

In accordance with the provisions of Section 34 of the Election Law, we herewith submit our annual report for the year 1922.

The Primary and General Election in the year 1922, were held under a general revision of the old Election Law, and under a law that can be said to a large extent to have been the outgrowth of the work of the election commissioners of the state, who in their offices had seen the vast expense which piled up under the old law and the unnecessary provisions embodied in the law. A special committee of the legislature met many of the commissioners in Syracuse and the provisions of the old and the proposed new laws were all gone over in an effort to create the most workable and inexpensive law, so far as the legislature could see, as possible.

As a result the Boards of Elections this year were confronted with many changes, new forms and new provisions which demanded careful and constant study, and frequent reference of questions to the attorney-general for his decision.

The Constitution now provides for a literacy test for new voters, the test to be made by the inspectors. The inspectors, under the law, are expected to apply the test to every new voter, to ascertain whether or not, the voter can read and write. Not only were instructions to this effect in the copy of the Election Law, which each inspector received, but special instructions were send out from this office; but how well they were heeded, some of the members of your

Honorable Body know better than we. In many districts, we are lead to believe, they were not used, the inspectors assuming that the new voters could read and write. It was necessary to provide one set of 100 different sections of the State Constitution printed in an obsolete for each district. Through a combination with the commissioners of nearby counties, we were enabled to get this job done for 77 cents a set, whereas other counties had their work printed elsewhere and paid \$ 1.25 a set.

This was one of the many instances where our board was able to save expense over that paid by other boards. Everything used in printing and stationery in our office was submitted to bids and the lowest bid accepted. We adopted the combination statement of canvass and tally sheet, which seemed to have worked most satisfactorily and on which we received a better bid for printing than anyone in the state, so far as we can learn. In an effort to cut down expense, we have resorted to the use time and again on several articles connected with the General Election and Primary, such as paper, string and small boxes for supplies.

We have scanned bills for printing, which have been presented to us before they have gone to Your Board and in one instance alone found a discrepancy of \$ 247.77. We would recommend that Your Board audit no bills which were contracted by this office, unless they bear our O. K.

In the City of Watertown for the first time in many years, voting machines were used. On all appearances they seemed to work satisfactorily, the voters were able to manipulate them without any great trouble and the full registration in the largest districts were voted without any confusion and within the time limit. In the past,

the question has been raised that a fair election could not be held through the use of the voting machines, as the voters dare not split their ballots for fear of making a mistake. The last election in this city demonstrated that the voters of Watertown voted as they desired. We do not want to go on record as favoring the use of the machines in the country districts, but if after another year's trial, in the City of Watertown, they should work as well in all respects as they did in 1922, we would have little hesitancy in recommending them. The great cost in using the paper ballots lies in the first cost of setting the type and not in the press work, so that for a comparatively few of the districts to retain the paper ballots, would make a large expense to such districts.

In our office is kept a daily record of all proceedings. In this record is enumerated the many changes made in the enrollment, and certificates of citizenship issued to those who are going to Canada. Much of the work which had formerly been performed by the state superintendent of elections and the so-called forty day men now involves upon our office. Among the different items which might be mentioned is the sending out of hotel and boarding house sheets in the city, procuring a list of convictions and sending the record of such to the election district in which the person so convicted resided, obtaining a list of all persons in the City of Watertown who have died during the year, and at times when an application is made for a citizenship certificate, we are obliged to look back through the records for several years, and for the correction of enrollment, we are obliged to look up the records for the five preceding years.

The law governing the sending of absentee voter's ballots to applicants has added much to the work of our office. Opinions differ as to who is entitled to such a ballot. By some, it has been

held that any person may obtain such a ballot even if he goes visiting, hunting or fishing for two or three days at the time of General Election. It seems difficult to get a ruling and to know just where to draw the line. This year, almost everyone who made application in time was furnished with a ballot. One or two complained bitterly because their applications were not filed in time. The fault was entirely their own.

We might add that the number of voters with the enrollment of each party participating in the last primary was as follows:

Enrollment	Vote
Republican 16623	6765
Democratic 6844	689
Socialist 107	10
Farmer-Lab 235	10
Prohibition 706	87

The following shows the registered vote and the vote by parties for the Office of Governor:

Registration	Total vote	Rep.	Dem.	Soc.	F.-L.	Prohi	S.L.	Blank-Void
Towns 32252	17858	11491	5635	50	9	103	7	563
City 9456	8852	4430	3786	355	41	38	12	190
Total 41,708	26,710	15921	9421	405	50	141	19	753

While we might make many suggestions to expedite the work in this office, particularly with reference to the returns and enrollment turned in by the inspectors, we prefer to take those matters up with them. We would, however, recommend that provision be made in so far as possible in paying the printing on our office, especially for the publication of official canvass and the enrollment books, when completed. We believe that a saving of several hundred dollars can be made by the county if this plan is adopted.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioners of Elections.