

## Town Planning

*The Making of Homes is an Essential Part of the Responsibility of the Municipality.*

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The expression "Town Planning" has recently come into prominence. If you ask the average man what it means he will probably answer after this fashion, "Oh, it's some sort of a scheme for getting a handsome group of public buildings about an open square in the centre of the city."

It is a great pity that the public thought should be so mistaken. For that is just the kind of misconception that makes town planning almost impossible. It represents it as being expensive and "hifalutin," instead of, as it really is, an immediate and practical necessity. It appears to be an unproductive thing which will tie up large sums of money, instead of being a profitable investment. It makes it appear to be a luxury which can easily be postponed, instead of a matter whose object is the saving of labor and time and money and life itself.

It is too much to expect a sensible householder to buy a Corot for his drawing room while he cannot afford to drain his cellar.

So all the Philistinism in a city is arrayed against what it supposes to be a fad of artists and architects and their emotional followers. The taxpayer scowls at a proposal which promises to increase his peculiar burden. The labor element regards it as another exhibition of that social delirium which will squander large sums on pomp and display while serenely indifferent to the poverty and misery all about.

### Municipal Home-Making.

It is unfortunate that the Civic Centre has come to be accepted as the leading feature of a town planning scheme.

In point of fact town planning is no more and no less than good municipal home-making. If a civic community be thought of as a family, what ought to be, the question immediately arises, what sort of a home does that family live in? Town planning is the attempt to answer that question.

There are few words more filled with meaning than "home." Its tenderness and sacredness are largely due to the fact that the weak members of the family are not disregarded there. A home is a shelter for all who belong to it, no matter how inexperienced or feeble they may be. The child or the cripple gets as much from the home as the head of the family who is its owner and ruler. Thus the wanderer in distant lands, bruised by the unsympathetic contacts of streets, hotels and factories, looks back with tender longing to the place where his weakness was no handicap and he was free of all the joys provided, not because he was a contributor or a conqueror, but because he belonged. And this is the root idea of town planning.

### The Order Has Changed.

There was a period when men built homes as fortresses. A man's house was indeed his castle. All other interests of life were subordinated to that of safety. This conception determined the nature of the home. Its site was a crag or an island. Its walls were thick and its windows small. Its door was a massive slab of oak and iron. Space, air, light, ease were not important compared with the necessity of rendering the home immune from violence.

In that same period cities were built for the same purpose. They were meant supremely to be fortresses. They had walls and moats. Because walls were costly either to build or defend the area of the city was small. Hence the streets were narrow and the houses crowded together. Space, air, light, ease took second place to security. Such was the town planning of the tenth century.

But that period has passed away. Terror is no longer the ruling motive of the builder of a house. Law and order, established under strong governments, hold wanton violence in check. Citizens are freed from the necessity of cowering, like frightened rats, in gloomy and confined quarters. Homes are built for health and comfort, and with a thought of beauty. It is possible now to indulge in space, air, light, and comfort, and every home has as many of these amenities as the owner feels he can afford.

### Appreciation of Good Homes.

There can be no question of the fact of the popular appreciation of good homes. If many people live in slums and hovels it is because many people are very poor and can afford nothing better. The almost universal rule is that the smaller the income the greater proportion of it goes for rent. If the family income increases the most certain expenditure of the surplus will be upon the improvement of the home. Nothing more decidedly characterizes European civilization than its love of the family home. We are a home-making, home-loving race.

Now, town planning is just the belated extension of this disposition and practice to the town. It means, first, the appreciation of the fact that an urban community is essentially a family, and that the town is its home, and it means, secondly, that the same intelligence, care and zeal should be spent in making a city a healthful, wholesome and delightful place in which to live as is spent upon the private home.

### The Case for Town-Planning.

Accordingly we find the fundamental principles of town planning set forth in the recent and authoritative work issued in England, "The Case for Town-Planning," to be as follows:

1. The provision of healthy sites for homes.
2. The building of well-planned houses under town planning schemes.
3. The provision of gardens, recreation grounds, playing fields, boulevards and parks, and the preservation of places of natural beauty.
4. The provision of roads of several types in town planning schemes.
5. The provision of traffic facilities and the development of new industrial areas.

Each of these principles is a subject for discussion in itself. The purpose of this article is but the humble disarming of prejudice, by pointing out that town planning is neither an extravagance nor a display, but is simply common-sense applied to the construction of towns.

Artemus Ward said of old Quebec, "Its streets were laid out by a gentleman who had been afflicted with lunacy from childhood, so that they ran everywhere in general and nowhere in particular." He might have said something as critical of almost every city on earth. The modern cities — and cities are peculiarly a modern phenomenon — have, like Topsy, "just grown." They are crowded in places and unduly scattered in other places. Their streets seldom fit the traffic either in point of volume or direction. The most objectionable contacts between business and residence are commonly in evidence. Their connections with the surrounding country by rail, water, or highway are frequently awkward and often dangerous. They are like some of the manor houses which still survive in central Europe, where room has been joined to room and building to building, till sheds and shops and stables and human habitations are found sprawling higgledy-piggledy beneath one series of roofs.

The inconvenience of cities, the unhealthfulness of cities, the expensiveness of cities, and the ugliness of cities have forced into existence the art of town planning. This art has reached Canada. Several cities have already achieved their plans for the future development of their suburbs. Several Provincial legislatures have given effect to these plans. Besides, in the person of Mr. Thomas Adams, whom the Conservation Commission has brought from England, we have one of the most capable of town planning experts amongst us. Such a man is much needed in these formative days in Canada. May the Canadian people hear his message with an open mind.

### BIG DROP IN BUILDING.

According to figures given out recently by Building Inspector Chausse, of Montreal, the building record for the first six months of the current year shows a decrease of one million dollars as compared with the same period of last year. For the first half of 1915 the value of permits issued was \$3,419,000, while for the first six months of the current year the figures were \$2,434,000.

## Canada's Exports of Explosives to England

Much has been said about the adaptability of Canada's industries as shown by the enormous increases in her exports of munitions. Nothing more striking could well be found than the figures of the Bluebooks. Here is one comparison: In July, 1914, Canada exported to the United Kingdom \$250 worth of explosives of all kinds. During January, 1916, eighteen months later, the figures were \$29,014,906 and \$2,295,013 respectively. The intermediate stages in this rapid increase are most interesting, as they included many ups and downs which are at first sight surprising. During August and September of 1914, the first two months of the war, the exports of munitions did not only fail to increase, but actually fell away to nothing. The reason for this may be attributed to the fact that there was a demand for rifle and field artillery ammunition for the ranges of the military camps. October saw a renewal of exports of small arm ammunition, the Old Country receiving during this month Canadian supplies aggregating \$34,000 worth. No appreciable exports to England of shells, etc., took place until July of the following year. The rifle and pistol ammunition had fallen off by December, 1914, to \$8,479. With the new year another stimulation becomes noticeable and for five succeeding months supplies of rifle ammunition of varying value went to England, the greatest figures being those of March, when about \$71,000 worth left for the Mother Country. It was June of 1915 which saw the beginning of the large exports. In that month \$405,000 worth left. The figures of the exports to the United Kingdom during the succeeding months, according to the latest available statistics, follow:

	Rifle and Pistol Ammunition.	Explosives and Fulminates.
1915.		
July . . . . .	89,489	46,441
Aug. . . . .	344,854	215,444
Sept. . . . .	327,084	266,758
Oct. . . . .	641,661	16,870
Nov. . . . .	283,697	288,553
Dec. . . . .	6,612,510	157,148
1916.		
Jan. . . . .	29,014,906	2,295,013
Feb. . . . .	11,931,804	1,084,000

The heavy tax on American munitions bound for foreign countries, will if it materializes, increase the demand for Canadian munitions considerably, though many American munition manufacturers have protected themselves against just such a contingency.

### PLANS TO REBUILD EUROPE.

#### American Branch of Reconstruction League Tells of Scheme.

Announcement of its plan to abolish war and spend \$100,000,000 in reconstructing homes, religious institutions and business establishments in Europe has been made by the American committee of the International Construction League. The news was given out by John Moffat, chairman of the executive committee, who said that some money already has been subscribed toward the reconstruction fund, and that it is hoped to get President Wilson as honorary chairman of the advisory committee of the American committee.

The present honorary president of the committee, according to Mr. Moffat, is President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, and among those whose names appear on the letterhead of the organization are Norman Hapgood, Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, Mrs. Helen Hartley Jenkins, Otto H. Kahn, Theodore Roosevelt Pell, Henry Watterson, Louis Wiley, Rabbi S. S. Wise, Govs. Capper of Kansas, Craig of North Carolina, Ferris of Michigan, Hunt of Arizona and Whitcombe of Oregon; Senators Hursting of Wisconsin, Norris of Nebraska, Overman of North Carolina and Tillman of South Carolina, and Frederick H. Allen, treasurer.

The aims of the league are:

"First—Immediate relief for the suffering war victims of Europe. This work is to be continued as long as the war may last.

"Second—American aid for the stricken people of Europe when they turn from war to the task of rehabilitation.

"Third—A plan to educate public opinion as to the practicability of a world wide arrangement that will insure a lasting peace, with a view to pledging America to its support."