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H. V. NELLES AND CHRISTOPHER ARMSTRONG

"THE GREAT FIGHT FOR CLEAN GOVERNMENT"

> There had come a moment - quite suddenly it seemed, - when it occurred to everybody at the same time that the whole government of the city was rotten. The word is a strong one. But it is the one that was used. Look at the aldermen, they said, - rotten! Look at the city solicitor, rotten. And as for the mayor himself, - phew!
>
> The thing came like a wave. Everybody felt it at once. People wondered how any sane intelligent community could tolerate the presence of a set of scoundrels like the twenty aldermen of the city....
>
> Stephen Leacock, "The Great Fight for Clean Government"[1]

Whence came these great bursts of reforming zeal like the one that rocked Leacock's Plutoria? According to much of the recent writing about reform in Canada's cities between 1890 and 1920 they sprang from the class interests of well-to-do businessmen and professionals. Typical of this interpretation is the claim that, "Restructured civic governments were meant to afford business interests a greater opportunity in moulding city developments."[2] In the case of Winnipeg Alan Artibise concluded that "the source of reform was not the general public but the city's businessmen. Indeed, the vast majority of Winnipeggers - including organized labour - were effectively barred from taking an active part in governing the city...."[3] This new consensus on the nature of reform derives from work on the urban history of the United States which began to appear over a decade ago. Following the lead of Samuel P. Hays and other students of American Progressivism it focusses upon the elitism and self-interest of the reformers. The drive for boards of control, for city managers and for commission government is seen as the authoritarian reaction of the upper classes to disorder, inefficiency and dishonesty in local affairs. Centralized decision-making and scientific management were the cures prescribed by business-men for log-rolling, ward-heeling and bribe-taking in a drive to make the city more like the modern corporation. In Hays' words, reform innovations "served as vehicles whereby business and professional leaders

moved directly into the inner circles of government ... and dominated municipal affairs for two decades."[4] This sums up the current orthodoxy in urban history. But was it really that way? Already American historians are beginning to mount a challenge to this interpretation.[5] Are Canadians wise to leap aboard another historiographical bandwagon from the United States just as they once embraced economic determinism or the frontier thesis with such enthusiasm?

...

Was the movement for municipal reform in Canada really as elitist, as anti-democratic as has been made out recently? True, Goldwin Smith, one of the leading intellectuals of reform, could write in the mid-1890's, "A great city requires an administration expert, stable and responsible. Nothing can in reality be less responsible than a council, the composition of which is changed every year." He thought Washington, D.C., which was ruled by a three-man board appointed directly by the President of the United States, the only well-governed city in North America.[6] But not all reformers shared his profound distrust for the lower orders. Progressive ideas, after all, included a faith in democracy, in the wisdom of the common man once freed of outworn institutions. Rejecting Smith's authoritarian approach the editors of the Toronto Mail and Empire argued in 1895, "It is better for us to blunder through our difficulties towards a better civic government on the free representative principle than to give the administration of the city over to the hands of a cabal with supreme power."[7] Most reformers cherished the conviction that the less well-off would not fail to express their confidence in the managerial capacity of their betters if given the chance. Not being political philosophers they could ignore the potential conflict between bourgeois authority and popular rights; reformers did not simply opt for the first at the expense of the second. Evidence of this effort to accommodate potentially contradictory objectives was the institutional framework which the reformers devised, for it was rarely as elitist or as authoritarian as would be expected if

the reform movement were no more than an upper-class conspiracy. And the institutions which did come into being, tempered by political debate, often represented subtle transformations of reform notions lacking in the purity of ideology or rhetoric. The reformers were thus democrats despite themselves, both from conviction and from circumstance, and the changes they brought about in municipal government reflected that ambivalence.

Urban reformers in Canada could not ignore the fact that it was impossible for them to monopolize political power, however much they might wish to do so. Property qualifications and franchise restrictions might exclude many labourers from participation, but a skilled tradesman could own his own home and qualify to vote in most municipalities. And since the latter was most likely to belong to a trade union the preferences of organized labour had to be taken seriously. A group of Toronto reformers, centred on the Board of Trade (and including Goldwin Smith), learned this lesson in 1892 when they ran E. B. Osler for mayor.[8] A stockbroker and C.P.R. director, Osler was the very model of a modern entrepreneur-reformer, who promised the voters "A Business Man and a Business Plan." Unaccountably, the lower orders were not impressed with the high-and-mighty tone of his campaign, so deftly satirized by Grip:

> There are self-seeking intriguers who, I'm told, do not refuse
> To appear at public meetings and elaborate their views,
> And will go among the people and mean-spiritedly deign
> Their future plans and policy to outline and explain.
>
> Now, gentlemen, I'm sure that it would pain you very much
> Supposing that your candidate were classed along with such;
> I occupy much higher ground - I should be doing wrong
> To take into my confidence the low and vulgar throng.
>
> A dignified aloofness is the role that suits me best, -
> A sort of 'press the button and leave you to do the rest' -
> My name is E. B. Osler and I'm candidate for mayor,
> Now surely that's sufficient to elect me to the chair.[9]

In a hot four-way contest Osler was narrowly defeated by real estate agent Robert J. Fleming, whose supporters lost no opportunity to recall the way in which the mud of Cabbagetown "used to squirt through the toes

of poor young Bob." About the most radical thing the "People's Bob" did was to dispense with the silk tophat and white kid gloves which the city's chief magistrate traditionally wore, but he was politically astute enough to win re-election on three occasions.[10]

In 1894-5 a judicial enquiry revealed widespread bribe-taking amongst the aldermen of Toronto,[11] sparking interest in a board of control. A Citizens' Civic Reform Committee (with Goldwin Smith in a leading role) wanted the mayor to have administrators appointed by him handle executive duties and the letting of all contracts; their recommendations could only be reversed by a two-thirds' vote of council.[12] Convinced as it might be of the need for changes in the structure of municipal government, organized labour refused to support such an undemocratic plan. The union leaders were, however, favourable to the election of controllers at-large which promised a significant increase in the political power of the working classes.[13] City aldermen, by contrast, were suspicious of both proposals. If there was to be an executive body, they argued, let it be chosen by council from amongst its elected members. The provincial government agreed, and when Toronto's board of control took office in April of 1896 it represented not simply a victory for the bourgeois reformers but an effort to strike a balance between the poles of bureaucratic efficiency and democratic responsiveness.[14]

Organized labour, while initially suspicious of authoritarian schemes for boards of control or commission government, could thus be won over to support them if they seemed to point towards the democratization of the political system. Unless the franchise was extremely restricted this could be achieved by making more offices elective and elective at-large, which would permit a concentration of voting power behind a few candidates impossible under the ward system.[15] In Montreal, for instance, the Trades and Labour Council opposed the introduction of a board of control in 1909-10, viewing it as "a plot of capitalists and corporations."[16] Yet this evidently did not reflect the view of all working class voters for a plebiscite on the issue in September, 1909

saw a board endorsed by 18,441 to 2,644.[17] In the 1910 civic elections the middle class reformers grouped themselves under the banner of the Association of Citizens and attempted to neutralize organized labour's hostility towards the new system by endorsing its candidate for controller, Joseph Ainey. Ainey topped the poll with 30,942 votes.[18]

That this experience was not confined to the larger cities of central Canada is demonstrated by the case of Saint John, New Brunswick. In 1912 that city became the first in Canada to adopt commission government. The earliest proponents of such "businessmen's government" had indubitably been the members of the local Board of Trade, who took up the idea in 1911 in the hopes of increasing administrative efficiency and enticing new industries to locate there.[19] But when a pressure group called the Citizens' Committee was created, care was taken to see that it included representatives from philanthropic, ethnic and secret societies, the ministerial association and the local Trades and Labour Council. The sitting aldermen, however, did not exhibit much enthusiasm for the change and instead voted for a royal commission to study the municipal government.[20] That decision was roundly denounced by speakers from all walks of life at a mass meeting organized by the T.L.C. on March 27, 1911. Labour Council president Walter Allingham put the views of his organization plainly to the 600 assembled citizens: commission government would benefit the workingman since he would need to keep an eye on just 5 men *versus* the present 17.[21] Impressed by the strength of organized opinion the provincial government speedily approved a plebiscite on the issue.[22]

In the campaign which the Citizens' Committee mounted to secure a favourable vote labour's representatives played an important role. They had already insisted successfully that there should be no property qualifications for candidates, throwing office open to everyone. Allingham and company were confident that the introduction of primary elections, respectable salaries for the commissioners and the provision for initiatives, referendums and recalls would significantly enhance the

the democratic character of local politics.[23] In the plebiscite held on April 18, 1911 over 75% of the adult male population was eligible to vote (although only 55% of the electorate actually qualified by paying their taxes on time). The turnout was about 70% and commission government was approved by 3,893 to 1,647, a margin which demonstrated the broad support the plan commanded in the community.[24] In the spring of 1912 when the Citizens' Committee met to select a slate of candidates for the elections the role of organized labour in securing commission government was recognized by the inclusion of Walter Allingham along with four prominent businessmen and professionals. Allingham won fourth place in the primary but finished out of the running on election day.[25]

It cannot be argued that Canada's first and most longlasting scheme of commission government was imposed on the workingmen of Saint John against their will. Rather, organized labour chose to cooperate with the Board of Trade in promoting the plan because they regarded it as one means of democratizing government. After 1912 Saint John's trade unionists could concentrate their voting strength behind a few candidates. If elected a working class nominee would not only exert considerable influence on a five-man body but would also possess executive authority over the civic departments. And should the commissioners fail to act in the interests of labour the initiative, the referendum and the recall provided means of redress. When the city locked out its policemen in September, 1918 for attempting to form a union, the T.L.C. organized a successful campaign to recall the Commissioner of Public Safety, Harry R. McLellan, and Sewer and Water Commissioner E. J. Hillyard, (who had ill-advisedly declared that German money was behind the police union). In an election held on December 30, 1918 both incumbents were handily defeated and replaced. The dismissed officers were reinstated, their pay increased and a conciliation board set up which eventually found for the men. A police union affiliated to the national Trades and Labour Congress was formed and the suspended men granted back pay.[26] No wonder workingmen were amongst the staunchest supporters of commission government in Saint John, retaining their enthusiasm for the experiment longer than

other groups in the city which finally voted to abandon it in 1936. Reform movements in many places thus should be viewed as coalitions of interests, sometimes uneasy, sometimes amicable. Since decisions on the structure of municipal government were ultimately taken at the provincial level, where a broader franchise prevailed, middle and upper class reformers were rarely in a position to ignore altogether the wishes of other residents of their cities even if they might want to do so.

...

Not every reformer in Canada was ready to accept new-fangled foreign ideas like commission government. In 1912 the province of British Columbia appointed a royal commission on municipal government. Some of those who testified before it, like M. B. Cotsworth, did put the case for more centralized, authoritarian rule. Cotsworth argued that local government should be entrusted to a small number of competent men or even to a single individual so "that he can direct the affairs for the best interests of the city without fear of the voters." And he added, "I am certain that one practical man, like Sir William Whyte or Mr. Marpole,[27] his opinion would be far more valuable than the whole bunch of people here in Vancouver."[28] But many people disagreed. Representing the Vancouver Board of Trade Alderman Walter Hepburn rejected commission government in principle. Former alderman Edward Odlum, also appearing for the Board, was equally critical of it; he endorsed Hepburn's view that the recall was a "humbug," calling it "the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard of." Professor Odlum, a distinguished ethnologist, along with Mayor Macbeath of Vancouver and Reeve Harvey of Point Grey did believe that some separation of legislative and executive functions would improve the quality of local government, but none of them wanted to see council abolished. Odlum pointed out that modelling the municipality upon the corporation did not necessarily imply the destruction of democratic control:

> One of the commonest things we hear in the city, in conversation and through the press, is that we should manage the city as a big business concern is managed. They have their management to do the executive work, but they have a

> legislative body above them, which is the annual or general meeting called for the purpose, so that even in these big enterprises they recognize that there must be a legislative body above themselves.[29]

Having taken testimony throughout the province, in other Canadian cities and in the United States, the commissioners[30] reported that the existing system in British Columbia (modelled upon Ontario's) had generally functioned well. Why, then, change to some new and untried form of government? They specifically ruled out commission government on the grounds that "it places too much uncontrolled power in the hands of a few men." Three people might dominate a five-member body, and even the best-intentioned oligarchs could do harm to a city. Since the commissioners would almost invariably meet in private the recall did not provide an adequate safeguard against the abuse of power. City councils, on the other hand, provided training grounds for public servants, training whose value was demonstrated by the number of former aldermen in provincial and federal politics. The report expressed scepticism about the notion that a city the size of Vancouver could not be governed effectively owing to the pressure of executive duties upon its councillors. If this were so, how could British municipalities with similar systems manage satisfactorily? Should the problem be thought sufficiently serious, however, the recommended solution was a board of control, an institution which had already proven itself in other Canadian cities.[31]

The commissioners were not alone in their views. A significant number of other municipal experts considered authoritarian structures and corporate models to be at odds with the heritage of British liberty. For example, Professor W. B. Munro, a distinguished expatriate who taught political science at Harvard, frequently intervened in the debate about cleaning up Canada's cities to criticize the city managers and commission governments so fashionable in the United States. Even boards of control were an aberration to him, for all such institutions represented a departure from the tradition of parliamentary sovereignty

in the direction of the American system of checks and balances. Government by experts and technocrats he would have nothing to do with; let the solid taxpaying burgher rule.[32] Harry Bragg, editor of the Canadian Municipal Journal, welcomed these views from such an eminent authority, adding that "the real test of a government is in the political traditions which it develops among the people."[33] Bragg often insisted that "Civic Government [Was] Something More Than Business": "No wonder Bryce in his American Commonwealth said that municipal government in the United States was a complete failure, when the public spirit is so wanting that municipalities had to come down to purely business methods to make any success at all." In Canada, by comparison, things were not so bad: "Her citizens take a keener interest today in the doings of local councils, and if the public interest can be still further inspired there is not much danger of the civic government of this country getting down to the dead level of the business world."[34]

Even those reformers who expressed envy at the honesty and efficiency with which European, particularly German, cities were run had doubts about the paternalism of the system. Writing in the Canadian Municipal Journal in 1913 Frederick Wright complained that in Freiburg, "Government has taken the place of the parent." Despite an impressive array of social services and civic utilities Wright concluded that, "In no Anglo-Saxon district could such municipalization of public utilities be carried out so completely as in Freiburg - the nature of the people would not stand for it; it would smack too much of interference with the Divine Right of Man."[35] If self-reliant Canadians could not stomach such spoon-feeding before 1914, the war made the well-run German city just another example of Hunnish autocracy. Wright returned to the theme in the dark days of 1916: "...it would be a sorry day for us if the German brand of local government ever had an opportunity of being introduced into Canada." German city-dwellers "were little better than prisoners under suspended sentence." "On paper," he conceded, "the German system of municipal government is beautiful, but in practice bad, and unthinkable in a democratic country like Canada."[36] A year later

H. L. McBain summed up the concerns of those municipal reformers who could not put their ultimate faith in structural change:

> I do not ignore the importance of governmental form in a democracy. But I am profoundly convinced that we have laid and are laying too much stress upon this matter of form. This or that type of government is of importance only to the extent that it lends itself to the smooth functioning of democratic control. We cannot assume that any organic form will give the people of a city any better government than they deserve.[37]
>
> ...
>
> But most amazing of all was the announcement that was presently made that ... Mayor McGrath himself would favour clean government, and would become the official nominee of the League. This certainly was strange.
>
> Stephen Leacock, "The Great Fight for Clean Government"[38]

If the analysis of the urban reform movement in recent writing has been somewhat unsatisfactory, it has been sophisticated by comparison with the treatment meted out to the "old guard" against whom the reforms were directed. Too often they have simply been dismissed as the "machine," their activities and their appeal lumped together under the heading "ward politics." Closer study is all the more necessary because Mayor McGrath of Plutoria was not the only experienced politico to display a remarkable ability to ride and redirect the reform wave. All the rhetorical fervour and institutional change must not be permitted to obscure this fact. Here Samuel Hays has entered a caveat which his Canadian disciples ought not to ignore; "These innovations did not always accomplish the objectives that the business community desired," he writes, "because other forces could and often did adjust to the change in governmental structure and reestablish their influence."[39]

For instance, in 1896 when Toronto city council chose Canada's first board of control they selected three experienced aldermen. Daniel Lamb, whose family firm rendered down animal wastes, was a council veteran first elected in 1885, while flour merchant Robert H. Graham had been on and off the council since 1887 and insurance agent George McMurrich

had served ever since 1891.[40] Lamb, who topped the ballotting with 13 votes (versus 11 for Graham and 9 for McMurrich) was, moreover, an outspoken opponent of the board of control system. On the very day he was selected he declared that he preferred the system of council committees and led a successful fight to prevent all bills and bylaws being referred to the board rather than the legislation committee. Previously Lamb had expressed strong disapproval of the plan to require a two-thirds' vote of council to overturn a recommendation by the controllers. Graham also voiced reservations about the new system, while promising to serve it loyally.[41] Only McMurrich, who had taken a leading role in the movement for structural reform in 1895 (along with Aldermen Thomas Davies and John Hallam[42]) seems to have been genuinely enthusiastic about the change. The fourth member of the new board was, of course, the "People's Bob" Fleming, a member of council beginning in 1886, first elected mayor in 1892. Fleming had solid credentials as a moral reformer and temperance man, but in private life he was a real estate promoter and loan broker, the very sort of man whom the upper class reformers insisted had helped to launch the city upon a sea of financial troubles in the early 1890's.[43] Hardly, then, the kind of board of control envisioned by Goldwin Smith and E. B. Osler to run the city like a big corporation.

Similar problems afflicted the reform movement in Montreal. There a reform committee proposed changes in the city charter to strike at the power of the ward politicians and the "machine" of Raymond Prefontaine by giving wider powers to the mayor. By the time the changes had been approved by the provincial government in 1898 none other than Raymond Prefontaine was mayor, a post he retained until 1902. Even after 1900 when a reform alliance headed by Herbert B. Ames and Hormisdas Laporte won a majority on city council, Laporte as chairman of the finance committee found himself at odds with a fellow-reformer who headed the roads committee. Over Laporte's objections that committee continued to approve numerous public works schemes rooted in patronage. Following the revelations of the Cannon Commission in 1909 a new wave of reform

enthusiasm captured all four controllers' seats and nineteen of the twenty-two places on council. But within a couple of years investigations again revealed that kickbacks and sloppy administrative practices were as prevalent as ever. And in 1912 Mederic Martin, one of the Aldermen most severely criticized by Jude Cannon for dishonest practices, was elected mayor.[44] It seemed as though life was imitating Leacock's artful satire.[45] Mayor McGrath, then, was just one of the old-time stalwarts to ride out the burst of reforming zeal. Others were also prepared to say what needed to be said to get elected, to adopt the rhetoric of reform in order to hang onto power.

...

All of this suggests that in future students of urban reform in Canada ought to devote less attention to ideas, to rhetoric and to institutional changes and concentrate more upon what actually went on in the cities. However unglamourous mill rates and local improvement bylaws may seem they dominated the civic scene (just as weed control and barbed wire tariffs held their place upon the provincial and national stages). Once we know more about what actually went on in the various regions of the country, we shall be better placed to assess the nature and the achievements of the urban reform movement. When this is possible it may become clear that the Canadian scene differed in important ways from that in the United States.[46]

. . . . . .

1. Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich (New York, 1914), p. 277.

2. John C. Weaver, "'Tomorrow's Metropolis' Revisited: A Critical Assessment of Canadian Urban Reform, 1890-1920," paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, 1976, p. 2. For a similar line of argument see Weaver's "The Meaning of Municipal Reform: Toronto, 1895," Ontario History, LXVI (1974), pp. 89-100 and "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal: Businessmen and Boosters in Canadian Civic Reform 1890-1920," in A. R. McCormack and Ian MacPherson, eds., Cities in the West (Ottawa, 1975), pp. 48-73. See also Michel Gauvin, "The Municipal Reform Movement in Montreal, 1886-1914," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1972.

3. Winnipeg, A Social History of Urban Growth 1874-1914 (Montreal, 1975), p. 57. This is the first scholarly history of a Canadian city in this period to appear. The chapter from which this quotation is taken is entitled "Civic Politics: The Search for Business Efficiency in Municipal Affairs" and is rather brief, concentrating upon the utterances of business leaders in the years 1881-4, 1897 and 1904-7. It seems surprising in view of the later strength of organized labour in the city, and the attention paid to ethnic voters by the provincial government of Rodmond Roblin, that the working classes had so little influence upon municipal affairs. If so, Winnipeg was unusual amongst Canada's cities.

4. "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 55 (1964), p. 167. Hays has recently reiterated this view in "The Changing Political Structure of the City in Industrial America," Journal of Urban History, I (1974), pp. 6-38. Leacock had, of course, developed this view long before; here is his description of the first meeting of the Clean Government League of Plutoria:

> This was organized by a group of leading and disinterested citizens who held their first meeting in the largest upstairs room of the Mausoleum Club. Mr. Lucullus Fyshe, Mr. Boulder and others keenly interested in obtaining simple justice for the stockholders of the Traction and the Citizens Light were prominent from the start. Mr. Rasselyer-Brown, Mr. Furlong senior and others were there, not from special interest in the light or traction questions, but, as they said themselves, from pure civic spirit. Dr. Boomer was there to represent the university with three of his most presentable professors, cultivated men who were able to sit in a first-class club and drink whiskey and soda and talk as well as any businessman present. Mr. Skinyer, Mr. Beatem and others represented the bar. Dr. McTeague, blinking in the blue tobacco smoke was there to stand for the church. (Arcadian Adventures, pp. 289-90)

   Perhaps because he was an economist historians have refused to take Leacock seriously.

5. See, for instance, Melvin G. Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," in Lewis L. Gould, ed., The Progressive Era (Syracuse, 1974), pp. 133-51, where he distinguishes "social reformers" like Mayor Hazen Pingree of Detroit and Mayor Tom L. Johnson of Cleveland from the structural reformers of the National Municipal League, and notes that "Social reform ... would be at odds with the city-commission and city-manager movement that rose during the twilight of the Progressive Era." (p. 139)

6. Goldwin Smith, Municipal Government, A Letter to "The World" (n.p., n.d.); see also Toronto World and Toronto Mail, December 12, 1894.

7. Toronto Mail and Empire, November 16, 1895; the editorial was criticizing a plan of reform devised by Smith's committee.

8. The story of Osler's campaign is told in greater detail in our forthcoming book The Unbluing of Toronto and the Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Cars and Municipal Reform, 1888-1897 (Peter Martin Associates, 1977).

9. Grip, November 28, 1891.

10. Fleming was returned again in 1893, lost in 1894 and 1895 (by a mere 45 votes) and won again in 1896 and 1897, retiring to become city Assessment Commissioner and in 1903 General Manager of the Toronto Railway Company.

11. City of Toronto Archives, City Clerk's Department Papers, "In the matter of the investigation before his honour Judge McDougall, pursuant to resolutions of city council dated 8th October, 1894 and 13th November, 1894," Evidence and Reports (typescript).

12. Weaver, "The Meaning of Municipal Reform: Toronto, 1895," passim.

13. Organized labour showed its opposition to the non-elected board of control in 1893 when the Ratepayers' Association and the Board of Trade proposed a five-man body consisting of the mayor, three men appointed by him with the approval of council and one person elected by council. The T.L.C. wanted the board to consist of the mayor and two members elected at-large plus a single alderman chosen by council. At the same time it called for the abolition of wards and property qualifications for office, the payment of aldermen and their election at-large. It did not join in the 1895 deliberations. See Public Archives of Canada, Toronto Trades and Labour Council, Minutes (microfilm), vol. II, October 20, November 8, 1893, pp. 43-7, 52-4.

14. A council committee and the citizens' group held a number of joint sessions. The provincial legislation made a board of control mandatory for any city which attained a population over 100,000; see Statutes of Ontario, 1896, c.51. s. 33.

15. Thus Weaver's statement that, "Since ethnic and working class areas were clustered in certain wards, the movements for boards, commissions and at-large elections reduced their already slight role in civic affairs," ("'Tomorrow's Metropolis' Revisited," p. 27) seems too sweeping. The leaders of organized labour often favoured boards of control elected at-large, and in at least one case, as we shall see, were amongst the strongest supporters of commission government; they did not feel that these structural reforms reduced the political power of the working classes.

16. Gauvin, "Municipal Reform in Montreal," p. 133.

17. Michel Gauvin, "The Reformer and the Machine in Montreal Civic Politics: From Raymond Prefontaine to Médéric Martin," paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, 1976, footnote 46. The plebiscite also approved a reduction in the number of aldermen and rejected the creation of a board of public works by similarly large margins.

18. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

19. City of Saint John, Office of the Clerk of the Common Council, Council Minutes, January 9, 1911.

20. Ibid., March 23, 1911.

21. Saint John Daily Telegraph, March 28, 1911.

22. Ibid., March 30, 1911; Statutes of New Brunswick, 1911, c.66, "An Act to Provide for the Taking of a Plebiscite on the Commission Plan of City Government in the City of Saint John."

23. Saint John Daily Telegraph, April 15, 1911. These advantages of the scheme along with elections at-large, two-year terms of office and the unification of legislative with executive functions were cited in the display advertisements run by the Citizens' Committee.

24. Adult British subjects, male or female, could vote if the paid taxes on income or personal property worth over $100; the number of female voters was not specified. By comparison, in Winnipeg British subjects, male and female, could vote at this time if they held property rated at over $100 or leased property rated at $200. (Artibise, Winnipeg, p. 38) There were 7,784 registered voters (out of a population of 100,000) in the latter city in 1906, there being fewer British subjects proportionately than in Saint John.

25. Saint John Daily Telegraph, March 27, April 6, 1912. The committee's candidate for mayor was ousted in the primary; an outsider, Harry R. McLellan, topped the poll for commissioner, while former alderman Rupert W. Wigmore, an opponent of the changes, ran third. Thus the committee's nominees did not even command a majority on the commission. In this Saint John was not unique, for the introduction of commission government in Des Moines (upon which Saint John's system was patterned) in 1908, saw a complete five-man opposition slate win out over the business and professional group's nominees. (Hays, "Politics of Reform in Municipal Government," p. 162) Hays simply recounts this without discussing its relevance to his interpretation of the reform movement in the United States.

26. The story of the police lockout is contained in the Saint John Daily Telegraph, September, 1918-February, 1919. For the recall petition see City of Saint John, Office of the Clerk of the Common Council, Minutes of Council, November 20, 1918.

27. Whyte was the retired vice-president of the C.P.R. and Richard Marpole headed the B.C. division of that railway.

28. British Columbia Provincial Library, British Columbia, Royal Commission on Municipal Government, Evidence and Documents, vol. I, pp. 205, 208.

29. Ibid., pp. 580-90, 591-6, 673-5; vol. II, pp. 35-51; Odlum is quoted at pp. 594-5.

30. The three commissioners were W. H. Keary, a former schoolmaster in the federal penitentiary service and eight times mayor of New Westminster, A. E. Bull, a Vancouver lawyer, police magistrate and first judge of the juvenile court, and H. A. Maclean, a Victoria lawyer who had served as Deputy Attorney General from 1878 to 1910.

31. British Columbia, Royal Commission on Municipal Government, Report (Victoria, 1913), pp. L5-7.

32. Munro was Professor of Municipal Government at Harvard; see his works "City Government in Canada: Boards of Control and Commission Government in Canadian Cities," Canadian Political Science Association, Proceedings, 1913, pp. 112-23; American Influences on Canadian Government (Toronto, 1929), pp. 99-143, and a report of a speech by him in the Halifax Morning Chronicle, April 16, 1919.

33. Canadian Municipal Journal, February, 1913 in which Bragg reviewed Munro's paper to the C.P.S.A. cited in n.32; Bragg favoured a board of control system, arguing that, "The commission plan is little more than a protest against the policy of separating executive from legislative authority. If Canadian cities will only refrain from the policy, there will be no need for the protest."

34. Ibid., May, 1915, editorial.

35. Ibid., August, 1913.

36. Ibid., April, 1916.

37. Ibid., June 1917, reprinted from the National Municipal Review.

38. Arcadian Adventures, p. 298.

39. Hays, "Politics of Reform in Municipal Government," p. 167.

40. Biographical details can be found in the City Directory, 1885-1897; Graham had started out as a clerk in a wholesale home furnishing business before acquiring his own business.

41. Toronto World, March 31, April 21, 1896.

42. Weaver, "The Meaning of Municipal Reform: Toronto, 1895," p. 96. Hallam's sudden enthusiasm for reform would have done credit to Mayor McGrath himself. He had been on and off the council since 1870, but in 1895 the McDougall investigation had revealed that in 1891 he had approached one syndicate bidding for the tram franchise and "demanded to be let in on the ground floor to the extent of $50,000." (McDougall Evidence (see above n. 11), vol. III, p. 866). Since nobody believed his lame excuse that he intended to resign from council if he entered the syndicate, rather than staying on to vote for his own interests, he perhaps felt it wise to be identified with the cause of reform.

43. Fleming had been a staunch backer of Mayor William Howland, elected to clean up the city in 1886, and had led the drive to reduce the number of licensed saloons; see Desmond Morton, Mayor Howland, The Citizen's Candidate (Toronto, 1973). Fleming's opponents in the mayoralty contest in 1892 suggested that he had run to stave off bankruptcy and his affairs were certainly in a most precarious state during the depression.

44. This is based upon Gauvin's "The Reformer and the Machine in Montreal," pp. 5-6, 14-17. The story of municipal reform in Montreal after the Cannon Commission may also be found in Robert Rumilly, Histoire de Montreal, tome III (Montreal, 1974), pp. 400-12.

45. Leacock's Plutoria was, of course, a thinly veiled satire upon Montreal despite the Americanization of the references in the interests of United States sales; Arcadian Adventures was written not long after the wave of reform enthusiasm engendered by the Cannon Commission.

46. On the evidence presented above we are already in a position to say that the following sketch of reform movements by Hays does not apply to many Canadian cities: "Entirely missing from the reform movement were the typical ward leaders of the previous era- the small store-keeper, the white-collar clerk, the skilled artisan. Instead it was dominated by the central-city businessman, the advanced professional and the upper social classes." ("Changing Political Structure of the City," p. 23).