

# SOME BIG MUNICIPAL MEN

(By AJAX)

## J. DUCHASTEL de MONTROUGE, C.E.



It seems appropriate, with the next Good Roads Congress being held in Western Canada, that the new president should come from the East, and a Frenchman at that, but born in the United States—partially educated in the Province of Quebec, part of his experience received in Ontario, and naturalized a Britisher; and incidentally a good municipal engineer. This example of positive collectivism in one person has a long name but an awfully short temper with inefficiency. Even the name, long though it may be, represents something worth while—achievement in the past. It is that of Jules Duchastel de Montrouge, and the man behind this name is big enough mentally and physically to live up to it. For professional and business reasons the name is reduced to J. Duchastel and by this name we will now proceed to pen sketch our victim.

J. Duchastel is city engineer of Outremont and has been for ten years, and as this little city stands out as one of the bright stars of Canadian municipaldom, in every part of its administration, which includes the engineering department, and as all the improvements have taken place under the present engineer's regime, it follows that Mr. Duchastel knows his business. He does. He has done his work so well that he is looked upon as the stuff from which experts are made. But he does not write to the papers, which is a weakness, as shown in the present tendency of engineers, to publicly air their knowledge. Essentially practical and direct in his methods, he soon gets to the heart of things, which means that though Outremont's streets and sidewalks are among the best on this continent, their cost has been comparatively small. The same with all the public works, so no wonder the people of Outremont swear by their engineer (and possibly some at him).

Jules Duchastel was born in 1878, in the French Consulate at New York, his father being then Consul. When he was five years of age, he was taken to France, to the old city of Rheims—now almost in ruins—of which one of his ancestors had been mayor. The boy Jules was then brought to Quebec, and between that city and Montreal he completed his education, graduating from Laval University with the degree of B.Sc. The young engineer's first experience was in that best of training schools, the C. P. R., where he was on the staff of the chief engineer. Here Duchastel had every opportunity to exercise his talents—at one time on bridge work, at another on the elevators at Port Arthur, and so on until he had a practical experience of every kind of railroad engineering, which, for training purposes, is probably the hardest in the

world. Then he took up municipal engineering, and in 1906 became town engineer of Outremont, at that time in the real estate stage.

In the planning of the streets, he not only utilized the natural beauty of the place, but improved it by the planing of young trees in every street, and adopted the best methods of laying down the roads and sidewalks, which are all of cement. He recently installed a splendid system of lighting. In all this building up of the municipality, Mr. Duchastel was fortunate in the full support of his council, who have confidence in their engineer. It was well that a man of such calibre should be elected to the presidency of the Good Roads Association.

Mr. Duchastel, who is a member of the Society of Canadian Engineers, has determined to make his year of office as President of the Good Roads Association successful, in showing how best local materials can be utilized in the building of roads. He has already made a good start in his programme, and there is no reason to doubt the success of the next Good Roads Congress, when such a common sense propaganda is being prepared.

## MONTREAL AND THE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL.

All over the greater part of the civilized world, some time between January and June, of this year, the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare is being celebrated. As mentioned in this Journal in February, St. Louis plans an elaborate pageant; New York, Boston, and other centres, will be well represented as far as the United States are concerned. In England, the usual performances at Stratford-on-Avon will be held, though possibly they will lack somewhat of the luxuriousness which has marked the previous festivals, owing to the general depression induced by war conditions. In Italy, France, and Spain, the Tercentenary will be observed in some manner.

A committee of prominent men and women of Montreal has been formed to arrange a Festival for that city next April. A Shakespearean actor and producer has been secured to organize the details of the Festival, in the person of Harcourt Farmer, who put on "Julius Caesar" in Providence a couple of seasons ago, with such success. The committee has mapped out a tentative programme as follows: A Shakespearean afternoon, with readings, etc., in costume, and appropriate music, at the People's Forum, on April 16th; a lecture on The Women of Shakespeare; another lecture on The Characters of Shakespeare; these lectures to be given some time during April; a performance of "Hamlet" in Westmount; and the performance on April 25th. These will be given by the Shakespeare Tercentenary Festival Committee, and the fine new Congress Hall has been secured for the event. Scenes from "Othello," "Hamlet," "Twelfth Night," "Julius Caesar," "King John," etc., will be done, by a cast of mixed professionals and amateurs, in costume.