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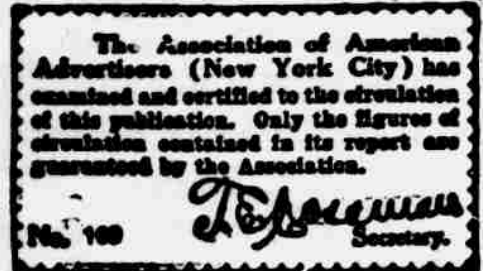
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Items Gathered in From Far and Near

Government by Commission.

From the Philadelphia Ledger.

The fact that Topeka voted Tuesday to adopt what is known as the commission form of government is another indication of the trend of modern political development in the direction of municipal government by a group instead of by a single individual; and the adoption by popular vote in Boston of a plan to make the mayorality non-partisan and to reduce the city council to a non-partisan membership of nine is a part of the general movement toward what Elliot has called "government by a few men." The Galveston plan of commission government has abundantly justified itself in practice; the success of the similar Des Moines plan, which was furiously assailed as oligarchic and un-American, has silenced most of its critics, and Houston, Tex., with its board of five directors (a mayor and four aldermen), has had an experience similar to that of Galveston and Des Moines in securing not merely economy and efficiency of administration, but personal accountability on the part of the city officials. Before Topeka chose, Tuesday, to try "commission government," the plan had already been accepted by seven other cities in the state—including Kansas City, the metropolis, and Leavenworth—and a dozen other cities are about to fall into line with the new idea.

A Cold Winter.

From the Columbus Journal.

The predictions of a long, cold winter coming on now appear in the papers. In addition to the goosebumps, maskrat and other signs, it is said that the overabundance of hickory nuts and the scarcity of chestnuts declare that the winter will be severe. And then, it is said the squirrels have taken to their winter homes, three weeks ahead of time. Maybe on account of the overabundance of hickory nuts they have been able to lay in their winter supply so much earlier. We have noticed that the Statehouse squirrels have not yet retired to their winter quarters, but their coaxing for peanuts is lively as ever. But perhaps, being civilized squirrels, they don't have to get ready for winter.

Too Much Haste.

From the Baltimore Sun.

Nothing more fittingly characterizes modern life than the few words "too much haste." We are a busy people and live in a busy age. The unceasing activity, in all lines of human endeavor, keeps the nerves on a continuous tension. As a result of this, man has grown restless and impatient; no longer does he derive the joy which comes from labor under less strenuous conditions. The forces of life are eddying around us so vigorously as to tax to the utmost our powers and energies. Everything is being sacrificed to the attainment of quick and immediate results. The fastest trains and steamers do not go fast enough. To save a few hours in crossing continent or ocean millions are spent.

A Bit Mixed.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

An English journalist, somewhat mixed as to personalities in America, says, Dana Gibson founded the New York Sun. Of course, Richard Harding Davis was the president of the Confederacy, and Booker T. Washington the father of his country.

Or Ice Cream Soda?

From the Houston Chronicle.

The British suffragettes refuse to eat when imprisoned; have their judges tried fudge?

TWINKLES

(BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.)

The Unusual Exacted.

"Isn't your hat rather curious in shape?" asked the uninformed man. "Certainly," answered his wife. "It has to be. Any hat that wasn't curious in shape would look queer."

"Opportunity knocks occasionally at

COMMISSION GOVERNMENT

—IV.—

THE REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

No one fault in the present system of municipal affairs, all over the country stands out more glaringly than the inability of the people to secure responsibility of their municipal officials to themselves. Public service corporations apparently have slight difficulty in most places in America, of obtaining control when anything is at stake and they pay for it (which in turn is doubly paid for by the citizens.) Contractors, who make politics a business also, have little trouble, when the real test comes; and so on through the whole list of parasites who are as a rule connected with the city hall in most of the cities of the United States.

Where do the people come in?

Don't they pay for their public servants?

Yes, two or three times over.

Why don't they get rid of the men who despoil them?

They can't under the present system, and the people and the officials know it.

GIVE THE AVERAGE MAN A SHOW

Now, the Des Moines Plan has an effective method for the removal of public officers.

It is based on the fact that the people hire their servants to manage their affairs and that like other employers, can dismiss them whenever they so desire. If you were running a business and placed a superintendent in charge of that business—you would feel that the law was wrong if it told you that you could not remove that man from his position when he was loafing; when he was playing into the hands of your competitors; or when he was running your business into debt by carelessness.

Now that is exactly what the "Recall" in the Des Moines Charter means to the citizens.

The people of Des Moines simply reserve the right to dismiss a commissioner if he does not do his duty. Moreover, since they only elect five officers, who are the only ones directly responsible to the people, the citizens know that it is those men and those men only, who are at fault.

And the effect is, that the city officials always remember who it is who hires them.

The honest and capable official has nothing to fear.

This is the way the most average official is developed to his highest capability.

And that is the reason the Des Moines Plan is a success.

It makes effective officials under the new Plan who would be inefficient under the old.

They always remember who elected them—not the public service corporations—but the men of the city.

That way the ordinary, average man has the reins in his hands.

HOW IT IS DONE

This is the simple provision of the Des Moines Plan.

Here are the main points:

"Section 18.—The holder of any elective office may be removed at any time by the electors qualified to vote for a successor of such incumbent. The procedure to effect the removal of an incumbent of an elective office shall be as follows: A petition signed by electors entitled to vote for a successor to the incumbent sought to be removed, equal in number to at least twenty-five per centum of the entire vote for all candidates for the office of mayor at the last preceding general municipal election, demanding an election of a successor of the person sought to be removed, shall be filed with the city clerk, which petition shall contain a general statement of the grounds for which the removal is sought. * * * If the petition shall be found to be sufficient, the council shall order and fix a date for holding the said election, not less than thirty days or more than forty days from the date of the clerk's certificate to the council that a sufficient petition is filed."

In any such removal election, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes, shall be declared elected. The officer whose removal is sought, has a chance to be vindicated by putting his name on the ticket for election. Naturally, if he is not re-elected, his place is taken by his successor.

The actual simplicity of this plan, as compared with our own system of impeachment, in which the people have every disadvantage—even a trial in court, needs no comment. We ask our readers if they know how an official can be removed under our form of government. Did they ever hear of a man being removed from office? If, so, how much did the people have to do with it? Did it take about two months as under the Des Moines Plan? Or did it take months of squabbling in the county courts and then in the supreme court?

TWO ACTUAL ILLUSTRATIONS

In conclusion it is well to tell those who say that the Recall does not work, that when the Los Angeles people became disgusted with their mayors and wanted a certain thing settled, they did so by removing two mayors in succession—three mayors in three weeks.

And to those who think that (from the above illustration) that removal by the people might be unfair, we cite the following actual occurrence in Des Moines:

The Commissioner who is in charge of the police department enforced the law against gambling machines. The town is a "liberal" town. A petition for his recall was circulated. It failed at once—the people refused to remove a man for doing what he had sworn to do—to enforce the laws.

Boiled down, it means that when twenty-five per cent of the people wish a man removed, the man has to be given a vote of confidence by the people—or get out.

What do the people now, (under the present plan) have to do with their public officials after they are elected?

every man's door," said Uncle Eben; "but if you sits aroun' in de rockin' chair waitin' for it, you's purty sure to fall asleep an' miss it."

The Greatest Danger.

The pugilist, 'tis good to note, Pursues a sport that's safe and wise. Unless, perchance, he gets sore throat From too much vocal exercise.

An Independent Attitude.

"Are you running your railroads for the benefit of the public or the stockholders?"

"I'm no unpire," answered Mr. Dustin Stax. "If we pay big dividends the public complains and if we don't the stockholders kick. I'm inclined to maintain neutrality as a high-salaried official and let 'em fight it out."

The All-Conquering Youngster. There's a dignified man with a serious face Whose thoughtfulness moves him to frown.

He steps at a very deliberate pace In making his way through the town. And you'd never suspect, as his manners you view,

When propriety holds down the lid, The silly performances he will go through

When at home he amuses the Kid!

He'd suffer a martyrdom cruel before He'd bow down and flatter a king; He studies his public remarks o'er and o'er,

Least he say an irrelevant thing. But he'll memorize little nonsensical rhymes

And repeat them with care when he's bid.

He'll e'en try to stand on his gray head, sometimes, Because it amuses the Kid!

A British gunboat returning from Bering sea reports new changes in the Bogoslov Islands, which were created off the Alaskan coast, five years ago by a volcanic upheaval. What were at first two separate islands are now made into one by the rising of the ocean floor between. Vegetation is already beginning to appear on the newborn islets.

MASONIC CALENDAR.

Friday, Nov. 12.—King Solomon's Chapter, No. 4, R. A. M., stated meeting.

MATHER'S JACKSON COAL

There is nothing so exasperating to the cook than a poor fire, and in these days of shifting fuel, she is in a constant state of agitation.

ONE TRIAL WILL CONVINCE

that the very best cook stove fuel that comes to this market is Mather's Jackson. We have it in lump or nut sizes.

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BERRYHILL TELLS OF THE ADOPTION OF HIS CREATION

(Continued From Page One.)

ability to handle the problems which confronted them. He didn't think the ability to bring order out of chaos was among them. He didn't believe a board of aldermen elected by the people, without reference to conditions such as now exist, was in a position to cope with the question. He heartily favored having the entire council resign, and then have the governor, or some other legally constituted authority, appoint a commission of three or five men to take charge of affairs, and discharge every man in the employ of the city, then making a new deal and employing only such men as were absolutely necessary to run the establishment. If the council attempted to run the city itself, it would have to divide the police and fire departments and other departments by two, three, four and even five; it would be necessary to abolish every clerkship, abolish the salaries of the mayor and aldermen, and reduce the wages and members of employees to the minimum. He didn't believe a board, elected as this council had been, and with the differences which had existed amongst the members, could cope with the questions. If it could be done legally he very much desired that the city go into the hands of a commission, and have its affairs administered by such commission for a period of 12 or 14 months. If this course is not pursued it would be necessary for the council to stop paying revenues into the sinking funds, unless help is gotten from some outside source. If more money than is now in sight is not secured, and if the city failed to meet its fixed charges, a receivership would follow, a condition many people had wished for during the past four or five years. This crisis might lead to a merging of the city and county governments, and he did not think there was a member of the council who would stand in the way of this end being accomplished. If the members of the council, by resigning, could place the city on its feet quicker, it was their duty to resign.

"As stated in that address, the public had lost confidence in the city officials. Hundreds of her people were leaving the city, and contemplated its utter abandonment. The leading citizens, facing complete disaster to their interests, called a public meeting, at which the emergency confronting the city was discussed. This meeting was taken charge of by a committee known as the Deep Water Committee, composed of more than 100 of the leading citizens, and which had demonstrated its right to act for the public through its successful work in influencing an appropriation by the national government for the development of deep water at the port.

Story of Texas Cities.

"Recognizing the incapacity of the city officials, the citizens, through a committee appointed at this public meeting, prepared a new charter which was submitted to the legislature of Texas for ratification. The measure was almost unanimously sustained by public sentiment, was endorsed by the government of the state, and with practical unanimity enacted into law by the legislature. It provided for what is known as a commission form of government by five citizens, two of whom were to be elected by popular vote at large and three, the mayor and two commissioners to be appointed by the governor. Subsequently the court of criminal appeals held the appointments void. The court of civil appeals sustained the validity of the acts in all details. To avoid legal complications the citizens' committee secured a modification of the law, by amendment, enacted by the General Assembly, and provided for the election of the mayor and four commissioners by popular vote. The system was inaugurated, the credit of the city restored, public improvements undertaken upon a business basis, the credit of the city raised to a very high standard, individual confidence in the future of the place returned, and in every respect the new play of government became successful.

"Influenced by this experiment, Houston next adopted the system with slight modifications. Later on the cities of Dallas, Ft. Worth and El Paso secured similar charters. The movement for a simple commission form of government attracted general attention throughout the country and steps were taken in many states looking toward the inauguration of the movement.

Movement in Des Moines.

"The meeting referred to as held in Des Moines on the 17th day of November, 1905, developed a very marked interest on the part of the leading business men of the city. Committees were appointed and a bill prepared for submission to the General Assembly of Iowa at its session during the winter of 1906. The committee was composed of myself, Mr. W. H. Bailey and Mr. John Read, lawyers of the city.

"The measure prepared, contained

many of the provisions of the Galveston charter, but also included certain features that had been developed by a legislative committee of the Ohio legislature some eight or ten years since, when the question of general municipal reform was considered in that state. One of the most radical innovations of the act was that providing for the mandatory submission of all public franchises to a popular vote. The so-called Los Angeles Recall was also incorporated in the bill and certain radical innovations adopted in the matter of electing the council.

"The Des Moines committee presented the bill at a joint meeting of the Committees on Cities and Towns of the senate and house of the 31st General Assembly. It was soon apparent, however, that public sentiment had not been sufficiently aroused to justify legislative action, and the committee declined to recommend the measure for passage.

Indianapolis Plan Considered.

"During the summer of 1906 the movement developed new force. The Indianapolis charter, adopted but a short time previous, was freely discussed by the press, and secured many adherents. A committee was sent to Indianapolis to investigate the workings of the system and favorable reports were given. The Indianapolis system involved the concentration of large powers of an executive character upon the mayor who, within his province, was independent of the council. Legislative authority was conferred upon a large council elected by small sub-divisions of the city. The old system of government by council committees was abandoned, and in effect the mayor became the chief force in the administration of city powers.

The Enabling Act.

"A meeting was arranged by the Commercial club of the City of Des Moines, and on the 31st day of January, 1907, the two Plans were discussed. Mr. W. H. Bailey advocating the Indianapolis system and James G. Berryhill the Galveston or Commission system. A vote was taken by the committee, composed of 300 of the business men of Des Moines, and the Galveston System, with modifications, discussed at the meeting, was endorsed by a decisive majority. The following committee was appointed at this public meeting to prepare a bill for submission to the 32nd General Assembly, namely, James G. Berryhill, W. H. Bailey, I. M. Earle, John Read and S. B. Allen.

"The bill submitted to the 31st General Assembly, was taken as a basis for the new measure. Several important additions were made thereto, those providing for the Referendum and the Initiative, and the provisions designed to prevent the formation of political machines under the new system were greatly strengthened. The bill thus prepared, was presented to the General Assembly, was endorsed by the committees of Cities and Towns of the house and senate and became a law on the 20th day of March, 1907, and is known as Chapter 48 of the Acts of the 32nd General Assembly."

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