

"If you believe that one way to secure good government is to inculcate sound principles in the minds of the children during their school days, you will find the subject covered in a most practical and intelligent manner by the League's Committee on Instruction in Municipal Government.

"If you approve of the formation and encouragement in the colleges of active clubs for the study of municipal problems and the duties of citizenship; if you believe that the members of these clubs on graduation should be guided at once to opportunities for lines of political usefulness in their respective cities, you will see that these labors also have been taken in hand by a separate committee of the League.

"If you thing the present method of nominating elective municipal officers can and should be improved, you will be interested in the notable progress of the League's committee on this subject.

"If you are interested in the movements for Municipal Reform and Municipal Home Rule, and believe that the city's local policy should be determined by its own citizens, read the League's careful and intelligent expert report entitled 'A Municipal Program'. It has become a standard work for reference in preparing new charters.

"If you are among those who feel it is a just reproach to instructors on civil government in our colleges and universities that strength is wasted through the difference caused by the limited vision, you will find a committee of the League which confines itself exclusively to bringing together the men engaged in this work, so that each may benefit by the experience of all.

"Whether you believe in municipal ownership or oppose it, you will follow with interest the broad investigation on this live and insistent question which is now being made by the League's Committee on City and Public Service Corporation."

It is extremely important that the people should work under the best municipal government possible, which should be on a stable and firm basis. The endeavor should be to educate not only the children but the adults to the responsibilities of citizenship.

From the beginning the League has promoted a close affiliation with educational institutions, and in 1900 it appointed a Committee on Instruction on Municipal Government in American Colleges and Universities, with the late Dr. Thomas M. Brown, then President of Lehigh University, as Chairman, which was the commencement of a long and careful effort to bring to the attention of educators the importance of systematic instruction in municipal government and citizenship. This Committee prepared a series of reports, including syllabi and outlines of courses, which have been very generally availed of by instructors. It was followed by a special committee known as the Committee on the Co-ordination of Instruction in Municipal Government and composed of those actually giving instruction along those lines, designed to bring together for mutual conference and help the great number of men who in the several colleges and universities were giving attention to this subject. Of this Committee, Professor L. S. Rowe, of the University of Pennsylvania, was the first chairman, and Professor W. B. Munro, of Harvard, the second and present chairman. As a complement to these two committees, another was appointed to consider the question of instruction in municipal government in elementary schools. Of this Committee Superintendent William H. Maxwell of Greater New York was chairman. This committee did for the elementary and high schools what the Brown Committee had done for colleges and universities, and it in turn was followed by a committee of which Professor Jesse J. Sheppard, of the High School of Commerce, New York City, is Chairman, which is doing for elementary school instructors what the Munro Committee is doing for college and university professors.

In addition to work along these lines the League is seeking to bring the various educational institutions into closer touch with advance work both through the Baldwin prize, which supplements the formal work of instruction, through the college libraries and very often directly through membership.

The League has also maintained close co-operative relationships with such national organizations as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the American Civic Association (with which it has twice met jointly in annual meeting). The American Society of Municipal Improvements, the National Civic Federation and the League of American Municipalities.

These organizations have sprung into existence since the formation of the League in obedience to the demand

for effective, co-operative work. Organization is essential to the success of business, social and religious effort and likewise in the field of civic endeavor and administration.

A MUNICIPAL UNION 750 YEARS OLD.

In Canada the cities should be established on a still higher basis than they are at present and provincial organizations are important factors in raising the tone of municipal life and in improving the administration of affairs. The parent country has established the precedent which we should be quick to follow. Indeed there is one municipal league in the United Kingdom which is 750 years old. The record of this league of municipalities, whose beginning runs back to the middle of the twelfth century, is disclosed in the book of the 1919 Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, an imposing volume of over 150 pages. The most interesting section of the book contains a historical sketch of the organization, in which we find that the convention is supposed to have been organized by King David I of Scotland, 1124-1154. At that time commissioners of four of the principal towns of Scotland established the custom of meeting periodically as an ultimate court of appeal respecting matters that concerned the internal interests of the royal burghs. This body was known as the "Court of the Four Burghs," and its decrees were declared to be equally final and conclusive, in all affairs subject to its jurisdiction, as those of the Scottish parliament, of which it was finally made a part. Its separate jurisdiction was still recognized, however, questions of dispute were referred to it, and its decisions accepted. Even after it was enlarged by the admission of additional burghs it was called, in a charter granted to it by James II, in 1454, the "Parliament of the Four Burghs," and it was ordained to do and exercise all and singular which in any way, in the Court of Parliament, according to the laws, statutes, and customs of burghs, are treated upon, considered, and finally determined." In 1487 a yearly meeting was established for commissioners from all the burghs of Scotland. Subsequently, in 1581, the commissioners were authorized to convene, "in quhat Burgh they thought maist expedient, with full commission to treat upon the wellfare of merchandis and merchandice, gude rewle and Statues for the common profit of Burrowes." By the treaty of union the "rights and privileges of the Royal Burghs of Scotland as they are now, do remain entire," and the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland is unique as the last remnant of the old parliament of Scotland. It is an important deliberative and consultative assembly, actively promoting useful and practical legislative measures, and is thoroughly representative of burghal interests.

The scope and activity of this interesting and powerful body is illustrated by the present year book. It contains the records of about 50 meetings held during the year by various committees, in addition to the minutes of the Convention held in 1918, the program for the 1919 Convention, and various data and appendices.

There are sundry other bodies of cities, boroughs and officials which abundantly illustrate, if that is now necessary, the age-long adage that "in union there is strength."

We have a series of state leagues of cities in the United States and we had a League of Municipalities which is now moribund, but a conference of mayors and governors was held in Washington the past Winter under the aegis of the President of the United States which may become a permanent body. Some idea of the scope of its discussions may be gathered from the following platform which it adopted:

1. Improvement of transportation facilities pending the return of the railroads to their private owners.
2. A federal agency to determine fair prices for government and private purchaser, in order to promote the re-establishment of normal industry and to encourage public improvements.
3. No lowering of wage standards except in consequence of a reduced cost of living.
4. Federal co-operation to avert serious consequences in the financial affairs of public utilities.
5. Prompt payment of cancelled government contracts to release capital for other uses.
6. Announcement of government policy for releasing raw materials now in government control.
7. Conservation of natural resources and the elimination of waste.
8. Continuance of public employment agencies.
9. Federal experience in solving housing problems to be made available for communities.