

# Editorial

## POLLUTION OF BOUNDARY WATERS.

In the Public Service Monthly for July, issued by the Province of Ontario, some interesting notes appear dealing with the question of the pollution of boundary waters.

After dealing with the work of the International Joint Commission, to which reference has been made in recent issues of *The Canadian Engineer*, and pointing out the part which Canadian engineers have taken in connection with this work, the article says:—

"The required works, which are of considerable magnitude, involving an expenditure of approximately \$11,500,000, will be an enormous boon to the many citizens of both countries now enjoying these waters for boating and summer resort purposes, to say nothing of the advantage to the several municipalities depending upon them solely for municipal water supplies, one of which, Niagara-on-the-Lake, has been recently compelled to instal an extensive purification plant for the protection of the troops located there. It is worthy of note that the population affected is 1,837,352 persons, and the annual cost of the works, including interest, sinking fund, and operation, averages 91 cents per person, a cost which appears small when compared with the benefit to be derived."

## THE CITY MANAGER PLAN OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

A few years ago, more particularly than now, a good deal of discussion centered around the advantages or the disadvantages of what is known as the city manager plan of municipal government. It was a new idea and had many advocates. Articles were written, papers were read before various bodies outlining the many blessings that would follow the introduction of the plan.

Just prior to that the commission form of government was heralded as the saviour of the situation, eliminating the council or the board of control system.

Some Canadian cities gave the city manager plan some serious consideration but were slow to adopt it in its entirety, feeling that to a very large degree the plan was yet in its experimental stage.

A combination of the commission plus city manager would seem to be the ideal. It would eliminate what is regarded as the principal objection to the straight city manager scheme, namely, the fear of one-man power. With the commissioners acting as a group through one controlled executive, the whims or fancies of any one man would be neutralized by the combined judgment of the other members of the commission. Furthermore, if any one member of the board happened to be selfishly interested in the passing of certain acts the passing of every act by the group makes it impossible for any one to put such deals over. In this way the manager would become servant and executor rather than boss.

While the pure city manager plan may not be suitable for the larger municipalities, the fact remains that in a number of smaller cities where the combined plan has been tried, there does not seem to be any desire to revert to the former method which, to say the least, is cumbersome and so indirect in its operation as to make it less

efficient. Under the council plan there is often much confusion due to the fact that the work is divided and subdivided among the various committees.

While such confusion may exist with the commission plus manager plan, it is not likely that it will be so pronounced.

It is estimated that there are about three hundred and fifty cities in the United States that are under the control of commissions, while about twenty have adopted the system of control by city manager.

Of course, the success of the plan depends to a large degree upon the capacity, energy and honesty of the manager. In any event it is questionable whether any one with even a reasonable store of commonsense and judgment could waste as much or bungle as much as the average aggregation of so-called popular representatives who normally control civic affairs.

## IMPORTANCE OF MAINTENANCE.

While many articles have been printed, many papers read and much discussion devoted to the problems incidental to highway construction, it is rather interesting to note that but a very small portion of space is devoted to the subject of highway maintenance. In Canada, as elsewhere, there is a disposition to give just a little less attention to this side of the problem than is actually demanded. Roads, whether in the city, the town or the country, no matter how well they may have been laid, will not last unless those responsible for their up-keep exercise vigilance and see to it that incipient holes, cracks and cuts are promptly and thoroughly attended to.

It is poor business to spend good money laying a modern pavement and then, as the result of the penny wise and pound foolish policy, negative the investment by indifference to the proper degree of maintenance for which the pavement calls.

A pavement, like most other things, is put there to render a service to the community. If, as a result of careless maintenance organization, it gets into disrepair and fails to give the service for which it was designed, it is to that extent as uneconomical as a pump or any other piece of machinery in a similar condition.

Delays in repairing small defects in pavements are always uneconomical and sometimes dangerous. Sooner or later they have to be attended to and will in most cases cost as much or more to attend to them when they are old as when they are new.

What are spoken of as permanent pavements will deteriorate, and cannot in the very nature of things have as long life if, after being laid down, they are not properly maintained.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

### Re Rosewater's Hydraulic Table.

Sir,—In addition to the uses of the tables as described in your issue of August 3rd last there is another which will be found useful. Supposing two or more mains deliver water at a given point with the same total loss of head, but the diameters and lengths are different, it is