

## GOVERNMENT OF A MUNICIPALITY BY COUNCIL AND MANAGER\*

Mayor and Council Could Not Cope With Increased Business  
—Committee System Faulty and Superseded  
by Council and Manager

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**D**URING the past decade the subject of municipal management has been under intensive consideration by civic authorities and trained publicists, with the result that there has been a decided trend towards radical changes in the system at present obtaining. That under which the great majority of municipalities operate filled all the purposes for which it was formulated just so long as it remains sufficiently elastic to bear the strain of civic development. The mayor, as executive officer, with the council in its legislative and advisory capacity, could well attend to all the business requiring attention under conditions as they were when the municipal system was adopted and during the gradual changes which took place prior to the opening of the present century.

Present-day ideas on civic development, however, have so far outdistanced the system that the latter is now absolutely unable to deal effectively with the situation in any but the most elemental of civic communities. Modern municipalities are not content with caring for the welfare of the citizen in the old way. The ratepayer does not content himself with candles or kerosene for light, nor draw his water from the ancient well. He has electric light and gas and water, telephones and sewers and pavements, parks and playgrounds and cemeteries, all provided by the municipality, and paid for by the rates if the service is not a revenue producer, and very often paid for by the rates when they should be self-supporting and producing a proportion of the general rates as well.

To meet the diversified demands upon the time and intelligence of the council, demands which, added to the purely executive and legislative functions hitherto constituting the chief municipal activities, made some change absolutely necessary, the committee system was adopted. The burden of management was divided, and one group of aldermen looked after one branch of the civic service, another took charge of a second part of the municipal work, and every item of business was brought before the council board, where it gave rise to more or less discussion between the councillors, and caused more or less controversy between men who, after all, were more or less strangers to the particular line of business under discussion.

### Committee System Unsatisfactory

The weakness of this system becomes more apparent as the municipal activities become more diversified, and the advisability of some change in the administration of municipal affairs in general is now generally admitted by all who have given the subject any study. Every municipality of any size in the country is taking over the supply of some of the public utilities formerly provided for by private corporation, and the tendency is to add to the list of municipally owned utilities rather than to decrease it. This in spite of the fact that private ownership of public utilities has in the past been more successful in Canada than has public ownership. This condition is, however, not the fault of the principle of municipal ownership, but the fault of the system under which the various services are operated.

The present system of handling the business of the community through departments controlled by a committee of aldermen has been generally recognized as making for inefficiency, waste and inadequate service. Some way by which the methods of successful private corporation may be adopted and applied to the working of the municipal corporation has

been sought, but as yet the result of the search is indeterminate. At present we cannot do better than adopt the methods of the best business concerns of to-day and be ready to improve on them as experience suggests. As the shareholders of our joint stock companies appoint directors and these in turn engage managers who select their staffs with the object of most efficient service, so in civic affairs the citizens as shareholders cannot do better than follow their lead. The immediate advantages to be gained by adopting such a system are obvious:—

### Advantages of City Manager

(a) The aldermen are freed from the consideration of petty details, and are thus enabled to give a much greater portion of their time to the larger affairs of civic administration, which more properly belongs to them as legislators.

(b) The holding of one man responsible for the administration of the various departments tends to a thoroughness which cannot be expected from committees of aldermen, who are changing their personnel from year to year.

(c) Lack of continuity of policy, owing to the changing personnel of these committees, is thus obviated.

(d) The control of municipal employees is much more satisfactory under the managerial system when the right man is secured.

(e) The placing of all departments under a permanent official assures efficiency and economy which cannot be obtained under the system of committees.

In general, upon looking fully into the whole question, the managerial system retains the best features of the aldermanic system of civic government and eliminates its weak points by adopting the methods of the most successful public utility undertakings.

## OCTOBER BANK CLEARINGS

The following are the bank clearings for the month of October, compared with the same month last year:—

	Oct., 1919.	Oct., 1918.	Changes.
Montreal .....	\$630,794,792	\$ 471,869,247	+\$158,925,545
Toronto .....	403,638,337	300,110,288	+ 103,528,049
Winnipeg ....	300,069,261	285,906,330	+ 14,162,931
Vancouver ...	66,791,366	49,908,856	+ 16,882,510
Ottawa .....	40,818,526	33,767,492	+ 7,051,034
Calgary .....	43,889,651	34,442,575	+ 9,447,076
Hamilton .....	30,094,098	24,815,744	+ 5,278,354
Quebec .....	26,803,429	22,196,564	+ 4,606,865
Edmonton ...	24,454,704	16,072,904	+ 8,381,800
Halifax .....	22,534,817	19,955,474	+ 2,579,343
London .....	14,607,557	11,340,870	+ 3,266,687
Regina .....	26,801,665	25,168,271	+ 1,633,394
St. John .....	13,908,805	9,875,134	+ 4,033,671
Victoria .....	11,860,501	8,878,471	+ 2,982,030
Saskatoon ...	11,294,553	10,400,679	+ 893,874
Moose Jaw ...	9,451,541	9,863,566	— 412,025
Brandon .....	4,525,113	3,608,521	+ 916,592
Fort William .	4,800,392	4,448,167	+ 352,225
Lethbridge ...	3,781,253	4,649,387	— 868,134
Medicine Hat ..	2,844,583	2,570,795	+ 273,788
New Westminster	2,992,833	2,389,778	+ 603,055
Peterboro ....	4,098,155	3,940,898	+ 157,257
Sherbrooke ...	4,246,050	3,553,094	+ 692,956
Kitchener .....	4,793,387	2,940,524	+ 1,852,863
Windsor .....	11,371,667	5,083,792	+ 6,287,875
Prince Albert ..	2,102,238	.....	+ 2,102,238
Total ....	\$1,723,369,274	\$1,367,757,421	+\$355,601,853

The Bank of Liverpool and Martin's Bank, which amalgamated last year, are now absorbing the Halifax Commercial Bank, giving four shares, quoted roughly at seven pounds, for each share of the Halifax Bank. The deposits of the Liverpool and Martin's institution aggregate £68,000,000, the paid-up capital £2,046,000 and the reserves £1,518,000. The Halifax Bank has deposits of £3,200,000 and its capital is £200,000. The reserves amount to £120,000.

\*An address before the Convention of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, October 7th to 9th, 1919.