

enter upon any large undertaking without fully considering all the circumstances in connection with it. Optimism is essential; so is a progressive spirit. "Going it blind" is bad business.

MUNICIPAL elections were held last week throughout the western provinces and similar elections will be held next week throughout Ontario. A large number of new men will come into the municipal arena to receive their first practical lessons in self-government. Canada has as fine a municipal system as any country in the world. This system varies in different provinces, but the important features are identical. There can be no doubt that much of this country's success may be accounted for by this municipal system and by the training which leading citizens receive from participation therein.

Municipal administration brings a man fame of a local character. If he shows special aptitude for public administration in his township, village, town or city, he is likely to be singled out for legislative or parliamentary honours. In the municipality he learns the A B C's both of politics and public administration. While municipal duties are important in themselves they are usually but the stepping-stone to broader fields of public usefulness.

It is not every municipal administrator who can go higher. Nevertheless, every citizen with an ambition to serve his fellowmen can not do better than seek a place in a municipal administration. It will teach him lessons which will be enormously beneficial to him personally and which will considerably widen his view of public affairs. When he ceases to be a municipal administrator he will be a better citizen and wield a stronger influence in all public discussions and all political campaigns.

Further, greater business ability and a higher quality of administration are now required in municipal government. Municipal ownership of waterworks, gas plants, electric lighting, and street railways have enlarged the field of the municipal administrator. If municipal ownership is to succeed, the municipal administrator must be a man of broader education, greater experience and wider outlook than his predecessor of half a century ago. The complexity of modern industrial and commercial life extends as surely to municipal government as to any portion of human activity.

A RECENT despatch from Washington shows how close are the commercial relations between the United States and the British Empire. For the first ten months of 1909, the total foreign trade of the United States amounted to two billion, five hundred million dollars, and of this forty per cent. was with British countries.

Among these British countries, Canada stands second to Great Britain as a market for United States goods. During these ten months, the United States sold us goods to the value of \$154,500,000 as against \$128,000,000 in the same period of 1908. This explains President Taft's conciliatory message, and the semi-official announcement that there would be no tariff war between the two countries.

A PPARENTLY neither the citizens of Montreal nor the City Council of that metropolis are prepared to accept Judge Cannon's report. One day last week the real estate owners were asked to vote on a by-law as to whether the Corporation should establish a municipal lighting-plant at a cost of two million dollars. The by-law was fathered by men who had been prominent in civic affairs during the past three or four years and who were more or less criticised by the report of the Commissioner who investigated the civic affairs. It would naturally be supposed that owing to the severe nature of Judge Cannon's finding, any proposition emanating from these gentlemen would have been voted down. Twenty thousand owners of property were entitled to vote, but only 2,855 took sufficient interest in the question to go to the polls and mark their ballots. Of these 1,610 voted for the by-law, and 1,245 against. From this one of two conclusions must be drawn. We must either assume that the people of Montreal are not interested in the government of their own city or that they do not believe in the finding which Judge Cannon presented.

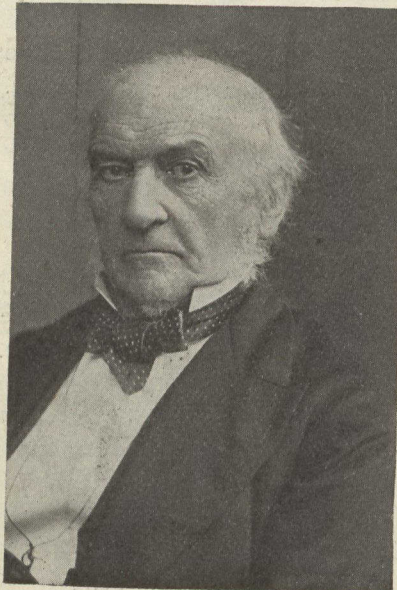
The interviews with the aldermen which have appeared in the newspapers since Judge Cannon's report, certainly indicate that a majority of the aldermen will decline to accept the Judge's findings. They claim that his assertion that a million dollars a year is wasted by carelessness and chicanery is not true. They are apparently determined to return the Judge's report to the Attorney-General of the province, by whom the Commissioner was appointed. They are also

apparently determined to go before the electors next month and try to secure a verdict which will be antagonistic to the Judge's finding. If the vote last week is any criterion of what will happen in February, the so-called "grafters" and "plunderers" will be returned to power.

Without expressing an opinion as to whether Judge Cannon's verdict is correct or not, there is sufficient evidence to indicate to the country at large that Montreal's municipal government is in need of a shaking-up. The good business men of Montreal are either asleep or so engrossed in their private affairs that they have not time to spare for the welfare of their city. This charge is more or less true as regards the business men of all large Canadian cities, but nowhere is there such apathy as in the City of Montreal.

GLADSTONE AND PENNY NEWSPAPERS

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, publicist and litterateur, was born on December 29th, 1809. That fact has caused much to be written about him during the past week and no feature is more interesting than the account of his fight with the House of Lords over penny newspapers.



William Gladstone.

The features of this contest bear an intimate relation to the present struggle between the Commons and the Lords now being fought out, with other issues, in a general election.

By a law of the year 1836, there was an inland revenue tax of a penny on every copy of a newspaper printed in Great Britain and an additional tax of sixpence on every advertisement in the paper. The distinct and avowed purpose of the taxation, says Justin McCarthy, was to prevent the issue of cheap newspapers. "It was the creed of many that cheap newspapers meant the establishment of a daily propaganda of socialism, communism, red republicanism, blasphemy, bad spelling, and general immorality." In spite of the tax, penny newspapers had come into existence in Liverpool, Mr. Gladstone's birthplace, in London, and other cities. The

struggle to pay the tax and also the expenses of publishing was terrific. The older papers sold at sixpence and naturally they opposed the "cheap uns." The manufacturers of paper, strangely enough, were also opposed to the newcomers, being unable to foresee the great growth of their industry.

Mr. Gladstone became the champion of the penny rag, and in 1860 brought in a bill to abolish the paper duties. The second reading was carried by a majority of fifty-three; the third reading by nine. This gave courage to the opponents in the House of Lords and when the bill was sent up to them, it was promptly rejected. Mr. Gladstone was highly incensed—and one of Mr. Gladstone's qualities was his ability to grow mightily indignant when his measures were rejected. He and Mr. Bright maintained that since the House of Lords could not initiate a tax, they had no power to reimpose a tax which the House of Commons had removed. It was argued in return that the Lords could modify any scheme of taxation, even if they could not initiate one. The question was fought out before the public between sessions, and the bill re-introduced in the following year. The Lords attempted no further opposition and the measure became law. It is said that Lord Palmerston sent a message to the Lords that the rejection of Mr. Gladstone's scheme was a very good joke for once, but they really must not try it a second time. The Lords followed this advice, if it ever were really given, and cheap newspapers became possible. To-day after fifty years of experience and mechanical improvements, only one daily newspaper in Great Britain sells for more than a penny, and many of them sell for a half-penny. Socialistic teaching has come, but more through other sources than the penny rag.

When Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister for the fourth time he again came into conflict with the House of Lords. In February, 1893, he introduced his Irish Home Rule Bill, which the Commons had previously rejected. The opposition to it was tremendous and it was not until September that it was safely passed on to the House of Lords. The Upper House disposed of it promptly, killing it by a majority of more than ten to one. On this event Mr. Justin McCarthy has passed a curious remark, pregnant with application to the present situation. "Mr. Gladstone might, on the whole, have been content. The peers reject every great reform measure which comes before them for the first time. They never resist long. They yield when they see that public opinion is determined." This may be taken either as a compliment or an adverse criticism, according to the view of the reader. However, Mr. Gladstone never forced the second conflict over this bill. He never sent it to the House of Lords for the second and happy occasion. In the following year he retired from active politics, leaving the House of Lords triumphant and Ireland tied to the chariot-wheels of Great Britain.