

THE GRANTING OF CITIZENSHIP TO THE INDIANS.

The decision of the government to introduce a new Indian Act this session which will change the status of the Indians from being wards of the Crown to responsible citizens is particularly interesting inasmuch as the new status will do away with the tribal councils that in the past have—within certain limits—controlled the daily lives of the natives. So that the rising generation will at least better understand the responsibility of citizenship every child born of Indian parents must attain a certain standard of education, and even before citizenship is granted to a village or reservation, the general tone must be sufficiently high to satisfy the superintendent of Indian Lands. How the new citizens of Canada will take up their responsibility remains to be seen.

INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

As a post war activity the Government of British Columbia established a Department of Industries under the direction of Major D. B. Martyn, D.S.O., M.C., the principal objects being the utilization of the undeveloped natural resources of the province, the establishment of new industries, and in particular, to encourage returned soldiers, either singly or by companies to go into business for themselves. To illustrate, the department has just loaned \$200,000 to the Canadian Western Cordage Company, a Vancouver concern organized and managed entirely by returned soldiers. Some of the loans are as low as \$500.

Commissioner Martyn, who gave a resume of the work of his department before the Union of B.C. Municipalities as reported in our January and February issues, is assisted by an advisory council made up of seven business men. Though the department has only been seven months in existence, over 200 applications for assistance have already been received.

This determination of British Columbia not to wait for outside capital but to invest their own money for the development of the vast resources of the Province is to be commended, inasmuch as it cannot help but encourage private investors to follow the example, instead of, as they have been inclined to do in the past, investing their money in foreign securities. In some of our provinces it is noticeable how much more confidence is placed in their basic industries by American investors than by their own citizens—though these same citizens are the first to protest when the said basic industries show exceptional profits. Now that British Columbia has set the example it is hoped that the other provincial authorities will do something more than they have done to encourage the utilization of the wonderful resources in their respective zones.

Municipal institutions constitute the strength of free nations. A nation may establish a system of free government, but without municipal institutions it cannot have the spirit of liberty.—de Tocqueville.

FREIGHT CHARGES PLAY A SMALL PART IN THE RISING COST OF LIVING.

In a recent advertisement published by the American Association of Railway Executives under the caption of "Carrying a Ton a Mile For Less Than a Cent," one or two significant facts affecting the increased cost of living were brought out. One fact is as follows:—"A suit of clothing that sold for \$30 before the war was carried 2,265 miles by rail from Chicago to Los Angeles for 16½ cents. Now the freight charge is 22 cents and the suit sells for \$50." That is, while the freight charges had only been increased 5½ cents the cost of the suit had increased twenty dollars. Truly a lesson in costs, plus profits, that go to make up the increased prices of commodities today as compared with pre-war prices. One of the stock arguments for increased prices is transportation charges, which are now shown to represent but an infinitesimal amount, such as beef being carried from Chicago to New York for two-thirds of a cent per pound.

As the freight charges on Canadian railroads are the same as on those in the United States our profiteers must find some other excuse than "transportation charges" to cover up their tracks.

CIVIC SALARIES.

The Civil Service Commission of the City of Montreal—a newly-organized body under Col. F. M. Gaudet, recently employed American "classification" experts to re-adjust the civic salaries. The result, which is given in another column, makes instructive reading to those who were under the impression that adequate pay was the only means to get efficiency—even in the public service.

Outside the Chief Engineer, who is to receive \$10,000 a year, none of the salaries for heads of departments can be termed princely, considering the responsibility and the service expected. One of the principal weaknesses of our municipal service is that the salaries are not adequate in comparison to the salaries earned by men doing similar work for private concerns, and yet in the case of Montreal the "classification" experts from New York have given their deliberate opinion that fully qualified engineers should have a commencing salary of \$3,000, lawyers \$3,000, accountants \$1,800, etc., etc.

It seems to us that recommendations of "experts"—and particularly "experts" from outside points who cannot know anything of local conditions—should not always be accepted on their face value. On what system the experts base their conclusions we do not know; it is certain they have little knowledge of what the more progressive cities in Canada (that is municipally speaking) pay their officers, otherwise they would know that their salaries are much higher proportionally than those suggested in their recommendations. The municipality, like the private employer, to get good service from its employees must pay for it—the better the salary or wage, the better result.