

## CONVENTION OF U. C. M.—(Continued).

control, if at any time the federal or provincial authorities should be relieved of the duties of surveying townships and the work transferred to municipalities. This matter was dealt within an able treatise by Mr. W. A. Begg, Director of Townsites for the Province of Saskatchewan, and is published in the booklet, "Conservation of Life." It appeared, I believe, about a year ago. It shows the advisability of taking advantage of a portion of a waterfront for various farmers instead of running the said lines through lakes which often results in giving the owner of one quarter section several miles of waterfront to the exclusion of his neighbors. This is a topic which will demand more attention when the scheme for the settlement of soldiers on farms is more fully investigated and practiced.

Three things are necessary for economic production from the land — land, labor and capital. Land, however fertile, untouched by the hand of man, produces little that can be used to sustain life. Labor, however willing, can do little to secure production without the help of implements which require capital to secure. Capital, used only in the purchase of land and not in its development, will make no contribution to the needs of mankind so far as production is concerned. But fertile land, cultivated by intelligent labor, assisted by modern and up-to-date machinery, may do much, nay, it may do everything to meet the needs of the world's starving millions.

It would seem a self-evident fact that the man in the best position, generally speaking, to produce from the land is the man already on it. And it is he with whom the municipality comes in closest touch. His solution of the problem of economic development of the land will depend largely on the attitude of the municipal organization of which he is a part. It may do much to encourage him to the greatest possible effort or it may stifle all the ambition he has. Western municipalities have realized the importance of encouraging and assisting those who are earnestly striving to solve the problem of greater production from the land in the face of the world's dire need. The supplying of seed grain to those unable to secure it for themselves is one way in which the rural municipality has met its responsibility in regard to the economic development of the land. It would be interesting to know just how much of the grain produced in the West this year was made possible by the help given by rural municipal organizations in the supplying of seed and feed.

Another means of encouraging development of the land by municipalities in general is practical and systematic town planning and rural development. There are yet many in Canada who do not give this important subject the attention which it demands. Public reason and sentiment, however, are getting behind it more and more every day. I do not need to explain to the delegates that this is accounted for largely through the presence and work in Canada of Mr. Thomas Adams, Town Planning Expert, whose capacity and success are well known to Canada's nine provinces. Had all our provinces enacted urban and rural planning legislation, what sub-division nonsense and complications might have been avoided! In the East and in the West we have large cities and towns, also some villages, surrounded by large areas which should be under cultivation but are not because they have been sub-divided into blocks and lots and these small parcels are likely owned by unfortunate purchasers who do not live near them. Saskatchewan has gone a long way towards overcoming this condition.

In 1914 it passed an "Act Respecting Sub-Divisions." One section of it reads as follows:

"3. The legal or equitable owner of any portion of a sub-divided area within the limits of a city, town, village or rural municipality, whether the plan of sub-division is registered or unregistered, may apply to the local government board for permission to enter upon and occupy any vacant land in such area for the purpose of cultivating the same in common with his own property, and the board after notice to the owner of such vacant land, in such form as it may by regulation prescribe, may grant to the applicant the permission sought upon such terms and conditions as may seem just."

Besides this clause the provincial legislature has made as easy as possible, through municipal institutions and otherwise, the restoration to acreage of sub-divisions. This has proved a real agency in the economic development of land. Under proper town planning supervision,

land within a municipality suited to farming only, would be devoted to that purpose and only a proper area for the convenient housing of the populace in the present and reasonably near future would be allowed.

Land should be developed by sane and logical methods and even at the risk of being challenged at this time when "greater production" is in the air, let it be said that the process should not always be for production purposes. Land should be developed by municipalities for making beautiful and homelike the dwellings within their boundaries. At the thirteenth annual convention of the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities, held last month in Regina, the Lieutenant-Governor brought home to the delegates the number of people who were constantly leaving the prairies, where a competency had been secured, to seek and make homes in this the Pacific province. Surely one vital duty of a municipality is to so make use of the lands under its control or supervision that its homes may be real homes and that contentment and permanency may be characteristic of them. The beautiful municipality should be an ideal as well as the useful or productive municipality; in fact they go hand in hand and one is never accomplished without the other. The "city beautiful" is naturally the "city healthful" and the latter is always the "city progressive." Just before leaving for this convention I received a very interesting letter on this topic from Mr. F. B. Moffet, Mayor of the City of Weyburn, Saskatchewan, portions of which I will quote:

"The citizens of the urban centres of the Canadian prairie provinces are recognizing, as time goes on, that the beautification of their cities and towns is not only something that gratifies their esthetic taste but also is of material benefit as well.

"I am convinced that town forests would prove to be one of these methods of beautifying the communities in so far as trees are concerned. The reasons I give were largely obtained from information published by places already having them. The forest differs from the park inasmuch as it is larger and does not require the upkeep that a park does. The principal expense is in the price of the land, the preparation and planting. The idea of a town forest is not new. In European countries they are said to be older than even their governments. To stimulate interest, the American Forestry Association has inaugurated a town forest contest and offered to plant fifty acres of town property with one thousand white pines to the acre. There are one hundred points to be considered in securing the prize, consisting of area, soil protection, possibilities for recreation and esthetic development, general improvement, and plans for future development.

"The means provided for acquiring town forests in Massachusetts are arranged for by the Town Forest Act, which gives the municipality the right to sell bonds for the promotion of town forests and to extend the payment over thirty years. Practically every country in Europe has tested out the town forest and found it a profitable investment."

Municipalities can aid in no uncertain manner in profitable development of land by a generous and practical interest in educational institutions. A council should so arrange that schools will be encouraged and that in them the uses and abuses of land can be inculcated in the youthful mind. It can go further by helping in school gardening and in seeing that sane methods of using and cultivating any area of land, either large or small, secure due attention in the curriculum of studies.

Vacant lot gardening has received an impetus during the last few years through progressive councils and societies, which fact goes to show that our subject has been in their minds. These unused spaces are often put to economical as well as economic purposes. Besides making them more attractive looking, their cultivation means a conservation of resources and a decreased bill of expenses for the family concerned, which in these days of skyward tending prices for all necessities means much to the average householder.

ALD. OWEN: We have arranged for the appointment of a town planning director, who will be an official with the town with which I am connected. In this connection it is encouraging to know that Mr. Adams has been good enough to offer his services, and his wealth of experience in drafting these by-laws.

MR. ADAM: At present there is in force in Canada seven Town Planning Acts. The most recent Act is in Prince Edward Island, with the appointment of a com-