

The William H. Baldwin Prize of \$100 offered by the National Municipal League for the best essay on *The Practical Working of Government in Some Large American City* has been awarded to Henry Warren Cleary of the Junior Class in Harvard College, with honorable mention of Francis S. Wyner of the same class in the same institution. Fifteen essays were presented in competition by students from seven different colleges and universities. The judges were Elliott H. Pendleton, Esq., of Cincinnati; Mr. John A. Butler, of Milwaukee, and Prof. Augustus Raymond Hatton, of Western Reserve University. The subject for next year's Baldwin prize competition is *City Government by Commission*, and a descriptive circular concerning the terms of the award may be had on application to Hon. Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Secretary of the National Municipal League, North American Building, Philadelphia, Pa. Competitors must be "undergraduate students in some American college or university which offers distinct and independent instruction in municipal government."

Hon. Nathan Matthews, ex-mayor of Boston and chairman of the commission which drew up the new Boston charter, has accepted an invitation to give a course of lectures at Harvard next year on *The Government of the City of Boston*. Mr. Matthews is well known to students of government throughout the United States owing to his *Municipal History of Boston* which he published several years ago.

A new volume on *Municipal Government*, by Prof. F. J. Goodnow, is announced to appear this autumn.

NINE ELECTIONS IN ONE YEAR.

F. H. GARVER.

Recently, certain influences have tended greatly to increase the number of elections in many states and localities. Chief among these influences have been the growing tendency to put into actual operation the principles of the primary and of the referendum. A concrete example may be seen in the experience of Sioux City, Iowa, during the year 1908. In this town of 50,000 inhabitants nine regular or special elections were held during the year named. The essential facts concerning these elections are as follows:

January 21. Special election on the commission plan of government. Active campaign waged. Plan defeated by a majority of 329 in a total vote of 4237.

February 24. The city primary. Regular, biennial election. (State primary law passed in 1907.) Candidates nominated for eighteen city offices, including ten councilmen. Total vote on mayor, 3248. Contest on mayoralty in Republican party only.

March 9. School election. Regular, annual. Two directors and a school treasurer elected. A tax proposition to appropriate \$60,000 for a school-house fund also voted on. Total vote on treasurer, 1641. Tax proposition carried by a majority of 204 in a total vote of 1484.

March 30. City election. Regular, biennial. Eight officers and a council of ten elected, each voter voting for eleven candidates. Total vote on mayor, 7159.

May 28. Special election on traction franchise. The Traction Company sought: (1) the right to extend its lines through additional streets and (2) a time extension of certain old franchises. Popular demand for universal transfers refused by the company. Franchises defeated by a majority of 34 in a total vote of 3868.

June 2. General primary. Regular, biennial election. Four parties in the field. Candidates nominated for United States senator, presidential electors-at-large (two), district elector, representative in congress, state senator, state representatives (two), nine state, nine county, and three township officers. Total, twenty-eight different offices.

August 11. Second special election on traction franchise. Practically a resubmission of franchises voted down on May 28, from which, however, the objectionable features had been eliminated. Franchises carried by a majority of 1449 in a total vote of 2923.

November 3. General election. Regular, biennial. Forty-three officials voted for, including thirteen presidential electors, twelve state officers, one congressman, one state senator, two state representatives, nine county officers and five township officers. Total vote on presidential electors, 8168. Total registration in city, 9188.

An amendment to the state constitution was also voted upon and carried by a majority of 2162 in a total vote of 4616, which equals 56.5 per cent of the vote cast for presidential electors. At this election the republicans held a second primary on United States senator necessitated by the death of Senator Allison, their nominee in the June primary. Total vote, 4873.

November 17. Special election. Three separate propositions: (1)

The Perry Creek conduit and tax for same. Both carried. Total vote on conduit, 3558; on tax, 3496.

(2) The Bacon Creek conduit and tax for same. Both carried. Total vote on conduit, 3567; on tax, 3519.

(3) Gas franchise. Several changes in former franchises asked for by the Gas and Electric Company. Proposition defeated by a majority of 281 in a total vote of 3065.

Of these nine elections, five were regular and four were special. Of the former, four were biennial and one was annual. Two of the biennial elections were primaries, one a city primary, the other general. The adoption of the primary principle in Iowa has really added only one election, and that biennial, in Sioux City, because just prior to the passage of the state primary law an amendment to the constitution abolished annual state elections in favor of biennial.

The principle of the referendum was involved in six of the nine elections mentioned above, while that of the initiative was clearly employed in connection with several.

In addition to choosing ninety-four officers, or the equivalent of that number, during the year, the voters had submitted to them ten separate propositions, of which seven were voted or carried and three rejected. Discrimination was especially shown in connection with the last election when four propositions were affirmatively voted and one rejected. The same may be said of the traction franchise in that it was once rejected and only accepted after it had been materially modified.

One very noticeable feature of these elections was the smallness of the vote cast at the special elections. While 8168 votes were counted for presidential elections on November 3, not much over half as many were cast at any of the special elections. The vote on the commission plan of government was 4237 or 51.8 per cent of the vote for President. The vote on the gas franchise, 3065, equaled 37.5 per cent, while that on the school tax, 1641, amounted to only 20 per cent of the same total.

When elections are too frequent voters are bound to lose some of their interest no matter how important the issues may be. Yet the relatively small vote on some of the foregoing propositions should not be over-emphasized. Special elections seldom bring out the full vote. The phenomenon is parallel to another one, namely, that side-issues seldom do any better. This may be illustrated in the election of November 3, mentioned above, upon which occasion an amendment to the state constitution received in Sioux City 4616 votes as against 8168 for presidential electors.