the early days ranching was the principal business of the West; but, with the advent of railways, settlers flocked into the country, grain growing was introduced and, except in a few cases, the cattle kings were forced to give place to the tillers of the soil. Exclusive grain growing, however, has never been found either a satisfactory or permanent system of agriculture, and scientists have long since demonstrated that live stock have, of necessity, a place on every well organized farm. Our people have not been slow to grasp this fact, and the Provincial Government have expended no inconsiderable sum of money in an effort to aid in building up the live stock industry on a sound basis. Large numbers of pure bred sires have been brought into the country and sold to the farmers, at cost; high class females have been imported by the carload and sold on credit terms; substantial grants have been made to the live stock associations, agricultural societies and fair boards of the province, and every effort has been made to encourage the production of large numbers of live stock.

Notwithstanding the activity of the Government, the exceptional suitability of our country to stock raising, and the natural aptitude which many of our people have for the business, the number of live stock in the province has not increased in proportion to the increase in population. That this is so is un-

doubtedly due to the unfavorable conditions under which many of our farmers are marketing their stock, and until some improvement is made in this connection little permanent advance can be expected. What is most needed at the present time to develop the live stock industry is organization among the live stock men for the co-operative marketing of their stock, combined, where possible, with organization for the purpose of developing special lines of animals in given localities, or what is commonly called Community Breeding.

Present Marketing System

Under our present system there are two ways in which a farmer with an average number of stock can dispose of his produce. He can wait until a butcher or stock buyer comes around to his farm and makes him an offer for his stock or he can take the animals to the nearest town and accept what the butcher or buyers there will give. Under either circumstance the farmer is at a decided disadvantage. The butcher or buyer is always in close touch with the outside market, regarding which the farmer has but imperfect information. The buyers are experts in their business; they are able at a glance to make an accurate estimate of the animal's weight, and they can judge to a nicety just how much a given animal will dress out, how much choice meat will be in the carcass, etc. The farmer has no particular knowledge along any of these lines. He may not be satisfied with the price offered, but he knows that he has to sell the animal; that he can do better elsewhere is uncertain and eventually he accepts the price offered. It is true that if he has a carload he can ship to some outside

market where there is competitive bidding, but the average farmer cannot hope to start into stock keeping with a large number of animals. So long as he has only three or four cattle or a dozen hogs to offer, he is not going to obtain top prices from the local buyers; and even carload lots, unless of uniform type and high quality, will not bring the best returns.

The present system is also unduly expensive in that there are often four, five or more buyers operating in one locality. These men drive about from farm to farm picking up a few head here and there, several days being often required before they have enough to fill a car. This all adds to the cost of marketing, for the salaries of these men and the large livery bills which their operations entail must be borne by the stock producers.

One man, if centrally located and having the confidence of the stockmen, by using the rural telephone, could handle all the stock in a given district without any outlay for livery. If he acted as the selling agent for the community and was paid a commission on sales, it would be to his interest to keep in close touch with market conditions in all the large cities of the country so that he could sell on the best market. This he would have time to do, as he would not have to drive about the country looking for stock.

Co-operative Marketing

Stockmen in other countries have years ago faced conditions similar to ours and have solved the marketing problem by the organization of co-operative shipping, or marketing, associations, thru which a number of far-

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