

9. One reason for the unsatisfactory character of the lists prepared under the present system is the defectiveness of the provincial lists upon which, when available, the statute requires federal lists to be based. In rural areas, where accurate lists are, comparatively speaking, of small importance, the statutory procedure for their preparation results in the production of lists having a fair degree of accuracy, whether provincial lists are used or not; in urban areas, on the other hand, and particularly in large cities where, if personation and fraudulent voting are to be prevented, voters lists should be as nearly as possible complete and free from error, the lists based upon the provincial lists are inaccurate to a serious degree. This is well exemplified by a comparison of the results in the cities of Winnipeg, Montreal and Toronto. In Winnipeg, where, at the last two general elections, no provincial lists have been available for use and every voter has been required to register, the proportion of voters on the list who actually cast their votes was 84 per cent in 1925 and 82 per cent in 1926. In Montreal, where the provincial lists include only the names of men, but women must all register, the percentage of listed voters who voted was 73 per cent in 1925 and 70 per cent in 1926.

*By Mr. Hanson:*

Q. Do you attribute that to the state of the lists?—A. Partly, not wholly.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. When you find in a small constituency like my own, a list with some fifteen thousand people, with two thousand of them on twice, would that not decrease the number who could vote?—A. Yes (reading):—

In Toronto, where the provincial lists purport to include the names of both men and women, the percentages for the respective elections were only 58 per cent and 47 per cent. It is difficult to explain why 16 per cent to 18 per cent of voters who take the trouble to register should abstain from casting their votes, and some increase in the percentage of abstention might reasonably be expected when any names are included in the lists without the active intervention of the voters themselves. Moreover, the comparative intensity of the public interest in the result may in part account for the differences between the three cities. It may, however, fairly be inferred that at least 15 per cent of the names on the Toronto lists represent persons who are either not qualified to vote at a Dominion election or are not resident at the addresses which the lists give for them. A similar condition prevails in different degrees in all urban areas in which provincial lists are resorted to. The value of the resulting federal lists is thus reduced, and unnecessary expense is incurred for the printing of names which the lists should not contain.

Q. Did you ever make any study or think of what would be the percentage of changes in addresses in urban areas within a year?—A. I made a good many inquiries at one time from the directory companies and from some other sources—I have forgotten what they were; but I rather came to the conclusion that in the urban areas you could put down about thirty per cent as representing a fair average of changes per annum in addresses.

*By Mr. Hanson:*

Q. In cities big and little?—A. I meant in the larger cities.

Q. It would not be true in the smaller communities?—A. No.

[Mr. O. M. Biggar, K.C.]