

Municipal Ownership of Electric Light Plants.

The tendency towards municipalization is greatly increasing. Within the past decade almost without exception water-works plants are constructed and operated by the municipality, while previous to that time the great percentage was in the hands of companies. Generally speaking the street and and private lighting of urban municipalities is done by companies, and we now frequently find councils considering the advisability of owning and operating these plants. The economy of municipal ownership is based entirely on local conditions. A collection of favorable reports from cities owning their electric lighting plants will show its desirability, while unfavorable reports would as quickly indicate the opposite. A careful analysis of these, show that while the cost of fuel and labor varies according to localities and vicinities the cost of the operation of a lighting plant, and the revenue derived adhere to the general advantage. The reports indicate that the electric light station, if properly managed, offers opportunities for large returns on the investment, and perhaps more than any other business affords unlimited chances for numerous small leaks, which, taken into calculation, are not equal to the revenues derived. We cannot understand why a city should not own the lighting as well as the waterworks plant. To make a success of either, requires that the very best apparatus should be purchased, and the most competent labor and management employed. There are certain financial responsibilities which attend the ownership of municipal plant, which are deserving of careful consideration. Among these are, (1) liability of loss from fire. (2) Destruction of poles and circuit from storm. (3) Danger from a broken wire or defective insulation, and the possibility of costly litigation resulting. (4) Damage from lighting. (5) The probability of great advancement in electric generation and transmission in the near future. The risks and responsibilities can be taken and borne by the municipalities, as well as by a private corporation, and as it is generally contended that public lighting plants make the largest returns of any known investment; this could be saved to the tax payer. At the present time we may reasonably doubt the wisdom of the municipality making this investment in the face of the probability of the great advancement in electrical generation and transmission, which we know must result in a very few years. Our means of utilization of an electric current is by no means safely past the experimental stage, but on the contrary the electric domain is changing every day. Old appliances ceaselessly give way to new methods of production, distribution and utilization vary yearly, and we must in a short time expect it to thrust a revolutionary force in our lighting and power system.

The Necessity of Better Roads.

The remarkable development of the bicycle, and following that the advent of the horseless carriage, will make good roads a greater necessity than ever before in the history of the world, and especially on this continent, where road building has always been a neglected art. The Romans, in their invasion of England, left their impress on the country in those substantial roads which none but Romans seem to have understood the value of at the dawn of the Christian era, and those object lessons have not been lost on the practical Briton, who appreciates solid work. In consequence, the highways of Great Britain are the best in the world to-day, and the country reaps a real dividend on the outlay by cheapened cost of transportation. In Canada and the United States in the past, lack of capital and make-shift haste in development have left our highways not only rough, but in reality expensive for transportation purposes; and the quicker our municipalities wake up to the need of more attention to scientific road building the better it will be for their pockets and the public comfort. The Government of Ontario is the first provincial government in Canada to realize the situation, and the literature they have been issuing for the last two years, and their recent creation of a sort of "road department," give us hope that this province will not rest long under the reproach of the bad road abomination. In pointing to this hope we must not fail to mention the services rendered to this cause by a lay journalist—Andrew Patullo, of the *Woodstock Sentinel-Review*—who has not only agitated the subject with patience and persistence in his paper, but has spent much of his time without recompense in giving addresses at various places throughout the country. Such public spirit should not go unrewarded, and we trust this work will be taken up by newspaper men and members of Parliament in every other province of Canada. There are many people who still fail to see that a good solid road will pay a cash dividend on the investment, but this is because they have not looked below the surface. Like judicious advertising, good roads really and truly pay.—*Canadian Engineer*.

Where There's a Will There's a way.

The country newspapers are all the while talking of poor business in the country towns because of poor roads that prevent farmers from getting to market. The people are learning to wish for good roads. This is a very important step in the movement for better highways. "Where there's a will there's a way." When the people must have good roads, the way to get them will follow.—*Exchange*.

It is seemingly a short lane that has no mud in it.

Women Voters.

The following address to women voters was issued recently by Dr. Augusta Gullen Stowe of Toronto.—

"During the past few months elections have been a chief topic of conversation, and the interest in them having not yet abated, I deem it an opportune moment to draw the attention of women voters, and women generally, to the merits of so important a subject, reminding them of their duties as citizens and State builders. We have reached that period of intelligence in our civilization that has brought conviction to the minds of all thinking people, of both sexes, that there is no sex in ownership, and that there can be no discrimination of interests upon such basis.

All that contributes to the comfort, happiness, or convenience of men, is equally important and necessary to women. Women have been told that their kingdom is the home, and, in acceptance of the fact, viz., that governments, whether of State or municipality, are but the outcome of an aggregation of homes: it must be clear to every woman, whose instincts favor a clean and orderly home for herself, that her duty does not end with the individual home she calls her own. In the municipal or State home, where a community of interests are to be dealt with and equitably adjusted, good and wise housekeepers are in order, and it behooves every woman—every housekeeper of the individual home—to use all means in her power to place men of honest purpose in so responsible a position as municipal or provincial housekeeper. In order to effectually aid in doing this, we must faithfully exercise the franchise that has been already extended to us, and for the better instruction of those who may not know their privilege, I append a few facts from the Municipal Act.

Under section 79, "The right of voting in municipal elections shall belong to men or single women of the full age of twenty-one years, subjects of Her Majesty by birth or naturalization. Firstly, all persons, whether residents or not, who are in their own right, at the date of the elections, freeholders of the municipality; secondly, all householders or tenants who have continuously resided therein since the completion of the revised assessment, and, thirdly all who are in receipt of \$400 income.

Under section 80 a person is entitled to vote in respect of real property—whether leasehold or freehold, or partly each, if the rating of the actual value is not less than \$400 in cities.

Sections 85 and 87 instruct us that the owner and occupant of a house worth \$800, and being severally, not jointly, rated, each may vote, also if the assessed value of the house is 1,200 three persons, owner and two occupants may vote, and so on in the same ratio.

An occupant of a part of a house, having an outer door into a road or street, is a householder, and can vote under the act.