

referred back for amendments. If the Board decided to approve, then it would sanction the loan and the period of repayment.

When the Board had approved of any scheme and sanctioned loans for the same, it would submit a list of the same to the Government Executive for endorsement and the Government guarantee.

#### Consolidate the Loans.

When all was in order, the Board would consolidate a number of loans and negotiate its flotation on the best possible terms, and pay over to the municipal authorities the proceeds in return for duly authenticated debentures.

By this means the smaller municipalities will no doubt obtain money on more advantageous terms, than at present, as the investors would appreciate the value of the Government guarantee and the value of the security as well as the assurance that the money was for approved schemes.

If this arrangement was adopted, it would be a matter for consideration whether it would be necessary to submit the money by-laws to the ratepayers, because they would have ample protection and further the necessity of obtaining authority from the Department of Municipal Affairs or the Bureau of Public Health would have to be decided, as the schemes could be sent to them for criticism before the Board arrived at any decision.

As the Government through the Board would in this manner be involved in the supervision of the expenditure of the loans advanced, it would be necessary for the Municipal Authorities to have their loan accounts audited by an approved outside auditor twice a year, and the auditor's certificate and report forwarded to the Board. The Engineer to the Board would also from time to time have to inspect the works during execution.

The authorities would repay the loans with interest in a manner to be prescribed by the Board, and in the event of any municipality defaulting, the Board would be empowered to appoint a Receiver to collect the rates on its behalf.

The expense of the Board would be borne by the towns and villages on the basis of their individual assessments, or the Board would have to charge a small additional interest to cover the expense, or the Government would bear the cost as is done in Great Britain. All this would be decided upon by the Legislature when the matter came up for discussion.

If the provinces should consider this proposition worthy of adoption and should Municipal Boards be created, then it is possible that the requirements, stipulations and procedure may differ sufficiently in each province as to become anomalous. With the view to the different Boards acting more or less in harmony in this respect, it would be highly desirable that they should meet in annual conference to discuss various points of mutual interest and thus, as far as possible, prevent any anomalies occurring.

#### Only one Department to Satisfy.

Such an organization and procedure as is here roughly outlined would be a homogeneous body, the towns and village authorities would have interest in it, and they would have only one department or body to satisfy instead of two as in Great Britain. The Board would be in closer touch with the public and be a little more sympathetic than would be the case if it was purely an official department without representation. The development of sanitary works would be on more co-ordinated lines than is at present possible. The municipalities would have the satisfaction of receiving such information as would be available on prospective schemes, while the investors would have the satisfaction of knowing that the money was invested on undertakings approved by an independent public organization such as they are accustomed to in Great Britain.

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### UNIFORM MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTING

The Ontario Government will be asked by the Ontario Municipal Association to establish a municipal department with a Minister at its head. Moreover, either the Provincial Administration or the Federal Government will be requested to appoint a commission to devise a uniform system of accounting for municipalities.

Mr. George H. Lees, of Hamilton, said that municipalities were making costly experiments in road-building, sewage disposal, waterworks plants, sales of bonds, accounting systems and other questions. A municipal department would be able to collect a great deal of information which would save the municipalities large sums of money, and a great deal of unnecessary work. He also urged that if a uniform system of accounting were provided it would be possible to publish annually statistics analysing and comparing the cost of civic works and governments.

He also pointed out the necessity for comparative municipal statistics, and recommended that each municipality prepare similar data for every department and sub-department.

### AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL FINANCE COMMISSION

#### Report of Investigation is to be Compiled—Four Canadian Provinces are Represented

Plans have been perfected for the compilation of the report of the United States Federal commission on agricultural co-operative finance and agricultural co-operative associations, following the completion of its labors abroad. The organization has established headquarters in Washington with the senate committee on interstate commerce; the American commission on agricultural co-operation, which has co-operated with the Federal commission in its investigation into European methods, has also established itself in Washington, and will compile a report on the subject to be submitted to the governors of thirty-six States and the premiers of four Canadian provinces which were represented by delegates on the United States commission. The members of the commission recently returned from a three months trip abroad, having arrived home from Europe on July 26. In their quest for information on rural credit systems they visited Italy, Hungary, Austria, France, Germany, England, Ireland and Wales. Sub-committees also toured Russia, Denmark, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Egypt, Spain and Scotland. A complete report is to be made to Congress by the commission before the end of the year. Since the commission's return, a statement has been issued by its Director General Dr. C. J. Owen, to the State governors' and farmers' organizations, in which he says:—

#### Value of Organized Rural Population.

"The commission is deeply impressed with the vital importance of a thoroughly organized and united rural population. In this respect the countries of Europe offer a lesson which may not long be disregarded in America without serious consequences. The agricultural interests of most of the European countries visited by the commission are organized along one or more of the following lines: Credit, production, distribution and social organization for the betterment of country life.

"It is the opinion of many of the leaders of this movement in Europe that the question of rural credit ought not to be divorced from co-operation for business purposes and the general organization of community life in rural districts. In some countries visited, agriculture and country life interests generally are thoroughly organized and co-ordinated. The studies of the commission emphasize the necessity of defining the functions, on the one hand, of the government, and on the other of voluntary organizations, in promoting the development of country life. In some of these countries great emphasis is placed upon the value of voluntary associations and such State aid as involves governmental control over the activities of rural organizations is deprecated as tending to stifle the initiative of the people.

#### Modify European Systems.

"Rural conditions, environment and temperament in Europe differ widely in the various countries and also differ from rural conditions, environment and temperament in America as conditions differ in our several States and provinces; therefore, it may be necessary in some cases to modify these European systems if they are to be adapted to meet the needs of American farmers. At the same time, co-operative effort among the farmers of America might well be more generally employed and the facts gathered should be of great value in developing methods suited to the needs of the farmers in the several sections, States and provinces.

"To this end, the United States Commission, with a membership in the thirty-six States and in four provinces of Canada, has effected an organization, with headquarters in Washington, and invites the aid and co-operation of farmers and all agricultural organizations and persons concerned in promoting a more prosperous and contented rural life as the enduring basis of our material, social and civil welfare. The commission has selected two committees which will devote their entire time to drafting the final report regarding the investigation.

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### CROPS IN NEW BRUNSWICK

The farmers of New Brunswick are harvesting excellent crops, and much larger ones than was anticipated in the early summer. The potato crop will probably be the largest one on record, and already the question of outside markets is receiving attention. The United States market will be of some advantage if the new tariff in that country is adopted, although there will still be a duty on New Brunswick potatoes. The Munson Line has arranged to give a monthly service between St. John and Cuba for the benefit of potato shippers.