

IDEALS IN CITY PLANNING

Two years ago I was in Tacoma, which has naturally one of the beautiful locations in the world. The glory of Tacoma is its Point Defiance Park, high above and surrounded on three sides by the wonderful waters of Puget Sound. At flowing or ebbing tide the waters rush swirling with a power that suggests the rapids of Niagara. Trees several centuries old grow in the park, gigantic cedars and fir and hemlock. Yet I heard two citizens of Tacoma advocating the donation of the wonderful park to the United States as grounds for a penitentiary. "We don't care for old trees and fine views," said one, "we want to sell tobacco to the soldier guards." Happily this desecration was not permitted.

Real beauty costs little. The most beautiful things in all the universe are absolutely free, the stars, the color of the sunset clouds, the hoarfrost on the trees, the breaking of the waves on a shore, the budding of the trees and the blooming of the flowers in spring; and so with the cities, the most beautiful places I know in the world have not been made so by lavish expense but by intelligent care. On the other hand, the value of beauty is so great that men and women are willing to spend immense sums for the gain.

Let us pass on from beauty to health. Without vouching for their accuracy, I quote the following list from the Census Bureau Report for 1911:

Mortality Statistics, Per 1,000	
Seattle	8.8
Cleveland	12.8
San Francisco	15.2
Denver	15.5
Washington	15.7
Chicago	14.5
Baltimore	18.4
Boston	17.1
Los Angeles	14.5
St. Paul	10.9
Duluth	11.7
Kansas City	15.4
St. Louis	15.44
Buffalo	14.5
New York	15.2
Cincinnati	16.5
Philadelphia	16.6
Pittsburgh	14.9
Milwaukee	11.9

There is the city of Seattle whose death rate is only 8.8 or 36 per cent. better than Cleveland. There will be the natural instinct to make excuses, to assume that Seattle is more favorably located, to deny to the intelligence and conscious effort this wonderful record of Seattle. Some will maintain that Seattle, being further north and on salt water, ought to have a better record. Let us see whether it is location or intelligence. London, England, is further north than Seattle, is on salt water and has a similar climate to Seattle, but in 1736 the births in London were 16,491, the deaths 27,581.

Seattle is a younger city than Cleveland, there are fewer old people, more inhabitants in the prime of life, therefore the low death rate. This is granted, but the real test comes when we check the deaths of children under five years old. Seattle's rate is the lowest in the world. The 1911 Census Bureau report gives Cleveland's deaths under five years of age as 21.3 per cent. of the total, and Seattle's as 18.4 per cent. of the total. Forty years ago, in Munich, Bavaria, the death rate approached 40 per cent. of births for children under one year of age; in Seattle the record is under 10 per cent. for children under five years of age. The Seattle rate in fact approaches 8 per cent. In this matter of life and death I hold up Seattle as an example of what can be attained by knowledge, faith, courage, and power.

A city consists of people and also of buildings. The word health, in a large sense, applies to the conservation of property from fire. How does Cleveland stand in this respect? There are good sized cities in the world whose fire loss, owing to excellent preventative measures, is only \$0.04 per inhabitant per annum. Cleveland's loss is reported at \$2.43 or 60 times greater than that of one of the Swiss cities, and this does not take into account the loss of business due to fires, nor the cost of fire departments, which are palliatives, nor remedies.

In a fourteen years' residence in various European cities I saw only three fires. We excel in the work of fire extinguishment but what we want is fire prevention, and our studies and the experience of other great world cities show that the fire loss ought to be reduced to about \$0.24 per inhabitant.

The best civic virtue is intelligence. What is a man of first class intelligence and training worth compared to the average man? Why are Denmark, Norway and Sweden rich and Nicaragua, Honduras, San Salvador,

Guatemala poor? Why have property values doubled in the Philippines in the last fifteen years? In our special work of human efficiency, we have in many cases found no difficulty in bringing up the average efficiency of a thousand men from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. without discharging or harrying any of them.

Remember that I am not putting up any task that has not already been attained elsewhere. Human intelligence is without limit and there is always more ahead than there is behind.

The next fundamental is morality, reliability.

It is far easier to build up the morality of a city than the morality of individuals. A certain number of people are born wicked but even they are wicked only a small part of the time, and in a model city even these people would either behave, leave, or be controlled.

The next and last fundamental is industry.

If assessments both real and personal were on the same basis everywhere in the United States, they would be comparative. The average valuation per inhabitant or per voter or per adult above the age of 18 might be used. Assessed valuation is an indication, the per capita amounts of internal revenue tax paid for intoxicants and tobacco are negative indications.

It is difficult to give beauty, health, intelligence, morality, industry a money value, but would it be worth one dollar a day per inhabitant to excel in all these respects? The yearly gain, for a city the size of Cleveland would be \$21,900,000 at \$0.10 a day in one year, or at a dollar a day a piece it would be \$219,000,000.

That you may not feel that I have overdrawn the possibilities, I shall give you the description of two communities, one British and one German.

The island of Bermuda is 700 miles from anywhere, out of the path of all steam lines except those from Halifax to the West Indies. The island has only 20 square miles of area of which 3,000 acres are under cultivation. The island has 20,000 inhabitants, two thirds colored. The island has its roads, as well as its natural scenery, is a dream of beauty, no more beautiful place in all the world. Its healthfulness is very high, its intelligence unusual, no illiteracy, its morality so great that there is practically no crime of any kind, and its industry such that it supports without poverty 1,000 people per square mile, 1½ to the acre.

Ohio has coal mines, lies between the great lakes and the Ohio River; is the great central State between the East and West, it altogether one of the best States in the whole Union; but if Ohio had the same relative population as Bermuda, it would have 40,000,000 inhabitants.

As my second example, I shall quote from "The New Statesman's" review of Frederick C. Howe's book "European Cities at Work."

"Most people know nowadays that it is to Germany—that paradox of one of the best educated, most enlightened and up-to-date people of the world, yet still, for the great part, under the thralldom of a semi-despotic monarch and an uncurbed squirearchy—that we must look for the most striking examples of state socialism; but Mr. Howe's book will be a revelation to most readers as to the development and progress of the German cities.

"Germany almost alone among the civilized nations sees the city as the permanent center of the civilization of the future, and Germany almost alone is building her cities to make them contribute to the happiness, health, and well-being of the people. This seems to be the primary consideration with officials and citizens.

"Writing of Dusseldorf as a typical example, Mr. Howe states that the German city aims at being a model employer. This town treats its five thousand clerks and workmen more generously than private companies, and goes beyond the requirements of the law in regard to sickness, accident, and old age insurance. It grants all workmen and employees a retiring allowance, as well as pensions for widows and orphans. The wages paid rise with the years of service, and the conditions of work are determined by municipal regulations. This city goes in for all sorts of municipal trading. The whole city has been as much planned out as a garden city as Letchworth, and is one of the finest towns in the world. The city owns a considerable portion of the land on which it stands, some 2,500 acres belonging to it, and it has set aside a special fund of over \$5,000,000 as working capital with which to buy and sell real estate, while its powers of expropriation and its taxes on increment values make Mr. Lloyd George's schemes appear reactionary. The city owns the trams, gas, electricity, and water works. It operates a municipal mortgage bank, which has

already advanced considerably over \$5,000,000 to people of small means for the purchase of their houses. It has built houses for its own work people, a home for unmarried people; it has one or two municipal restaurants, carries on a wine business, a savings bank, a municipal pawnshop, also a legal aid department, where advice is furnished free. It maintains a corps of eighteen physicians to give gratuitous service to needy persons, while it has numerous municipal hospitals, infirmaries, sanatoria, and nursing homes, as well as an academy of practical medicine attached to the principal hospital. It owns and maintains a fine theatre as well as a great concert hall; it supports a symphony orchestra of sixty-one players, and provides musical direction. It also maintains a fine arts gallery, a museum of natural science and history, and a zoological garden, all of these agencies being correlated with the educational system. A few years ago the city invested something over three-quarters of a million sterling in the shares of an industrial undertaking of a profitable nature identified with the city. As might be imagined, its indebtedness is large, being in the neighbourhood of \$30,000,000, but no less than 87.3 per cent. of this is placed in industrial undertaking, and

against this indebtedness the city possesses assets exceeding \$38,000,000 in value.

Although so much space has here been devoted to Dusseldorf, it must not be thought that the city is unique in the diversity of its municipal undertakings or the success with which they are administered. Mr. Howe's book shows us that in these respects it is characteristic of all large German cities.

"The German city is free to own almost anything, free to control the individual and his property, free to borrow, free to experiment, free to develop as it wills. Its bonds to the state rest so lightly that it is almost unconscious of its chains. The citizen is a subject of the city, just as he is a subject of the state and empire.

"Under the laws of the state the German city can do anything it is not expressly forbidden to do, or that the central administrative authorities do not forbid. Generally speaking it can do anything an individual can do."

The German city is the justification of the expert, for it is governed by experts who devote their lives to that profession.

"Men prepare themselves for city administration as they do for the law, medicine, or any other profession.

They take special courses in the universities or technical schools in law, finance, engineering, town planning, education, or sanitation. On graduation they compete for a municipal post along with other candidates. Sometimes they enter the permanent service from the city council or the state civil administration, or the profession of law. They rise from one position to another or pass from city to city much as a clergyman or professor in this country moves from place to place. In time they hope to become burgomaster, and if they make a success in their city their reputation is known all over Germany. This is true of the burgomaster, of members of the magistrature or administrative council, and of the important permanent officials generally.

"In salary, in social position, in power and opportunity, as well as in permanency of tenure, Germany has provided a system that attracts men of talent and ability to city administration.

"The business men who rule the German city are not the small shopkeepers, as in Great Britain; they are the bankers, merchants, real estate speculators, and professional men. They form the ruling class. They elect the council which in turn elects

the burgomaster and members of the magistrature.

"Despite the political power of the business men, they do not legislate in the interest of their class, as they do in America. That is one of the anomalies of Germany, for I know of no other country in the world in which this is true."

Civil service is a delusion. Tenure of office does not make citizens either beautiful, healthy, intelligent, moral or industrious. It may have exactly the opposite effect, it perpetuates incompetency. Some of the most inefficient employees I have ever saw were the civil service incumbents in Washington. Among many of them it is not good form to be either intelligent or industrious.

A commission form of government? This may be a distinct step backward. An honest, competent commission may be better than a dishonest mayor and incompetent board of aldermen, but to substitute a collective executive for an individual executive is to weaken one of the fundamental principles of organization, namely, localized responsibility and authority.

The best form of organization in the world is found in modern marine service, and next to that is a great modern office building, which is probably evolving the future city type. The ad-

ministration of a great office building, like that of a great ship, is simply and successfully because there are a few definite aims and ideals and everything else is made subservient to them. In both cases, we have a competent head of the line, with full responsibility. He is surrounded by a staff; he could not for an hour perform his duties without staff help, and the staff and line together carry out the work.

Line gives the skeleton of administration and authority. Staff gives universal knowledge. Line without staff never has sufficient knowledge. Staff without line never has organization. Staff corresponds to a dictionary, line corresponds to grammar. The practical difficulty with unstandardized men is that the line thinks it has knowledge and the staffs think it has authority.

Therefore the three practical requirements for good city government are:

High Ideals,
Reasonable Standards,
Their Attainment
through a strong administration of line and staff.—Scientific American.

"Into the well which supplies thee with water, cast no stones."—Talmud.

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