

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN GERMANY.

"Municipal housekeeping," as a science and an art, evolved out of the conditions of life prevailing in the last half of this century, can be observed to better advantage in Germany than in any other country, says Dr. Albert Shaw. It is true that the German cities have been somewhat tardy in providing themselves with modern conveniences and improvements; but now having fairly entered upon the task, they are accomplishing it in a more systematic, thorough and businesslike way than any other cities, whether in Europe, America or Australia.

The burgomaster and magistrates are the most highly trained experts that a German city can secure. The burgomaster is an expert in the general art of municipal administration. Associated with him in the magisterial council are experts in law, experts in finance, experts in education to administer the schools, experts in engineering to oversee public works of every character, experts in sanitary science, experts in public charity, experts in forestry and park management, experts in the technical and business management of water and gas supplies, and so on. The analogy would not be perfect, but it would answer roughly to compare the governmental structure of a German city with that of a railway corporation, in which the board of directors, chosen by the stockholders, appoint a general superintendent or manager, a general passenger agent, a general freight agent, a chief legal officer, a chief engineer, a superintendent of motive power, and other general officers, and leave to these high-salaried experts, drawn from the service of various other transportation companies, all the entire management and operation of the road. The shareholders represent the voters of Berlin, let us say; the board of directors are the municipal council; the general superintendent is the chief burgomaster; and the general officers at the head of departments are the magistrates.

The *magistratsrath*, or *stadtrath*, of a German city is, then, a body of distinguished and honored, highly paid, professional, expert employees, and not a body of citizen representatives, although experienced members of the body of citizen representatives may be, and not unfrequently are, promoted to membership in the *magistratsrath*. The professional civil service is a vastly greater and better established field of employment in Germany than in England or America, and it is particularly difficult for an American to appreciate its position and significance. The mayor of an American city is usually some well-known citizen who is called temporarily from private life to occupy the most authoritative place in the corporation. The burgomaster of a German city is a civil servant—the permanent head of a permanent body of trained officials. The difference between the two is somewhat like that between our secretary of war and the general commanding the army.

ADMINISTRATION BY PERMANENT EXPERTS.

The mayor or head of the municipality—in some cities called the *oberburgermeister*, and in some simply the *burgermeister*—is the general manager of the whole mechanism of administration, and usually the guiding spirit as well in the economic policies of the municipality. He may feel that success in the management of a smaller city will perhaps be rewarded by the prize of the mayoralty of a greater one. Thus the late Dr. Forckenbeck, mayor of Berlin, had made his reputation as mayor of Breslau, and was called to fill a vacancy in the same position at the capital. Many cities appoint their mayors for life, and some make a trial appointment for a term of years and then grant a life lease.

The tenure of the paid magistrates in general follows that of the mayors, and the cities which give life appointments to the chief of the municipality commonly give them also to the expert professional element among his associates, while limiting the unpaid magistrates to terms corresponding with those of the popularly elected councillors. Duties are so well distributed among the magistrates that there results the highest type of executive efficiency, and the least possible friction or waste of energy. New departments of administration may either be assigned to the portfolios of existing magistrates, or may be provided for by the appointment of additional members. Thus the magistrate is sufficiently flexible to respond to the

changing circumstances of a city, and the presence of its unsalaried citizen members keeps it always sufficiently in touch with the spirit of the community. It should further be said that in the details of administration the magistrates have the co-operation in various ways of numerous unofficial citizens serving in a voluntary or honorary capacity on countless sub-committees.—*The Century*.

SHOES IN SONG AND STORY.

It was John Selden, member of Ben Johnson's famous club and "dictator of learning" in his time, who wrote that old friends are best and old shoes easiest. The literature of shoes, old and new, is full of interest and pleasure. The commonest things lack idealism in general. But now and then imagination has placed common interests in charming relationships. Miss Mitford makes Ailee Dinmont remark, when accused of giving the children their own way: "Eh, puir things, I hae nothing else to gie 'em." In that way poets and novelists have "given their old shoes," it may be, as writers who "has nothing else to gie." "King James," wrote Selden, "used to call for his old shoes; they were easiest for his feet." Charlotte Bronte in Jane Eyre left the memorable ejaculation: "What a mercy you are shod with velvet, Jane!" And Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in *The Fountain of Youth*: "A sense of peace and rest like slippers after shoes." These thoughts might carry one back to the moccasins in Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans." Theodore Roosevelt utilized the idea felicitously in "Hunting Trips," when he wrote: "Our moccasins feet made no noise." The moccasin, by the way, is most exquisitely suggested at this time of the year by the Indian shoe or lady's slipper that grows wild in New England woodlands. In Connecticut the flower in question is sometimes called the whip-poor-will shoe. It is half way a poem in itself, and shares with the honeysuckle the queenship of wild flowers. In the "Last of the Mohicans," Cooper writes: "All the footsteps had the print of moccasins." Hiawatha's wigwam was not without these proofs of savage rest and opulence.

Robert Herrick, the most graceful of the old English singers, left the lines:

"A careless shoestring in whose tie
I see a wild civility,
Does more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part."

In Edward Moore's "Spider and the Bee" there is an idea not less playful or sparkling:

"But from the hoop's bewitching round
Her very shoe has power to wound."

In "Silvia's Lovers" Mrs. Gaskell tells of the heroine "with little foot" that was still "encased in its smartly buckled shoe." O, so light a foot, sang another composer, will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint. Virgil may have had some such vision in his mind when he wrote in the most charming Latin:

"Et verae sine suppatuit dea."

The picture was fit for the admiration of the old Roman deities. Anglicised, the language of the graceful Roman was: "By her walk the true goddess is known." The grace of walking should be thoroughly studied. At its foundation would be found not the "smartly buckled shoe" of Silvia or "the faithless leather" of Young, but the sense of peace and rest suggested by Holmes. The daintiest shoes may be restful. None should be painful.—*The Aetna*.

BUSINESS IN THE STATES.

The New York circular of Henry Clews & Co., describing the business conditions of last week in the United States, says:

During the past week, notwithstanding the interruption of a holiday, there has been a distinct improvement in the tone of business in Wall street. Its main expression has appeared in the covering of "shorts," which has created a demand favorable to prices, while it implies that the "bears" have discovered symptoms that betoken a coming recovery in the market. The most pessimistic acknowledge that the passage of the tariff bill, viewed as an end of suspense, would have an important effect in the restoration of general confidence; and the present situation of the measure in the Senate is generally conceded to be favorable to its final enactment some time

during the current month. This view seems to be taken in business circles generally, and is having its effect in a more hopeful feeling, though not yet in any marked change in the volume of mercantile transactions. Wall Street is quick to perceive this new tendency, and its "bear" contingent shows its respect for it, and hence the improving tone we are able to record.

The introduction of the bank note question into the House is attracting much interest in financial circles. . . . In view of the great importance of the position which the bank note must in future occupy, it becomes a vital question—what shall be its nature, authorization, guarantee, and to what regulation shall it be subject? These are questions not to be lightly disposed of, and their consideration may occupy more time than those now raising them in Congress seem to contemplate. Three cardinal questions will centre around these points—(1) how far shall Federal and State powers respectively be recognized in the construction and administration of the system? (2) shall the guarantee consist of bond collateral, following the precedent of the National Bank Act, or shall it be provided by pledge of the entire assets of the bank, with special liability of the stockholders added? and (3) what arrangements shall be provided for securing ready, economical and efficient redemption of the notes when their volume is superfluous.

The export of gold continues without abatement. It now appears that this extraordinary outflow is chiefly due to the preparations of the Austrian Government for the restoration of gold payments; for although the contracts with bankers for supplying the gold have been long made, it seems that the actual delivery of the metal has been largely deferred until it was required for the act of resumption.

The various reorganization schemes now in progress will ultimately have an important bearing on the market for the better. At present their progress is slow, because of opposing factions and the depressed condition of railroad traffic. But these are only temporary difficulties, which will quickly disappear with any improvement in business. In this connection it will be well to keep in mind the recent unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of the United States limiting the power of State Railroad Commissions and prohibiting them from putting into effect unfair and unprofitable rates. This is one of the most important decisions affecting railroads announced in many years; for some States had been so severe and arbitrary in their restrictions that they practically amounted to confiscation of property, at least so far as profits were concerned.

ACTION AGAINST THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF FORESTERS.

A peculiar action has been heard in the Glasgow Justice of Peace Small Debt Court, when J. M. Macaulay sued James Marshall, manager of the Independent Order of Foresters, for £1 4s. 2d. Pursuer said he joined the body some time ago, paid £1 as entrance fee and 4s. 2d. for a certificate. He was, however, rejected by the medical board, and now claimed the return of the moneys expended under the belief that he would be elected a member of that body. Defender contended that, according to the constitution of the Independent Order of Foresters, pursuer could only sue the trustees of the Order. Macaulay was still a social member for all time to come; all that had been done by his rejection was that he was not entitled to the insurance benefits of the Order.

The Clerk—But what are these benefits?

The Defender—The same as those accruing to the members of any ordinary fraternal body; he might attend business meetings and vote. (Laughter.) Having been rejected by the Medical Board, he derived no pecuniary benefits in the event of illness. It was not registered as a friendly society, but they did business under the Insurance Act of Great Britain. He contended that he should not be sued, as he only did business as the servant of the order.

Pursuer explained that the moneys were sent off to Canada, and it was not to be supposed that he could sue the people there.

The justices said they would take a fortnight to consider the case.—*Insurance Record*, May 25th.