

THE UNION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES AND THE BELL TELEPHONE RATES CASE.

Our municipal leaders can score at least one for the Union in this case which was fought to a hard finish before the Board of Railway Commissioners at Ottawa in January. As indicating the equity of the position taken by the Union we refer to the following points:

- (1) The Union admitted that under present conditions the Company would be entitled to about \$1,630,000 increased revenue. The Board allowed increases calculated to give about \$2,100,000, instead of \$4,500,000 as asked by the Company.
- (2) The Union opposed the measured rate. The Board upheld this stand and refused its authorization.
- (3) The Union asked that the Company's depreciation reserve account be calculated on actual experience and not on theory. It was so ordered.
- (4) The Union admitted the justness of an increase in long distance tolls which was allowed.
- (5) The Union urged that any increase which might be granted, should be considered as temporary relief and subject to revision to meet future conditions. The Board upheld this contention and directed accordingly.

Every friend of the Union and the principles for which it stands has reason to be satisfied with the success attending its efforts in this famous case.

A. D. SHIBLEY,
Secretary.

New Government System for Montreal

The citizens of Montreal on May 16 are to decide by a referendum by which of two systems they will be governed in the future. The first system calls for a council of fifteen members, elected for four years by proportional representation in three electoral districts, a mayor elected by the councillors from among their number, and a manager who will have practically the control of the administration. The alternative system calls for a council of thirty-five aldermen elected in as many wards for two years, a mayor elected directly by the people for the same time, an executive committee of five aldermen and a director of departments elected by the council. The first system was prepared by a commission appointed by the provincial government after ten months of study of municipal governmental systems in different parts of the world and the second system, which has the backing of the majority of the present council, by a group of provincial legislators that represent Montreal and district.

While it cannot be said that either of the systems is perfect, both being largely of an experimental nature, particularly the first system—experimental inasmuch as no city of the size of Montreal has attempted the manager form of government or proportional representation—the citizens of the commercial metropolis will have a chance again of governing themselves. For four years this great city has been administered by a commission of five citizens appointed by the provincial government. It is true there is a City Council of twenty aldermen and the mayor, but its powers are so limited as to be innocuous when pitted against the decisions of the administrative commission. Such a system, of course, is against all principles of democracy, and it was never intended to be permanent, though in the main it has worked out fairly successfully for which great credit is due to the ability of the Chair-

man of the Commission (Mr. E. R. Decary) and the loyalty of his colleagues and officials. What the future of Montreal will be depends absolutely on the citizens themselves, for whatever the system of government is its success can only be measured by the determination of the people to see that it gets a real test.

THE SURVEYOR AND HIS OPPORTUNITIES.

The Editor:—

My attention has been drawn to certain editorial remarks, in your issue of the Canadian Municipal Journal of March, 1921.

In your article "The Surveyor and his Opportunities," the last paragraph is scarcely in accordance with facts, as from thirty to forty per cent. of our membership are land surveyors and they have, and are taking a very keen and active interest in the problem of town and rural planning.

Yours truly,

H. H. HAWKINS,
Hon. Sec'y-Treasurer.

Town Planning Institute of Canada.

We are delighted to publish the above correction of our statement under the above heading, that "We doubt even if the new Town Planning Institute contains a single surveyor." We hope we are also wrong in our further statement that "In town and rural planning the surveyor should be at home, yet we don't know of any plans that have been prepared by a surveyor." The point we wanted to drive home in the article was that surveyors in Canada, because of their training had a special opportunity to exercise their talent in town planning, but that we had had no evidence of their activity in this important work. Mr. Hawkin's letter shows that Canadian surveyors are alive to their opportunity and responsibility in the matter, and we trust the day will not be long when their services as town planners will be in request throughout the Dominion.