

# THE CANADIAN MUNICIPAL JOURNAL

## AND REVIEW OF CIVIC IMPROVEMENT

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

City of Montreal and  
United States - \$1.25  
Canada, Great Brit-  
ain and Countries  
in Postal Union - \$1.00

Published Monthly by

The Canadian Municipal Journal Co., Limited

HARRY BRAGG - - - - - President  
FREDERICK WRIGHT - - - - - Editor  
H. WISELY BRAGG - - - - - Business Manager

All communications to be made to Canadian Municipal  
Journal

CORISTINE BUILDING, MONTREAL  
Telephone Main 4362

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Official Organ of the Union of Canadian Municipalities

"Municipal from cover to cover"

Circulates in every city, town and village

Vol. XI

FEBRUARY, 1915

No 2

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## Rural Citizenship

The Grain Growers' Associations are taking very practical steps to inculcate into the minds of the large rural population of the great West the responsibility of citizenship by issuing a series of studies in rural citizenship. The studies are frankly admitted to be of a controversial nature with the object of making the men and women, and even children, who make their livelihood on the farm, think for themselves. As the introduction and the preface to the studies show, the idea is not Utopian, rather the impression one gets from their reading is that the whole scheme is very utilitarian and a protection against the inroads of industrialism. The introduction in part, says "that while rural life represented over sixty per cent of the population, rural population had only about twenty per cent of representation in the courts where our laws are made. This in large measure accounted for the great difficulty we experienced in seeking to introduce remedial legislation — not perhaps so much from any desire on the part of our representatives to be unfair, as from the fact that they had not been educated to look at these matters from the rural view point."

We fully agree that a more equitable representation between urban and rural populations in the legislatures of this country would result in a better understanding between agriculture and manufactures, particularly when it is recognized that Canada is essentially an agricultural country, and will be for many decades. But instead of working for a more even balance the tendency of the compiler (Mr. J. S. Woodsworth) and his writers is to teach the superiority of the country citizen over his brother of the city. One of the studies under the title of "Citizenship and Party" says:—"The great city is the Frankenstein created by the nineteenth century. These huge masses of population, drawn hurriedly together by the unprecedented industrial development, have outgrown the intelligence, the conscience, and public spirit of their citizens. What

the nineteenth century created, the twentieth century must redeem. Disorder, waste, ugliness, unwholesome conditions, wild beast struggle must give place to order, health, brotherliness and joy."

If this were true, Canadian cities must be hotbeds of everything undesirable. But it is not true. The city life of this Dominion will compare favorably with that of any other country, and while admitting that the last century, as an industrial century, increased urban population at the expense of the country, and increased the slum life, though not proportionately, it must be remembered that the inducement of the city to the countryman has been its social side rather than the material benefits, which are too often of an unknown quantity. It is true that the said social life is often of a questionable nature, but to the average man that is better than none at all for he is a sociable being, and not all the preaching in the world is going to make him forego it. If the "Back to the Land" movements could have guaranteed a country social life they would have been more successful, and it is because of the possibility of the realization of such, that we recommend the scheme of the Growers' Associations.

We believe that the communal life in the country can be made equally as attractive as that of the city; and without the temptations. Every country school should be utilized as the meeting place of the parents in the evenings, as they are that of the children in the day time, and we certainly can think of nothing so attractive as the discussion of the studies prepared by Mr. Woodsworth. Such meetings are bound to have good results in bringing home to our rural population the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. But again we would point out the futility and even danger of differentiating between rural and urban life to the detriment of either one or the other, for each has its own problems which can only be solved by facing them in a friendly and amicable spirit.