

A Civic Oath of Long Ago.

We will never bring disgrace to this our city by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks; we will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will revere and obey the city's laws and do our best to incite a like respect in those above us who are prone to annul or set them at naught; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty; thus in all these ways we will transmit this city not only not less, but greater, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

We are indebted to our contemporary, the Journal of the Kansas Municipalities, for the above translation of the oath taken by citizens of old Athens, when that city was building up its reputation as the most famous in all the then known world, and our reason for reproducing it in these columns is to show why Athens became famous. These Grecians of old lived for their

city; they set for themselves a standard of citizenship so high that in the striving to reach it they became a community of idealists—and were happy. It was such a community that produced the great thinkers, orators, painters, architects and sculptors that we revere almost to reverence to-day, and no wonder, when the arts were encouraged to the full, and a deep sense of public responsibility was a religion with every Athenian citizen. It was when the citizens got careless about their citizenship, and what it meant, that Athens fell.

This Athenian oath was in force over 2,000 years ago, at a period in the world's history when might was right. When every city was fighting against its neighbour, and every man a soldier as well as a citizen. How much easier should it be then for the citizens of this country to live up to their responsibility, which is not near so exacting as that of the Athenians of old.

Returned Men and the Community Life.

One of the most interesting results of the war, so far as Canada is concerned, is the large number of officers and the more enlightened of the men who have, since their demobilization, taken up, wholly or in part, civic questions. While in the trenches these men had time to think, and they came to the conclusion that what was very necessary to the welfare of Canada and her citizens was a new ideal—and that not dollars and cents. They realized that the basis upon which the social life of the nation must be built was the community, with its intense local problems. They had an opportunity to see for themselves that the outlook and the mentality of men were largely the results of their immediate environment. To these men in France the community back home, whether that community be big or little, had become a place worth while; that if democracy was worth fighting and dying for, their own homes and the homes of their neighbours were worth living and working for. And they studied, and studied hard. They appreciated the fact that material success as an end in itself was not worth a damn. The war proved that. The war also proved that service to one's fellows brought returns inconceivable five years ago, and these men—every community whose sons went to the front has got them—have come back determined to instil into the minds of the neighbours their responsibility to each other, and to the city, town or village in which they live.

Such an attitude on the part of these returned Canadians is not strange. They are part of the best of our manhood, the real patriots of the country. They gave up position and home and went forth to defend an ideal. They have learned

that that ideal can be made practical right in their own community. They have come back and found that those who did not go to Flanders had not learned anything from the horrors of war, and they are determined to teach them.

During the last eighteen months, scores of ex-officers and ex-soldiers have visited the offices of this journal seeking information regarding the municipal government of the different provinces, and we have been more than glad to give it. We told them quite frankly that it was not more municipal legislation that was required, in any of the provinces, but that rather a larger personal responsibility on the part of the citizens was required to perfect the community life of the nation. They were surprised to know that the municipal machinery of Canada was the most perfect in the world—a machine that covered every phase of civic and social activity—and all that was required to keep it running smoothly was a sympathetic public opinion. These visitors went away determined to arouse this same public spirit. We hope they succeed.

A ROAD BUILT WITH GERMAN HELMETS.

The District Council of Croydon (Eng.)—about ten miles south of London—has made good use of its war trophies by building one of the most remarkable roads in the world with German helmets, which being made of metal, made excellent material. The making of the road was simple. Tens of thousands of German helmets, which were taken during the closing days of the war were placed on a stretch of old road and crushed by a steam roller. The result was that with a light covering the township secured a good solid road on what had previously been little better than a mire. This is turning war into peace with a vengeance.