

MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS, CONTRACTORS, AND MATERIALS.

to those elected by the people, on much the same grounds as those given for appointments by the mayor. Thus 30 per cent. of the boards reported are raised to office in the most desirable way, another 30 per cent. in the next desirable, and the minority, or 40 per cent., in the least desirable way. This classification, of course, does not take into account local reasons favorable to one or another method, but is based upon the general principle that one official, or as few as possible, should be directly responsible to the people, and all others to the one or to the few comprising the council.

It should be borne in mind, however, that nearly half of the board selected by the people are in New England, where the good old-fashioned town meetings still prevail, where affairs are largely managed, as one might say, by committees of the whole, and where the direct responsibility to the people of all intrusted with public business naturally follows.

The North Central States the local government of which, in some particulars, is similar to that of New England, have 28 of 76 boards elected by the people, the Middle States have 13, and for all the remainder of the country but one board is reported, and that is in the Pacific States. While information regarding the management of all public works might alter the above ratios it is thought that the reports received are a fair index of the general practice of the whole country.

Next in importance to forms of management and methods of appointment is tenure of office. This is shown below for 188 public works; the total number of public works, number reporting and number of managing bodies serving for various terms being given in detail. The length of the terms are from one to six years, for life, or perpetual (see note), and the number under each, by groups and for the country, is as follows:

Groups	Total	No Public Works Reporting	Term						Life	Perpetual
			One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six		
N. E.	134	38	10	4	8					25
Mid.	166	41	10	1	7					110
S. Atl.	47	11	3		3		1	3	2	
S. Cent.	10	6		4	3					
N. Cent.	255	65	25	4	13			2		43
N. W.	177	27	15	5	1					
S. W.	58	4	1	2						
Pac.	37	3	1							
U. S.	870	188	64	27	32	3	2	3		158

*That is, where the managing body is renewed after the same general plan as the U. S. Senate, it never consisting entirely of new members.

From the above it will be seen that for the whole United States 65 out of 188 managing bodies, or over one-third, hold office for one year only, 21 for two and 32 for three years. Eleven bodies hold office from four to six years, and one holds office for life. The number of managing bodies holding office for only one year is surprisingly small, but over against these 65 may be set almost as large a number, 58, designated as perpetual, which are never wholly composed of new members, a fixed number, generally a minority, giving place unless re-elected, to new members at recurring periods. The three to six year bodies stand a fair chance of having, through re-election, at least one old member continually among them so that the showing under tender tenure of office is, after all, a good one, since the three to six year bodies number 43, and these with the body chosen for life and the perpetual bodies number 102 or about 55 per cent. of the total number reporting. In addition it must be borne in mind that many of the works are under the same superintendent year after year, and that upon him the successful operation of the works often almost wholly depends. In many instances the superintendent is the only man who really knows anything about the works, and woe unto that city who loses such a superintendent.

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