

A MODEL CHARTER—Continued.

time we elect a mayor and four commissioners and the first thing they do is to get together and divide the departments among them. The idea of the commission form of government is that all commissioners shall be responsible, but here you cannot get any one commissioner to interfere with other departments."

The Lowell, Mass., Sun said recently: "If the commission form of government is to be retained in Lowell, it must be in a modified form. There is a demand for a larger membership, with perhaps ward representation."

Failure in Ward System.

Many students of government think it was too readily assumed a few years ago that the ward system was responsible for most of the evils of city government and that too much emphasis was placed upon the advantages of a small council.

It seems quite clear the remedy is a fair-sized council from districts. Such council to be under constant control by the voters and a controlled city manager, who will carry out all the administrative duties. There is no need to go back to the discredited mayor, council and committees system.

The right of a few nobles to rule the rest of the people is autocracy. The right of a few rich men to rule is plutocracy. The right of a few well-born and educated people to rule is aristocracy. The right of the voters to actually and constantly rule themselves is democracy.

And surely it is becoming clearer that the government which is run by a class, no matter which class, whether a few of the worst citizens or a few of the best, is a bad government and never can be anything else.

Friction and dissatisfaction in one form or another will go on until legislators become servants, not masters of the voters.

In the words of Barbusse (author of perhaps the greatest war book "Under Fire") a French poilu in the trenches, "The people have been nothing; they must be everything."

Commissioner C. J. Yorath, of Saskatoon, on being asked his opinion on the suggested charter by Mr. Ross, sent the following valuable criticism.

"In the first place, let me at once congratulate your committee upon recognizing the two fundamental principles which are essential to successful civic government—first, the popular and proper representation of the people in the governing body, and the other concentrated control of administration in an experienced manager, similar to the principle recognized and established all the world over in the administration of business and financial institutions, no matter how large.

I know of no system which will give fairer representation, thereby creating civic interest and better citizenship than Hares system of proportional representation. If Montreal adopts this method of electing its representatives and the above principle of administration, it will be taking the lead in endeavoring to obtain what is urgently required throughout the Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific—efficient, clean and economical government.

"Regarding the council, it might be argued that for a city the size of Montreal twenty-four aldermen will be insufficient; but I feel it will be generally recognized that a more businesslike administration and the interests of the citizens are more likely to be safeguarded by a small council rather than by one which is unwieldy in its size. The principle of the aldermen electing one of their number to act as mayor, and it is presumed that length of

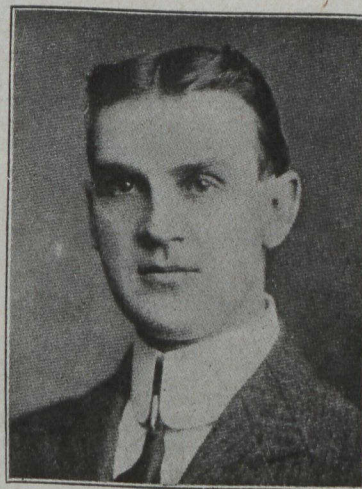
service upon the council will be the chief consideration in such election, is an admirable one, as it gives the honor when it is due, i.e., after a number of years of public service. This principle, too, when adopted, not only adds to the dignity of the mayor's office, but also that of the individual aldermen, and for that reason a city is more likely to be represented by men with true and proper ideals of citizenship.

"The principle of strictly confining the duties of the mayor and aldermen to legislative functions and replacing the administration under an experienced manager is recognized as the only right and proper one by those who have had municipal experience. From my own personal knowledge, after holding municipal positions for twenty years, I believe it to be the keynote to successful municipal government.

"It is only necessary to ask a business man the following question to make him realize the absurdity of present municipal government: 'Can a business be a success if conducted by a committee consisting of members who have no previous experience in the particular business which they are supposed to administer?'

"Municipal government is a highly technical subject and requires well-trained and technical administrators. I would add to the qualifications of the city manager, in addition to executive and administrative ability, that he also be a municipal engineer, as the greater part of municipal expenditure is upon engineering works, and it would be impossible for a manager without practical experience to properly control the city expenditures.

"The careful consideration which has obviously been given in drafting your proposed city charter is worthy of the most careful and thoughtful consideration by Montreal's best citizens, as it possesses possibilities of not only solving the municipal problems of your city, but its undoubted success would mean its adoption throughout Canada, thereby creating more efficient municipal government, higher ideals of citizenship, and, at a time when the Dominion's taxation is greatly increasing on account of the war, a very urgent and imperative decrease in local taxation.



CAPT. WALTERS,

Ex-Mayor of Hamilton, who on the outbreak of war, while still Mayor of the Ontario city, volunteered for the front and was accepted.

CITY OF SASKATOON
Comparative Statement of Tax Payments.

	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.
Levied	\$1,206,373.16	\$974,103.68	\$869,376.87	\$920,403.40
Collected	869,766.68	932,220.02	949,812.17	1,094,637.23
Percentage of taxes paid during year to Levy	72.1 p.c.	95.7 p.c.	109.2 p.c.	119 p.c.
Percentage of arrears paid during year	67 p.c.	50.5 p.c.	50.5 p.c.	55.1 p.c.
Percentage of current taxes paid to yearly levy	46.6 p.c.	47.2 p.c.	54.2 p.c.	65.8 p.c.
Taxes Outstanding December 31st	\$918,350.60	\$990,762.05	\$889,207.71	\$714,967.07

The above statement shows very conclusively that conditions in Saskatoon have improved.