

# The Canadian Engineer

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## TOWN PLANNING IN CANADA

REFERENCE was made in last week's *Canadian Engineer* to the formation of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, the inaugural meeting of which is to be held at an early date.

The object of the new organization is primarily to advance the study of town planning coupled with the proper development of land in urban and rural districts.

One of the immediate objects of the institute is to promote educational courses on town planning provided the necessary funds are forthcoming and, in view of the very great importance from an economic and health point of view of the necessity for intelligent direction along these lines, there is no doubt the money for this purpose will be obtainable. Courses in town planning in the Universities of McGill and Toronto are being looked forward to. In some of the British universities courses in town planning are already an actuality, while Harvard and Cornell Universities in the United States have similar course under contemplation.

Slowly, but none the less surely, the conviction is gaining ground that nothing is to be gained by overcrowding. The houses we occupy must be built upon some preconceived plan and not subject to caprice. So, too, communities cannot and ought not to be allowed to drift along and only wake up after the damage has been done, usually at a time when to correct the mistake means the investment of such enormous sums of money as to make such a proposal almost prohibitive.

The Town Planning Institute of Canada is starting out on original lines for a professional body. It has no chartered members, who enjoy election without proving their qualifications. Every member must, as a first condition, be

a member of an existing architectural, engineering or surveying professional institution. He must also undertake special study on town planning for a year and submit a thesis or pass an examination on the subject at the end of that probationary period. Legal members of recognized standing will be admitted as a special class.

There will also be associate members from other professions, just as journalists and medical men who are interested in those aspects of town planning, that are not strictly technical in character.

Most of the evils that are associated with defective housing—the lack of air and light—are the direct results of time worn methods of permitting communities simply to "grow up" with no attempt made to provide intelligent direction.

The day surely has gone and the time arrived when, to a greater degree than has heretofore obtained, communities shall be built up in accordance with a really comprehensive plan, and not allowed to "expand" in an uncontrolled manner.

The new institute will, in this country, find unlimited scope for its activities and will contribute much toward preventing the development of undesirable conditions, so far as community planning and housing are concerned.

## EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF ROAD CONFERENCES

THERE is being held in Quebec this week, the Sixth Annual Congress and Exhibition of the Canadian Good Roads Association. Gatherings of this kind are of decided assistance to the Good Roads movement in a variety of ways. They provide ample opportunity for engineers, superintendents, contractors, municipal officials and others interested in the design, construction and maintenance of roads to get together by twos and threes and discuss in a companionable and informal manner the different phases of the road problems with which they are one and all at different times confronted. It also affords an opportunity for many men to get into practical contact with those who are regarded as authorities on highway construction.

This is all along the right line and contributes not a little toward a better understanding of the highway problems of our country and all that is involved in their solution. Millions of dollars are being spent annually for better roads and anything that enables those responsible to do their work more intelligently and scientifically, is a step in the right direction. Conventions of the kind held this week in Quebec can, if properly conducted, be made useful educational agencies along these lines.

## GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF RAILWAYS

IN the course of his address at the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Montreal on May 7th, the president, Mr. E. W. Beatty, discussed government ownership of railways, and stated emphatically that he had no fear for government competition. In outlining the position of the company he said:—

"The gross receipts in the past year were larger than in 1917, but that the net earnings were \$12,043,630 below those of the previous year. This was the outcome of increased salaries and other operating expenses, coupled with a decline in traffic following the signing of the armistice. The first three months of this year were disappointing. The results of the year were, however, satisfactory, despite this shrinkage, 70 per cent. of which was the outcome of increased wages.

"The volume both of freight and passenger traffic decreased in comparison with 1917, the increase in gross earnings of \$5,148,363 being due to increases in rates granted in March and July of last year. The fact that, notwithstanding the heavy increases in the cost of operation, there was a surplus after payment of all charges and dividends, is a satisfactory evidence of the foresight and wisdom of the share-