

# SUPPLEMENTARY ORDER PAPER.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Tuesday, the 3rd Day of September, 1901.

### COUNTIES BILL.

Mr. McNAB, in Committee, to move the following new clauses:—

Interpretation.

1. In this Act,—

“Absolute majority of votes” means a number of votes greater than one-half of the number of all the voters who vote at an election, exclusive of voters whose ballot-papers are rejected; but the casting-vote of the Returning Officer, when given, shall be included in reckoning an absolute majority of votes.

Contingent vote may be given.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section thirty-one of “The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876,” a voter may, if he thinks fit, indicate on his ballot-paper the name or names of any candidate or candidates for whom he desires his vote or votes to be counted in the event of any candidate or candidates for whom he voted in the first instance not receiving an absolute majority of votes; and, if he indicates more than one such candidate, may indicate the order in which he desires that his vote or votes shall be counted for any such candidate or candidates.

Such indication shall be made by writing the figures “1,” “2,” “3,” “4,” or any subsequent number, opposite to the name or names of the candidate or candidates for whom he does not vote in the first instance, but for whom he desires his vote or votes to be so counted, and the order indicated by such numbers shall be taken to be the order in which he desires his vote or votes to be so counted:

Provided always that no mere irregularity or error in writing such figures, nor any omission to write the same, shall invalidate the vote or votes given by a voter in favour of any candidate or candidates in the first instance if the ballot-paper of the voter is otherwise in order.

Who are elected.

3. When in any district as many candidates obtain an absolute majority of votes as there are members to be returned at the election, the candidates so obtaining an absolute majority of votes shall be declared by the Returning Officer duly elected as members for the said district.

Defeated candidates.

4. At any election,—

- (1.) When one member only is to be returned at the election, and no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes; or
- (2.) When more than one member is to be returned at the election, and there are not the required number of candidates each of whom receives an absolute majority of votes,—

Votes given to defeated candidates, how dealt with.

the vote of every voter who has voted for the candidate who has received the smallest number of votes shall be counted for such one or more of the remaining candidates as he has indicated in manner aforesaid, and the votes so counted for such remaining candidates shall be

added to the votes originally given for them: Provided, however, that, for the purpose of ascertaining the absolute majority of votes only, the ballot-papers of all voters who have voted for the candidate who has received the smallest number of votes and who have not indicated in manner provided by section *two* hereof for whom they desire to vote shall be deemed to be rejected.

Contingent vote again exercised.

5. The provisions of sections *three* and *four* hereof shall apply to the votes as ascertained by the preceding section, until—

- (1.) When one member only is to be returned, a candidate receives an absolute majority; or
- (2.) When more than one member is to be returned, there are the required number of candidates, each of whom receives an absolute majority.

Returning Officer to exercise casting-vote.

6. When two or more candidates, none of whom are elected, receive an equal number of votes, and one of such candidates would, if there had been no equality of votes, have secured the smallest number of votes, the Returning Officer shall decide which of such candidates shall be deemed to have received the smallest number of votes.

Irregularity not to void ballot-paper.

7. If a voter writes a figure opposite to the name of a candidate for whom he votes in the first instance, the ballot-paper shall not be rejected for that reason only.

Section 32 of "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876," repealed.

8. Section thirty-two of "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876," is hereby repealed in so far as the same applies to the election of members of the Council, and the following enacted in lieu thereof:—

Provision where voter blind or not able to read.

"If any voter is blind or is unable to read, the Returning Officer shall, at the request of the voter, and before any scrutineer present, read to him the names of all the candidates on the voting-paper, and shall on each voting-paper draw a line through the names of such of the candidates as the voter states he desires not to vote for, and shall also, in manner provided by section *two* hereof, indicate the candidate or candidates for whom the voter desires his vote or votes to be counted in the event of any candidate or candidates for whom he voted in the first instance not receiving an absolute majority of votes."

Section 35 of "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876," repealed.

9. Section thirty-five of "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876," is hereby repealed in so far as the same applies to the election of members of the Council, and the following enacted in lieu thereof:—

Candidates having most votes to be declared to be elected.

"As soon as conveniently may be on or after the day of the poll, the Returning Officer shall give public notice of the number of votes received by each candidate, and shall declare those candidates elected who have received an absolute majority of votes."

Amendment of "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876."

10. "The Regulation of Local Elections Act, 1876," is hereby amended in so far as the same applies to the election of members of the Council, as follows:—

The Fourth Schedule, by inserting after the word "vote" the words "in the first instance," and by inserting the following new paragraph:—

"The voter may indicate, by writing the figures '1,' '2,' '3,' or any subsequent number, opposite the name or names of candidates struck out, the names of candidates for whom he desires his vote or votes to count in the event of the candidate or candidates for whom he votes in the first instance not securing an absolute majority of votes."