

of the local government board and then it has all the force of an act of parliament which has received the royal assent. That is done for the purpose of reducing the very large number of more or less miniature acts of parliament and save local authorities bringing all their petty grievances and small annoyances to the attention of parliament, enabling them to co-operate with the landowners and enabling the landowners to co-operate with the municipal and urban and district council, so that the plan which is prepared may be as fair as human ingenuity and skill can make it for the good of all the inhabitants of the district.

Progress Under Town-Planning Act

This is the scheme that we have been looking forward to for a number of years in England, and we are hoping that it may receive very kindly welcome at the hands of all municipal administrators. At the present time about one hundred local authorities in England have received permission to prepare their scheme. No scheme is yet completed. It is estimated and expected that it will take three years for all the negotiations to be gone through and all the difficulties to be smoothed over before any scheme can be finally and completely adopted. But we consider on our side of the Atlantic that it is well worth this slight delay and that it is a very great advantage for landowners and municipal administrations to be brought face to face on either side of the table and to feel that they are endeavoring not only to secure bargains each from the other but to promote the public weal.

If you ask us what effect it has on the landowners we reply that they are afforded an opportunity of showing their objections to the scheme which the municipality may propose. This is conducive to harmony. If those objections are overcome, if it can be shown that their fears are groundless, and if ultimately those schemes receive approval from the local government board and a scheme is adopted by the local government board as a fair scheme, then that scheme represents the only method whereby that landowner can develop his land.

That is a very important phase of the subject. I have no doubt whatever that you will hold varying views this morning as to whether that is democratic or undemocratic, as to whether it is desirable in a free country or whether it is undesirable, but it remains the fact: that in the future, when those schemes are finished, the municipality is master of the situation in being able to say to the landowner: "Here is the plan; when you want to make these streets and roads and bridges in order to develop your land, these are the directions, and these are the streets and roads which we desire you to make."

Scheme Not New in Germany

This has been in force in Germany for some considerable period. Lord Rothschild, for example, is the owner of large estates in West Frankfort, and he can develop those estates only along lines already laid down by the municipal authorities in Frankfort. It seems to us after the opportunity has been given to the landowner to state his case that it is only fair and reasonable that the rights of the present generation and of the coming generation shall overcome any scruples which the landowner may have in that direction. It is of the highest importance that the problems of fresh air, ventilation, sewerage and transit should be faced and faced honestly and squarely at the same time. Our towns have too long grown up in thoughtless, careless, haphazard fashion, and we feel that the time has now come when order and method should take the place of the careless

method or absence of method which has up to this time prevailed. And the towns in formulating these schemes are bound to consult the greatest authorities upon the subject of town-building. They must consult financiers before the local government board will attempt to pass such a scheme. They must consult antiquarians and historians for the preservation of all monuments of historical interest. They must most certainly bring the best medical testimony to bear on the problem of the town of the future. They must have the best advice as to the wind and weather currents, and they must be able to call for not only the best architectural advice but the best geological advice as to the ways and methods whereby their town shall grow. It has to be by a combination of the best brains of the best inhabitants of the district that the future of the town shall be assured. And then I need not say to you, gentlemen on this side of the Atlantic, that they will be obliged and must call in the advice of the skilled commercial men of their neighborhood. However desirable it is to house the people properly, and I believe you are all enthusiastic on that great question, it is also desirable to find the people occupations, and the commercial development of every district ought to be carefully studied.

At the end of the Town Planning Act, almost by a fluke, we got in a few words which are to us in England the real key to the whole situation, and many of us consider them to be worth about as much as the rest of the act. At the end of the last schedule as to the powers of the Local Government Board, and the rules and regulations which it shall guard and enforce, we had words inserted just at the last passing of the bill which give power under this scheme to determine the number and kind of buildings which may be erected on any site and the height and character of those buildings. We consider that the power to limit the height of buildings and to say how many people shall live or herd together on an acre, and the occupations which shall be carried on in any given locality is the most important part of the measure. We consider that it is only justice to the inhabitants of the town which is about to arise that those powers should be held and used. We feel that the health of the community ought to be the supreme law, and that it ought not to be at the caprice of any manufacturer or band of manufactureres establishing work shops to plant obnoxious occupations anywhere, and that powers should be given to regulate the manner in which business of that kind shall be conducted.

The Purpose of Town Planning.

We desire to give the people full and free access to their work and the fullest opportunity to quickly go from and to their homes in following their work. We desire that they shall lose as little time as possible, and yet that they may have access to light and air and the fullest opportunity to develop their own and their children's lives in the country fields. We desire to have the experience of the past united with the experience of all our fellowmen in our towns and cities to provide such dwellings for the future race as shall make the dirt squalor and disease of the slums pass away like an ugly dream of the night. And therefore, while I feel utterly unable to pronounce any opinion upon the vast schemes which you have sent to us, we hope that it will not be so much a question of palatial buildings as of seeing that everyone, even the poorest inhabitant within your borders, has the health, wealth and development of human life fitting him to a good citizen of this community.