

the people. There are the same safeguards over sinking funds and all other financial requirements just the same. The initiative allows any body of electors of a certain percentage for total vote for Mayor to come in and demand that the Commissioners shall submit some proposition to the whole vote, which the whole vote would carry, or not. The referendum comes in as a check — to say that it shall be suspended — unless it is declared to be a matter of public health and urgency, in which case the Commissioners have power under most of the laws to have anything enforced immediately. Every By-law passed by the Commissioners is passed simply to take effect fifteen days from that date, and then if a certain number of the electors come up and say "We don't want that" and put in a petition, the Commissioners must send that down to the people to be voted on. In the initiative a higher percentage is taken than in the referendum, to make a vote.

That is practically the system that a Commission form of Government means. This is a brief setting out of the advantages. There is one thing that it will not do, and that is, it will not put brains into the head of an incompetent man, if the citizens happen to elect one. It is not a panacea for all the ills Municipalities may suffer. But granted efficiency, and a length of office, —if you give them a term long enough—, length of office, you will, I think, have a City Government or a government of any Municipality that will bring out the best of what can be done under the statutes under which the Government will let you work. It is a business of itself, this City business. When a City gets to be the size of this, it demands first class trained service, and it is the trained servants that you don't get under Municipal Councils, and that you have a chance of getting under the Commission Form of Government.

A vote of thanks was passed unanimously on motion of Ald. Enright, seconded by Mayor Lee.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Letters were read from Premier Richard McBride and Hon. W. J. Bowser regretting inability to attend meeting; from Hon. H. E. Young, Hon. Price Ellison, and Mr. R. I. Child.

An invitation was read from the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Victoria to attend a Banquet on Thursday the 16th inst.

The President said he has received letters from Past Presidents Stevens, Bell and King, promising to attend the meetings of this Convention, if possible to do so. It is very nice to know our old associates still take an interest in our work.

A letter was read from Mr. W. D. Lighthall, Secretary of the Union of Canadian Municipalities, which was received and filed.

The Executive Committee's Report was taken up clause by clause and discussed. Most were referred, after discussion, to the Resolution Committee.

NEW SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

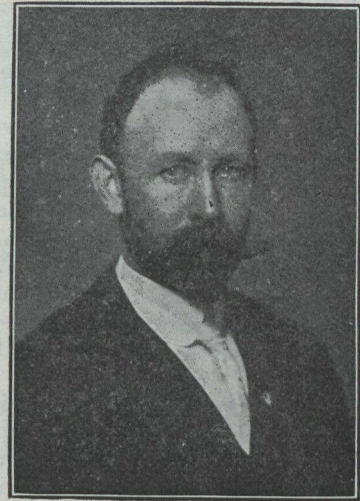
Altering of the time for election of Council was discussed, but no resolution was passed.

Mayor McNeish suggested that arrangements be made for the auditing of Municipal accounts.

The President mentioned that this matter has been taken up by the Canadian Union.

The President called for another paper.

The Building of a City



Alderman W. A. Gleason, Victoria, B. C.

The building of a City like the building of a Nation is a work that is not accomplished in a day. Many factors enter into the problem that require the closest attention of those who have been chosen from among our fellows to administer its affairs.

The ever increasing tendency to migrate to cities renders a problem already difficult, more and more acute; in the City the rich and poor meet together, and extremes of poverty and wealth seemingly irreconcilable exist.

Happily we in B. C. have hitherto been ignorant of this, but conditions are rapidly changing, and few countries have developed their resources faster, or increased their population in greater ratio, than will our own province in the next decade. It is inevitable that this, the greatest of all the provinces, must become the home of many thousands, who shall say how many? The cities of to-day indicate only in a faint degree what they will be in a few years, nor is it inconceivable that some, perhaps many, of our smaller municipalities may far exceed our present vision of future greatness. The influence of the City is, and must remain, the dominant factor in the life of the nation. This then is our problem, how shall we build? What elements shall we incorporate into the building? And what shall we discard as unworthy or likely to cause disintegration?

How shall we build?

First: Have a plan; then work out your plan. The plan may be conceived by one man, or better still, perhaps, it may be the product of a group of students of community life and conditions.

The first requisite in City building is men; men of purpose; men who are willing to sacrifice something of personal ease or gain, for the privilege of serving; men who will delight in seeing, and who are able to make the structure being raised, develop daily in strength and symmetry, commercially and educationally. Above all they must be men of large vision, as they plan not merely for the present but for the future; not visionary men, but men of vision. No man devoid of these qualities is fitted to share in the Government of a City, and ought never to be called to the responsibility of building a City.

Second: What elements shall be incorporated into the building? [The highest standard of efficiency attainable should be demanded of every department in