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Training Men For Municipal Government

One of the reasons given for the appointment of Sir Arthur Currie to the principalship of McGill University is, which he will be able to re-organize this great educational institution to better serve the needs of today. If such is the case there never was a better opportunity for Sir Arthur to serve the present generation than to work for the establishment of a municipal department through which young men can be specially trained for the government of our cities. In the United States, many of the universities, and the state institutions in particular, have such departments given wholly or in part to the study of municipal government, in which they have been remarkably successful. In Canada on the other hand education in local government has never been taken up seriously with the result that many of the principal executive positions have to be filled by outsiders, because with the growth of our cities such executive positions can only be satisfactorily filled by men with special knowledge. What is more, there is a fast growing feeling throughout the Dominion towards the commission and manager form of municipal government, which means that more trained men will soon be required for the administration of Canada's municipalities. Should the whole of the 891 urban communities adopt commission-manager government, say within a year, the system would fail through lack of qualified men. Even in the United States, where 125 cities and towns have adopted the manager form of government they have difficulty in the personnel and will have until enough men have graduated from the universities.

But municipal government goes farther than mere administration. Since the war thrust greater responsibilities on the councils, municipal students

have come to realize the tremendous opportunities to serve the citizens through local government. They know the very happiness of the community, be it large or small, depends on the broad mindedness of the local governing body. Social service and social welfare, and all that the terms imply, are today recognized as part of the duties of the local authorities; but neither administrative nor social responsibilities can be taken up by the local governing body only so far as it has ability to carry them out. This ability can only be attained by knowledge gained by such means as we suggest that McGill should take up, namely a municipal department. We believe that such an example would soon be followed by other Canadian universities.

THE FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN GOOD ROADS ASSOCIATION.

We congratulate Dr. E. M. Desaulniers, M.L.A., on his election to the first vice-presidency of the Canadian Good Roads Association whose annual convention was recently held in Winnipeg. Dr. Desaulniers has since its inception been a strong supporter of the association and his present position will enable him to do still more work in the cause of good roads which he has so much at heart. It is not too much to say that the present splendid road system of the Province of Quebec is due in no small measure to the constant advocacy of the genial doctor, and certain it is that no man in Canada is better versed in road building—its history from the days of Rome to the present systems as carried out in different parts of the world.