

FREEDOM OF LONDON.

In conferring the freedom of their respective cities on the Premier of Canada, the citizens of London and Edinburgh have honoured the whole of the Dominion in a way that cannot help but be appreciated by the citizens. In the old days to be a "free man" of any city in England or Scotland was to be exempt from local taxes, and though these substantial benefits have ceased, the honour in itself is the highest that any city can confer on any man. Those who have been considered worthy of honour were and are men who have achieved great fame, or represented great nations, so that Premier Meighen is to be congratulated.

T. L. CHURCH, M.P.

In leaving the municipal to enter the Dominion field of politics the City of Toronto has lost in Mayor Church one of the most remarkable municipal men in Canada. For twenty-three years the mayor has served the Queen City—five years as a school trustee, five years as an alderman, five years as a controller and seven years as mayor—a record that is not only unique in itself, but is convincing evidence of the continuous confidence that the citizens of Toronto have in "Tommy" Church. Like Mayor Martin, of Montreal, Church's strength lies in his influence over the common people. He knows them and they know him. He has put up many a stiff fight on their behalf against the interference of private interests, and has usually won out. Now that he has entered the Federal arena of politics our best wishes go with him.

It may not be generally known that Sir Lomer Gouin, M.P., was at one time an alderman of Montreal. It is true that his occupancy of that office was for but a few months, but such was the experience gained, even during that short period, by the Quebec political leader, that it stood him in good stead in many of the municipal reforms brought about by him during his long premiership of the Province.

JUNIOR MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

The experiments now being tried out in a number of cities and towns in the United States to train young people in local government, by the election by their fellows, of a junior municipal council and corporation—a duplication in every way of the ordinary council—will be watched with interest in Canada. The first town to take up the idea was Glen Ridge, N.Y., where every officer in the local government, from the mayor to the policeman, has as an understudy a boy or girl of between sixteen and twenty years of age, who was elected to his, or her, position by the young people of the town. We do not know how the members of Canadian councils would feel to have understudies in the persons of young boys and girls. We are inclined to think they would have some misgivings as to the real educational value of the experiment when the newness had worn off, and frankly we do not believe that the teaching of civic government on such a kindergarten system can be very successful in the long run. It is too elemental and superficial, inasmuch it is playing at something which may, or may not, teach the child mind how certain administrative functions should be carried on but which certainly cannot have a lasting influence, because in such teaching the real meaning—that is the fundamentals—of government are lacking.

Like the United States, Canada is very much behind Europe in the teaching of municipal government, but we fail to see how the Glen Ridge idea will help any. If anything it would tend to bring ridicule on the personnel of our councils, for though there may be something in the saying that "out of the mouths of babes comes forth wisdom," it is not conducive to the dignity of government to have the actions of the council flippantly criticised by a number of children.

MAYOR MAGUIRE OF TORONTO.

The citizens of Toronto are to be congratulated in their unanimous selection of Controller C. A. Maguire to succeed Thomas L. Church (now M.P. for one of the Toronto divisions) in the mayoralty. In the new mayor Toronto sets a good example of reward for service rendered, Mr. Maguire having been a controller for four years and an alderman for eight years. During this long period Mayor-elect Maguire has not only rendered faithful service in the council chamber and in the committee rooms, but he has lost no opportunity to help any and everybody that needed his help. Many hundreds of men and women are under obligation to him for securing them employment. He was one of the keenest fighters for public ownership of the street railway as he is for public ownership of all public utilities. Sports and recreation of all kinds have in him a strong advocate, because of the opportunities they give to build up the health of the city. All of which means that the city of Toronto has in the new mayor a man who does things as well as a thinker.

THE QUEBEC UNION.

The Union of Quebec by municipalities though only two years of age is making splendid headway in every part of the province. In addition to its annual convention, which this year was held in the City of Quebec during August, the union has already held two district conventions for the special benefit of those municipalities that have local problems to discuss. Both conventions, being held in French speaking districts, were conducted in the French language, but the union being bilingual the next district convention will be held in an English speaking community, when the papers and discussions will be in English. At the annual convention both languages are used, and those who have the opportunity to attend the sessions are always impressed with the keen interest shown by our French speaking compatriots in things municipal. If progress is made in the Quebec union at the same rate as during the last year it won't be very long before every one of the 1261 municipalities that comprise the Province of Quebec become members.

At the last district convention, which was held in Riviere-du-Loup—situated on the gulf of the St. Lawrence—about 120 delegates representing about 40 municipalities attended and passed many important resolutions, not only affecting the welfare of the district, but the whole of the province. These resolutions were taken up again at the general convention in August, discussed again and then handed over to the executive to carry out. And they are carried out. Nothing dies for lack of energy in the Quebec Union, but pushed on and on to a successful consummation. Much of the energizing force of this Union is supplied by the officers, every one of whom gives much of his time to the administration.