

THE COMMUNITY PLAYERS.

Some years ago there was inaugurated in the United States a movement for the uplift of the drama, one of the purposes of the organizers being to counteract the evils of commercialism that at that time underlay every dramatic production in the country. "Art for art's sake" had become a mere formula and the task of the "Community Players," the title which these pioneers for a better dramatic spirit gave to themselves was no small one. After many rebuffs they finally succeeded in gathering together a large body of good amateurs who gave from time to time excellent interpretations of the best plays. The idea spread throughout the different states until in most large centres there is a "Community Players" organization. The propaganda has now reached Montreal, and if the encouragement that the Community Players have received from the local public is any criterion of the spirit of the larger public of Canada there is much hope for its success in every large, and even small, community in the country.

The "Community Players" idea is not only to encourage local talent in acting and in the writing of plays, but to instil into the mind of the public a love of all that is best in the drama, using the word in its broadest sense. For attempting such a work, the Community Players of Montreal will receive the thanks of all citizens who are desirous to see built up in Canada a most noble art.

TWO ENGLISH OPINIONS ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

"Experience, where the system has been put into operation, has consistently and convincingly refuted the criticisms which have been directed against it, and I, for one, feel unshaken confidence that within no distant period its acceptance as a theory will be universal, and that it will be put into practical application wherever in the civilized world representative institutions prevail."—The Lord Chancellor (Lord Birkenhead).

"I cannot conceive any greater work for men or women who love their country and who desire to have it governed by a representative assembly than to take their part in so altering our method of election that the House of Commons is a true reflection of the people of all parts of the country."—G. R. Thorne, Labour M.P.

SAN FRANCISCO TO EXTEND MUNICIPAL STREET CAR LINES.

San Francisco having made a success of her municipal street car lines, is now considering taking over the balance of the lines of the city that are privately owned. That the city would ultimately acquire all of the street car lines has become more obvious as the situation has developed and is now quite generally admitted. This being the case, there is considerable activity in many different directions with reference to the valuation of the remaining privately owned lines.

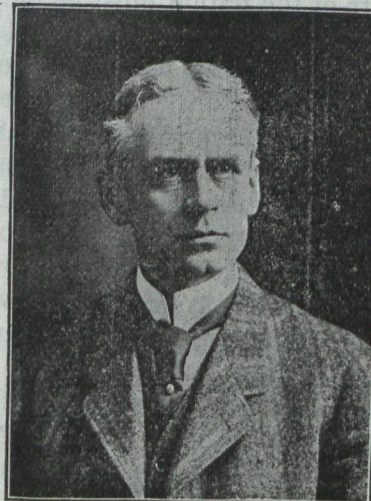
MUNICIPAL BIRD HOUSES IN ST. THOMAS.

The City of St. Thomas (Ont.) recently erected three large bird houses for the housing of Purple Martins. Each house will accommodate 80 pairs of birds. The cost of each structure was about \$250. They are erected in different parts of the city and are all of the same design. On account of their size it was necessary to erect them on steel towers constructed of 1½ inch angle steel. The towers are 24 feet high, each support being set into concrete abutments 4 feet deep. The base of the tower is 2½ ft. by 2½ ft. and 2 ft. by 2 ft. at the top.

MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

That the difficulties of municipal tramway undertakings are not confined to this continent is illustrated in the following editorial taken from the "Survey". (England), which shows very conclusively that in the Old Country the tramway systems are in anything but a flourishing position:

Municipal tramway undertakings have been in an unfortunate position for many years past, and the outlook does not appear to improve. Even the most prosperous concerns have been very hard hit, chiefly owing to the war, but especially to the aftermath of inflated expenditure that has been caused by the war. At Liverpool, for example, the prospects of the city tramways appear to be of the gloomiest, if we are to judge by a statement made recently by the chairman of the Tramways Committee. The undertaking, it was explained, is a losing concern. The city engineer's estimate of the work to be done this year in repairing the track and carrying out the Pierhead scheme amounts to £318,000, while the amount to the credit of the renewal and depreciation account is only £282,000, showing a deficit of £25,900. The operating cost of the system today is 99½ per cent of the revenue, and it is obvious therefore, as the chairman added, that if further increases takes place in the wages and material, the expenditure will be considerably more than the revenue, and the requirements of the renewal and depreciation fund, which were equal to 1s on the rates, will still have to be met. In the circumstances there is much to be said in favour of the contention that the travelling public must pay for their rides. There may be, and probably there is, something to be said for the argument of a labour councillor, that some blame for the present position of affairs may be ascribed to the past policy of voting profits to the relief of the rates, but it seems futile to lay emphasis upon this at the present crisis, and it is anything but helpful to find this statement followed by the assertion that his party would not consent to the raising of the fares. Apart from the fact that the policy condemned is a thing of the past, there is no denying that such relief as was given to the rates was enjoyed by the whole community, irrespective of class, while there can be no question that at present a large proportion of the revenue from the tramways is distributed among the working classes in the form of increased wages. In the circumstances it is little short of unreason to say, in effect, that fares must not be touched, especially in view of the probability that both wages and materials may cost more in the future.



Ex-MAYOR W. STANTFORD EVANS, of Winnipeg, Past President, U.C.M., who has been offered the secretaryship of the new Canadian Milling Association.

"The municipality is the first cog in the machinery of responsible government. The difference between a live city and a dead city is that the citizens of the first are always looking towards the future, while the citizens of the other are looking backward upon the past."

"You cannot rear an Imperial race in the slums."—Lord Rosebery.