MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AND THE EXPERT

(Continued from Page 334.)

made the people's money go farther, and the people, on the other hand, on coming to realise this fact, gradually gained, so we are told in respect to Dayton, Ohio, sufficient enthusiasm to warrant the daily papers transfering the City Hall news to the front page. The city-manager has, therefore, at least proved that the public are able to discriminate between efficient and inefficient government whenever they become acquainted with the facts. It has proved, too, that more thorough acquaintance with city affairs has meant an increase in their interest, which leads us to wonder whether the miscarriage of self-government in our cities has not probably been due to the lack of civic publicity rather than to the lack of mentality or character on the part of the electorate. Of the immediate universal success of the city-manager plan "per se" we must not be sanguine, for, as it is frequently pointed out, there is at present a danger "of giving too much prominence to the city-manager and so inevitably making him a political issue. He should certainly remain in the background as far as the public is concerned." (Dr. Herman James, Bureau of Municipal Research, University of Texas.) The eclipsing of the representative Council or Commission by an appointed officer will tend to inhibit the self-governing instinct of the people, a decided danger to the advance of democracy; but, what will be still more of a misfortune, the public in not having helped to burnish and oil the wheels of government will never appreciate the advantage of their running smoothly, rendering efficient and ample service If we profess to be democratic, let, let us be thoroughly democratic; the game is more difficult, but therein the more worthy.

Realising, then both the necessity and the diffculty of introducing an expert into municipal government, we venture to examine the case for an institution of recent birth which promises to go far toward applying scientific appraising and constructive solutions to our civic problems, —the Bureau of Municipal Research with its director and staff of experts who have taken up the study of civic government as a profession.

The Bureau of Municipal Research is the product of that movement for economy and efficiency in local administration which has been prominent throughout the cities of the United States for the last three decades. Such an institution was the inevitable result of the experience gained in all campaigns for reform. No proposal for reform hit its mark that was not loaded with facts, facts that stamped inefficient administration as being against the self-respect and the sincere desire of the community. In many instances Commissions of Investigation, employing men particularly trained for the work, as in Chicago in 1909, have developed into Bureaus of Public Efficiency that these facts might be consolidated and enlarged upon for fiscal benefit only. Bureaus of Municipal Research, such as in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and Toronto, have in the main been instituted by private initiative and expense, independent of the city hall. And the work of these bureaus has been aimed at all departments of the city's government from the point of view of the people's interest. City officials have on the whole gladly co-operated, for obvious reasons, and the serious question of what the legal position of the Bureau shall be in the future has not yet been brought to the front. The socialist administration of Mayor Seidel in Milwaukee (1910) was the first to make such a bureau an official department of the city Undoubtedly this will be the step taken in other cities where the invaluable aid of research work has not only overcome to a high degree the dishonesty and inefficiency in civic government, but also that ignorance of public affairs on the part of the electorate which is at all times a menace to "the officer who wishes to do his duty." In the words of Mr. George B. Hopkins, trustee of the New York Bureau of Municipal Research, established in 1906, "municipal research is a method, not a panacea It aims not to make over either the men in office or the men who vote, but to give men as they are better methods of working for the public and to give the public as it is better methods of watching and judging what their public servants do." Thus the work of the bureau is concentrated on methods and results, and altogether kept free from any association with a candidate for public office or his platform.

(To be Continued.)

REASSURING STATEMENT SHOWN BY BANK OF MONTREAL.

A striking exhibit of how the premier bank of Canada is swinging back from the special war conditions to the care of the growing trade of the country is afforded by the annual statement of the Bank of Montreal for the fiscal year to October 30th.

The report this year makes its appearance at a time when it will be closely scanned by everyone desirous of obtaining a knowledge of the Canadian banking situation at a period when the difficulties of the readjustment period are testing the industrial and commercial strength of the country.

It will be of special interest to note that the Bank of Montreal, even in the difficult and onerous conditions caused by the war, was looking well ahead towards the period of reconstruction that was inevitably to follow. As a result, the bank has been able to take care of a very large proportion of the expanding trade and commerce of the country and reports total current loans of $223,95,472, as against $164,182,581 last year, a gain of close to $60,000,000. The total of the loan accounts amounts to $256,500,001, as compared with $195,727,857 a year ago.

On the other hand, there has been a steady reduction in the special Government business which was undertaken during the war, and the holdings of Dominion and Provincial Government securities are now down to $14,863,954, from $63,984,255. At the same time the Canadian municipal securities and British, Foreign and Colonial Public securities, other than Canadian, have declined to $36,749,430, compared with $47,041,359. The total of these accounts has been reduced to $289,146,508, down from $337,980,858.

Every part of the statement has its interesting features. During the year the bank made a further issue of stock and both the Capital and Reserve have been increased to $22,000,000 each, as compared with $20,000,000 each at the end of the previous year. A very gratifying feature is to be found in the fact that even during the special period of the past year the savings deposits of the Canadian people have continued to increase, and as a result deposits bearing interest now stand at $322,578,613, up from 312,655,964. In consequence of the expansion enjoyed during the year the total assets of the Bank now amount to $560,150,812, as compared with $545,304,809.

Profits Reflect Larger Business.

As a result of the very much larger business handled and the increase in capital, the profits for the year show a steady gain, as compared with the previous year and amounted to $4,033,995, as compared with $3,314,227 in the previous year. These profits added to the balance of Profit and Loss a year ago which amounted to $1,812,854 and to the $1,000,000 of premiums on new stock, brought the amount available for distribution up to $6,846,850. There was distributed $2,960,000 in regular dividends and a bonus of 2 per cent; $2,000,000 was placed to the credit of Rest Account; $210,00 war tax on bank note circulation and $425,000 reserve for Bank premises. This brought the total allotments up to $5,595,000 and left a balance to be carried forward into the new year of $1,251,850.

The principal accounts of the bank, with comparisons with those of the previous year, show as follows:

	1920.	1919.
Total Assets	$560,150,812	$545,304,809
Liquid Assets	289,146,508	337,980,858
Deposits not bearing interest	111,739,215	129,946,641
Deposits bearing interest ...	322,578,613	312,655,964
Capital Stock	22,000,000	20,000,000
Rest	22,000,000	20,000,000
Dominion and Provincial Government Securities	14,863,954	63,984,255
Canadian Municipal Securities and British, Foreign and Colonial Public Securities, not Canadian	36,749,430	47,041,359
Current Loans	223,495,472	164,182,581
Gold and Silver Coin Current	25,187,389	24,742,654
Dominion Notes	48,199,032	49,865,151
Deposit in Central Gold Reserves	21,200,000	25,200,000