

# REVIEW OF CIVIC IMPROVEMENT

Conducted by

W. H. ATHERTON, Ph. D. (Sec. City Improvement League of Montreal)

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## A FORUM FOR CIVIC DISCUSSION.

By W. H. ATHERTON.

### Civic Organizations.

In a previous number of this Journal, we advocated in these columns the need of Canadian associations arising to deal with civic questions. We had an article showing the activity of the United States and a survey of the field there (see article on "Civic Functions," Canadian Municipal Journal, Nov. 1914). We have also recently promoted the idea of a central organization of Canadian Civic Associations to be a bureau of inter-relation, through a common association and a common journal (Canadian Municipal Journal, January 1915). We have also directed the attention of these organizations to the new City Planning movement inaugurated by the Commission of Conservation, and we have urged the associations to form in line to make public opinion on this new venture as one, which offers a master-key to the solution of most sociological and civic improvement problems (Canadian Municipal Journal, February 1915).

We therefore hail the advent of new life in the Dominion. We have just received from Toronto two questionnaires sent from a "Committee for study of a proposed forum for the discussion of civic affairs"—the interim committee being composed of Messrs. Hume Blake, K.C., Mark Bredin, John A. Cooper, W. J. A. Donald (acting secretary), John Firstbrook, F. D. Hayes, Oliver Hezzlewood, John Macdonald, John I. Sutcliffe, and Sir John Willison. Their office is 813 Trader's Bank Building, Toronto.

We publish both of their questionnaires in their original form, first to give them publicity, and secondly, because we hope that similarly other local associations may be formed, stimulated by the underlying thirst for knowledge evinced by the Toronto Committee, and finally that there shall be one central Canadian civic Association to join together all the civic experts of the Dominion into one school.

This idea has been approved of by the Canadian delegates, at the Toronto Meeting of the National Municipal League in November, 1913, and again, in the International City Planning Congress held in the Convocation Hall in Toronto last summer, when the steps were taken to secure the appointment of the City Planning and Housing Bureau, since attached to the Commission of Conservation and

placed under the direction of Mr. Thomas Adams (see this review for February 1915). A temporary committee, representative of the Dominion, has been appointed to study means for the formation of a central Canadian Association of civic students. The present writer has been appointed the Secretary "ad interim." It is meant to be not a local but a national association. We need a national forum for civic discussion (Canadian Municipal Journal, January, 1915).

We should very much desire that the committee issuing the following questionnaires, would draw up a resume of their findings in Canadian cities, such as we printed in our returns of November 1914, concerning a said similar return from investigations made in the cities of the United States.

Such information should be given to the common cause, and these columns will gladly be devoted to its dissemination.

### Questionnaire re City Clubs.

- 1.—How was your City Club financed at the beginning?
  - (a) How many members did it have to begin with?
  - (b) What was the entrance fee? Annual fee?
  - (c) What was the yearly income and expenditure at beginning?
  - (d) What is the present annual income and expenditure?
- 2.—What main circumstances led to the formation of your Club?
- 3.—Purposes of the Club:
  - (a) Was the Club organized to advocate or support men or measures?
  - (b) Under what circumstances has the Club ever supported or opposed measures?
  - (c) Has the character of the work of the Club changed?
- 4.—Equipment of a City Club:
  - (a) Do you know of any City Club which has succeeded without a club house or rooms?
  - (b) Do you know of any City Club which has succeeded without a Lunch Room?
  - (c) What value do you attach to these features.
- 5.—Re other Civic Associations:
  - (a) What other associations are active in civic work in your city?
  - (b) Could we get a brief statement of the special function of each of these civic associations?
  - (c) Could a Chamber of Commerce or a Board of Trade accomplish your purposes?
- 6.—We would be glad to have copies of:
  - (a) Annual reports and financial statements at various periods in your history.
  - (b) The Constitution of your Club.
  - (c) Names and addresses of Civic Associations in your city.

### Questionnaire re Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade.

- 1.—What are the main purposes of your Association?
- 2.—Does your organization take an active part in civic affairs?
- 3.—Under what circumstances did the Association begin civic activities?
- 4.—Does the Association advocate or oppose civic measures? If so, under what circumstances?
- 5.—Does it take any part in the civic elections? In what way?
- 6.—Has your policy in this respect been a constant one? What experiences have modified it?
- 7.—Has your civic policy endangered other interests of your Association?
- 8.—If there is a City Club in your city does it advocate measures?
- 9.—What opinion is generally held respecting its activities? Should it advocate or oppose measures?
- 10.—Do you believe that a City Club could succeed without a Club House or Rooms, or without a Lunch Room? What value do you attach to these features?
- 11.—We would be glad to have copies of:
  - (a) Annual reports and financial statements at various periods of your history.
  - (b) The Constitution of your Association.
  - (c) Names and addresses of other Civic Associations in your city.