

perimental, and many thought they would not work advantageously, considering them too democratic, and this doubtless was so to those to whom the word "democracy" was as a red rag to a bull. The system, however, gradually worked its way into public favour and no other form of government for the purposes intended need now be discussed. Whatever its advantages and disadvantages are it is here to stay. Consequently the more it is shaped into practical use by further legislation or by judicial interpretation the more useful and workable it will be.

There is one thing, however, which must be said about this: whilst in rural districts our municipal system works smoothly and is successful in its operation, the same cannot be said where it touches large urban centres. The reason for this is not difficult to understand. Farmers and those living in villages as a rule know their neighbour's business almost as well as they do their own. Everyone knows what is going on. There is time to consider their small public affairs, and numerous eyes see and criticise the expenditure of public money. They are economical and saving, and any recklessness or unnecessary extravagance or attempted graft is soon detected and repressed. In cities, on the contrary, men are too busy looking after their own affairs to devote time or attention to public matters; and, again, we have but few of the class who have independent means and leisure, combined with business experience, which would enable them to devote their energies to the service of the public; and the few that may have these qualifications are not sufficiently public-spirited to struggle for aldermanic seats in competition with that class which has grown up in cities who are devoted to party politics and silly sectional strife, or who have personal aims in view, or who seek small salaries or possibly graft from prominence in municipal affairs. It cannot be said, therefore, that democracy has produced the best kind of municipal government.

There is a growing feeling that municipal affairs in cities should be regulated and controlled by an authority of a different character, such as a commission composed of a few men of larger attainments, greater capacity and wider business experience than find their way under our elective system into our city councils.