

Other Citizen Opinion :

"The present ward system places a large portion of North Toronto in a helpless position, being linked up with St. John's Ward. It, moreover, gives a wonderful opportunity for ward-healers to get in their work. Why not abolish the Council, increase the number of Controllers to, say, a dozen, divide the city into four departments, and elect, say, three Controllers from each?"

"We want better candidates. Better still to have a commission to run successfully a big concern like the City of Toronto."

"No better results will ever be obtained until the number of aldermen is reduced to one-quarter and until they are of a more representative class."

"If the issues in an election are clear-cut and important, or if the candidate has a marked personality, one can get up an interest in elections. Otherwise they seem unnecessary. Periodical elections are probably desirable, but often they seem an unreasonable interference with the management of public affairs."

"In my opinion the city would be better managed under a commission of six business men."

"The whole municipal system is wrong. . . . We have often heard of government by commission. I have not really the time nor the ability to investigate the matter, but I am sure a good many more men besides myself would be glad to learn something as to the possibility or advantages of such a government."

"If the Hare System of Proportional Representation were used in our municipal elections, it would be possible for all classes in the community to secure adequate representation. It would thus be an effective method of creating interest in civic government. It would be effective voting."

Following suggestions from citizens, as contained in replies to the first bulletin on "Effective Voting," the Bureau proposes to issue a series of bulletins on

Voters' Leagues

Proportional Representation

Commission Government

Commission-Manager Government

The Council Form of Government.

EFFECTIVE CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

WHAT IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS SHOULD
BE EACH BODY'S BUSINESS

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EFFECTIVE VOTING—Story No. 2.

VOTING

From the Citizens' Point of View

The Bureau of Municipal Research does not necessarily subscribe to all or any of the statements quoted herein. **It is a fact**, however, that these views are held by many citizens. **It is a fact** that these views must have some relation to actual conditions. **It is a fact** that these views must be taken into account when planning for improvements in government.

Replies to Bulletin—

"Effective Voting"—Story No. 1

Eliminating replies from those who did not vote because of absence from town, or because they were not qualified to vote in Toronto, the Bureau received 170 replies permitting of tabulation.

Of this number, 161 voted—

60 stating that they did so with the expectation that their vote would count, while

40 stated that they voted in spite of a belief that it was no use.

25 voted partly with the expectation that their vote would count and partly in spite of a misgiving that it was no use.

36 did not state their views in this connection; but, in some cases, assigned special reasons for going to the polls.

Why Some Citizens Voted

"Every unsatisfactory condition of which we complain to-day could be remedied if the people desired it and used their vote properly. No one has the right to complain who does nothing to improve conditions."

"Because I am interested in the tax-rate and the only control I have on it is by the exercise of the franchise."

"A democratic necessity."

"I vote on all occasions, so that I may enjoy all the privileges of the franchise, and at the same time discharge my proper responsibilities as a citizen of the City of Toronto."

"Knowing my vote would count, even if not for successful candidate, as every vote helps such a man to try again."

"It is always worth while voting, even if it only keeps or helps to keep down an undesirable majority."

"If we didn't vote, the decision would favor the voter whose motive is self-interest."

"In the hope that some day voting will be looked on as a privilege and trust. This may happen when better men are nominated."

"I think every voter should vote. Sometimes the choice offered is not what one would like, but one can and should make a choice, even if this is done on the grounds of voting for the least undesirable of a number of bad ones."

"In the hope that sufficient other independent voters, unswayed by lodge or personal influence, would also vote so that the result would be a real expression of the majority wish of such free voters. I still hope for such result some day."

Of these 161 persons who went to the polls, 116 voted as a matter of plain duty; 14 looked upon it as an unpleasant duty; while only 30 considered it a pleasant duty.

Did this condition prevail:

Because of their lack of knowledge of the candidates?

Because the candidates were not sufficiently representative to meet with their approval or arouse their interest? Or,

Because of defects in our present system of voting?

Some Citizen Opinion Regarding the Present Method of Bringing Out Candidates

Over 25% of those who replied to Story No. 1 expressed a desire for better candidates and more reliable knowledge of their abilities and records. Eight out of the nine people who did not vote refrained from doing so because there were no candidates for whom they felt like voting. The following comments are typical:

"There is the plain and must-be-assumed duty to vote without the possibility of knowing much of the capabilities of the men from any reliable source. . . . Find out if we will support an effort to supply us with proper data."

"Wish we had a better system of selecting representatives and of keeping in touch with them after election."

"Would like reliable information with regard to candidates' ability and trustworthiness."

"As I lacked definite personal knowledge of candidates, there was no special pleasure in voting, yet it was in no way unpleasant."

"Why not keep tab on the promises the candidates make?"

"Candidates (self-chosen) are frequently not representative and sometimes unsuitable. Candidature should be considered by a general committee or convention as to suitability before submission to public."

"I had difficulty in finding out when and where candidates would speak and had to depend somewhat largely on the press for direction how to vote."

"I voted, but am not satisfied with the class of men representing the City of Toronto. Better men should be brought out."

"Life is too short to attend political meetings and question the speakers for your own information about voting. All candidates claim they stand for an efficient business administration and other such generalities, so it is Hobson's choice."

Voters' Leagues and similar organizations have among their objects:

Encouraging people to use their vote;

Keeping accurate records of the activities of those holding and those seeking municipal office;

Issuing this information broadcast to the citizens, in order to supply them with facts upon which to base their choice of candidates;

Securing a better system of nominations and elections.

Does Toronto Need a Voters' League?