

feudal influences created, or, on the other hand, tended to destroy, the ancient village community.

SANITARY DISTRICTS

Similarly, it may be said, that the rather artificial midway unit between the parish and the county, known in England as the 'district,' or 'sanitary district,' shows little tendency at present to reproduce itself in the Dominions. The nearest approaches to it are, perhaps, the 'ridings' into which the shires of New South Wales, and the 'town' and 'road' districts into which the counties of New Zealand, are, or may be, divided; but the parallel is not close, for the sanitary districts of England are not, in origin, subdivisions of counties. They are, rather, units based on the presumed requirements of public health administration in a densely populated country; and, apart from the great towns, population in the self-governing Dominions is, as yet, hardly dense enough to need them.

COUNTIES

On the other hand, the institution known as the county, shire, or even 'district' (in the larger sense),¹ i.e. the self-governing area of large size, running into hundreds of square miles, is a familiar object in Dominion local government. In almost all cases, it began life as a 'road district,' and, in the case of Western Australia, it retains that title; though, in this particular case, we can see the older unit on its way to the fuller developement of a 'county' or 'shire,' in the fact that, in some of the more thickly populated 'road districts,' there are, in addition to the district councils, local boards for sanitation and other health purposes. The 'divisional councils' of Cape Colony, the 'rural municipalities' of the prairie provinces of Canada

¹ Thus, the 'districts' of British Columbia and South Australia are, obviously, what would in England be called counties.