

CIVIC COMMITTEES AND RETURNED SOLDIERS.

(Extracts taken from the Bulletin of the Hospitals Commission).

A large number of Civic Committees have been formed in different parts of the Dominion and are doing most useful work. The most prominent of these is the Returned Soldiers Association of Winnipeg. This organization not only has provided a Club Room in connection with the Army and Navy Veterans Association, but has raised money and has looked after the wives and families of returned soldiers. Its activity covers a wide range. One method of raising money adopted, which is also being followed in other centres is the issue of a membership button at \$5.00. No returned soldier residing in Manitoba or passing through Winnipeg to a point further west, and requiring assistance in any shape or form, is left without a helping hand.

A well organized Committee known as the Voluntary Aid Association Returned Soldiers Welcome Home Committee has been at work for a considerable time in Toronto. Excellent arrangements have been made whereby the men are met at the station on arrival and are conveyed by automobile or special street car to the Central Military Convalescent Hospital where they are entertained. The Voluntary Aid Association also rendered valuable assistance in the furnishing and equipment of the Central Hospital.

A strong organization has been formed in the City of Saskatoon and very complete rules drawn up for the guidance of its Committees.

Manitoba.

Arrangements were made some time ago to call a conference of the mayors and reeves of all municipalities in Manitoba in order that the question of employment for returned soldiers might be discussed. This conference was held on February 16 and was presided over by Sir Daniel McMillan.

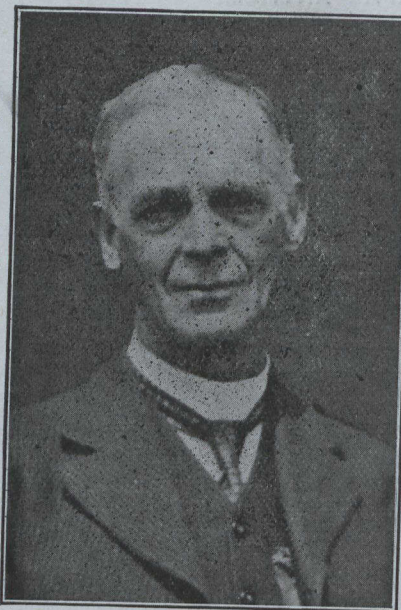
"Many of the mayors reported what was being done in their respective cities and towns and many expressions of determination to organize and effect associations similar to that established in Winnipeg were made. Because of the fact that the Winnipeg body welcomes first to this province soldiers from all parts of Manitoba, and treats them cordially here, the mayors and reeves also avowed that they would get their councils to send financial support to Winnipeg.

At the close of the meeting the following resolution was carried unanimously: "That this meeting of representatives from cities, towns and municipalities in the province of Manitoba hereby pledge themselves to co-operate with the Returned Soldiers Manitoba commission in conjunction with the Military Hospitals commission of Canada in the promotion of the welfare of returned soldiers and that the delegates to this meeting undertake individually to organize or assist in organizing each in its own town or municipality or in any such other way as may be most effective a local committee to carry out the objects of the Returned Soldiers' Commission, and the Military Hospitals Commission."

Before the holding of this meeting the following form was sent to each municipality:—

Returned Soldiers Manitoba Commission.

Town or Municipality.....
 Mayor or Reeve.....Postal Address.....
 How many men have enlisted from your district (approximate)?
 How many men have your Council in their employ?.....
 Can you find employment for returned soldiers?.....
 Would you be willing to give returned soldiers preference as regards employment on municipal work?.....
 Have you any ways or means of taking care of convalescent soldiers?.....
 Kindly give the names and addresses of Public or Private Hospitals and Convalescent Homes in your jurisdiction who would be willing to receive returned soldiers as paying guests?.....
 Have you any organization who looks after the returned soldiers on their arrival? If not, could you organize one?.....
 Remarks.....



EX-CONTROLLER
SPENCE,

Toronto,

Secretary of the Ontario Municipal Association, which meets this month in the City of Toronto.

MUNICIPAL ENTERPRISES.

The Editorial below, taken from the Canadian Engineer is interesting as showing the inadequate conception our contemporary has of the progress made in the local government by this country during the last few years, in spite of one or two drawbacks. We would refer its editorial department to the class of papers given before the recent U. C. M. convention, which would have been impossible a few years back.

One difficulty inherent to our democratic form of municipal government is the weakness in the preparation, development and execution of new enterprises. This is where a city managership should result in a great improvement. The aldermen who are elected to represent the ratepayers are often new to the office, have had no previous municipal experience and their preconception of what constitutes municipal administration often proves to be a stumbling block. But apart from this, it is well to consider how municipal enterprises are undertaken. How often have we read of candidates advocating some pet scheme which is going to do much to provide the ratepayers with an improvement which will return in great satisfaction? Street railways, water mains, sewers and pavements have been extended beyond the limits of prudence, but the anticipated results have not always been secured by the ratepayers. The benefits, if any, have been enjoyed by others.

It is true that developments on these lines have for the time been discontinued, but when more prosperous times return, it will only be necessary to sway the popular votes by eloquent speeches and golden visions to have the former unsatisfactory methods of promoting municipal enterprises repeated again despite the lessons learnt meanwhile.

It was hoped that the Canadian Civic Improvement League was launched for the purpose of promoting a better system, but after the great things which were said at its inauguration there does not appear to be very much progress made on the lines of its constitution. It may be said that the war absorbs the public attention and that our business is to concentrate on victory. If such is the argument, then the League was launched a little too soon. On the other hand, the argument may apply more forcibly after the declaration of peace, for then, after two or more years of violent political, commercial and social disturbance, the people will set to put their affairs into order once more and there will be no time to spare to think over "abstract and dry-as-dust" problems of municipal government. It will then be almost impossible to get the average ratepayer to think municipally and indeed few, outside a circle of municipal enthusiasts, will do so.

The present is Canada's opportunity to arrange her municipal house in order, whilst ordinary business is quiet and people have some leisure to ponder over problems.—Canadian Engineer.