

his own department. All the improvements of the last half decade in the Texan city can be attributed, substantially, to the fact that the new system of government has rendered strict adherence to these fundamental rules of sound municipal administration possible and even imperative.

It is not necessary to speak in any detail of specific advances made in municipal administration by Galveston under the sys-

**The Galveston
Example in
Other Texan
Cities**

tem of government by commission. It is enough that these were readily noted by neighboring Texan cities, and that the latter soon bestirred themselves to the task of inaugurating a similar framework of administration. Since 1903 charters fundamentally similar to that of Galveston have been sought and obtained by five other cities of Texas: Houston, Fort Worth, Austin, Dallas, and El Paso. The experience, moreover, was not lost upon many cities in the North, and during the last two or three years measures have been introduced into the legislatures of at least a dozen states all aiming to permit cities to simplify their framework of administration more or less generally in accord with the Texan plan. At its last session the Legislature of Iowa put such a measure upon the statute books, rendering optional to all cities of over 25,000 population the adoption of the commission system. This privilege has already found acceptance in the capital city of Des Moines; in this case provision being made for the employment of certain advanced methods of securing the strict and consistent responsibility of the authorities to their constituents.

Despite a general impression that the commission system of local administration is a novelty in American government, the principle involved is by no means new in the United States. It is in almost no important respect different from the New England system of town government by a board of selectmen, who, with their chairman, assume and concentrate in themselves all administrative and legislative functions from one annual election until the next. There are many New England "towns" with populations quite large enough to entitle them to rank as cities, which have, for more than a century, maintained what is

**The System
Not a New One
in America**