

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP.

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ECHOES OF THE PRIZE DEBATE.  
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OPINIONS OF V. T. McFADDEN, '08.

After a short introduction in which the terms, Municipal Ownership, Natural Monopoly and Public Utility were defined, Mr. McFadden, the leader of the affirmative showed that the movement towards Municipal Ownership was by no means a recent one, but it is only a reversion to that happy state of things which existed in England about the 15th century. He went on to state that a public utility must be useful to a municipality, as a municipality that it must be useful to the people ; and if the municipality owned the public utilities, the people would use them because they would be in fact part proprietors.

A private company, enjoying a public franchise, derives most of the benefits from conditions in creating which it had little or nothing to do. The citizen sees that such a condition of affairs is not just. The profits should accrue to the makers of those conditions—namely the people.

It is true that Municipal Ownership increases the city government's functions ; because it is desirable, because it makes the public affairs of more interest to the individual so that he gives them more time and attention ; because it prevents the government of a city from falling into the hands of a few ; and because the increased importance and dignity of public matters will attract better and more efficient men to the public service.

So long as each voter can directly affect the character and conduct of his local government, his interest in it will be in proportion to the number, importance and directness of the different ways in which that government serves him.

Every city in the land is in constant fever of complaint on account of the excessive charges and shabby services of favored companies.

Municipalities can float bonds at a much lower rate of interest than companies, because the whole assessable property of a city is generally liable for the payment of principle and interest.

No taxes are levied on city property and municipalities need not accumulate a depreciation fund.

Municipalities pay higher wages and allow their employees to