

CIVIC IMPROVEMENT LEAGUE.—Continued.

Next considered was the resolution of Mr. W. D. Lighthall, "that the question of provincial organization be deferred pending the formation and grouping of local leagues in each province." This was agreed to.

Alderman S. Morley Wickett, of Toronto, in submitting the objects of the League, strongly urged their adoption, for they must base their work on public opinion:

The proposal was as follows:

To assist in promoting the highest interests of the city of..... and the welfare of its citizens by the study and advancement of the best principles and methods of civic improvement and development, and by securing a general and effective public interest in all municipal affairs, with special regard to such questions as the following:

(1) The form and character of local government and the application of sound economic principles in regard to the administration of municipal business.

(2) The preparation of town planning schemes for the purpose of securing proper sanitary conditions, conveniences and amenity in connection with the development of land within and surrounding the area of the city.

(3) The replanning of old districts, the removal of slum areas, the widening of public thoroughfares, and other reconstruction schemes.

(4) The conservation of the industrial and physical resources of the city, with special regard to the housing conditions and health of its citizens and the adequacy and efficiency of its public services.

(5) The preservation and increase of natural and structural beauty, the character and position of public monuments, the laying out of parks and open spaces, the planting and preservation of trees, the regulation of public advertising, and the abatement of smoke and other nuisances.

(6) The preparation of civic surveys and maps, and the carrying out of investigations into housing, transportation and industrial conditions, methods of land valuation and assessment, etc.

(7) The promotion of school and college courses in civics and civic design, of exhibitions of works of art and of architectural engineering and other designs relating to civic improvements, and of public performances of music; and the provision of facilities for the recreation and physical development of the young.

(8) The means of securing increased production from the soil within and in the neighborhood of the city by encouraging the cultivation of idle suburban land and a more widespread interest in gardening.

The above objects were adopted.

Need of Statistics.

Mr. C. A. Magrath, of Ottawa, wanted to know if there were any statistics available regarding the work that has been carried on last year in different cities to meet want and distress. He thought this should receive consideration.

This was answered by Mr. Frederick Wright, of this Journal, who stated that the Union of Canadian Municipalities have sent out enquiries to every municipality asking for information in regard to local unemployment, with good results. He also stated that the Union had tried to bring about a round table conference on the employment problem, but had failed for want of the proper support. He recommended the studying of the interim report of the Ontario Commission on Unemployment, of which Sir John Willison was chairman.

Mr. Noulan Cauchon, of Ottawa, asked if any provision had been made for a definite policy of land tenure and taxation. He submitted the following resolution to be brought before the provisional committee:

"That the committee consider the urging through united effort of legislation to secure such system of land tenure and taxation of land values as would best insure sufficient land for the housing of the people in keeping with their sanitary and economic necessities."

Provisional Committee.

A provisional committee composed of all those who were in attendance at the meeting was next appointed. Sir John Willison was made chairman and Mr. F. Pauze vice-chairman. The list include the following:

Dr. Frank D. Adams, (Commission of Conservation); Thomas Adams (Commission of Conservation); Rev. J. L. Alexander, (Alberta Town Planning Assn.); W. S. B. Armstrong, (Toronto Housing Company); Dr. Wm. H. Atherton, (Montreal Civic Improvement League); Rev. Frank D. Baldwin, (General Conference Statistician, Me-

thodist Church); G. Frank Beer, (Toronto Housing Company); G. F. Benson, (President, Montreal Board of Trade); Dr. H. L. Brittain, (Bureau of Municipal Research); H. Bragg, (St. Lambert Board of Trade); Dr. P. H. Bryce, (Canadian Public Health Assn.); A. W. Campbell, Ottawa; Noulan Cauchon, Ottawa; E. P. Coleman (Board of Trade, Hamilton); G. C. R. Conway, (Chairman, Vancouver Civic Center Committee); W. H. Dandurand, (Montreal Civic Improvement League); Frank Darling, F.R.I.B.A., (Ottawa Federal Plan Commission); Dr. E. M. Desaulniers, (M.P.P., Quebec); W. J. A. Donald, (McMaster University); J. U. Emard, K.C., (Montreal Civic Improvement League); W. Sandford Evans, (Ottawa and Winnipeg); John Firstbrook, (Toronto Board of Trade); Hon. Sydney Fisher, (Commission of Conservation); Controller H. Fisher, (Ottawa); J. J. Fitzgerald, (Sherbrooke Board of Trade); J. L. Garland, (President, Board of Trade, Ottawa); C. H. Gould, (Montreal Civic Improvement League); Hon. J. J. Guerin (Montreal Civic Improvement League); J. P. Hynes, (Bureau of Municipal Research); J. J. Kelso, (Association of Children's Aid Societies, Toronto); W. D. Lighthall, K.C., (Union of Canadian Municipalities); J. J. MacKay, (Sec., Town Planning Commission, Hamilton); Dr. Helen McMurphy, Toronto; Mr. A. A. Magrath, Ottawa; W. A. McLean, (Commissioner of Highways, Ontario); Controller Morris (Town Planning Commission, Hamilton); Douglas H. Nelles, Ottawa; F. Pauze, (President, Montreal Chambre de Commerce, vice-chairman); A. G. Parker, (Bank of Montreal, Ottawa); George Phelps, Toronto; Rev. W. H. M. Quartermaine, Renfrew; Joseph Race, Ottawa; Dr. J. W. Robertson, Ottawa; Professor Adam Shortt, Ottawa; Mrs. Adam Shortt, Ottawa; Sir Clifford Sifton, Ottawa; Louis Simpson, Ottawa; Bryce M. Stewart, Ottawa; Mayor Walters, (Town Planning Commission, Hamilton); Dr. S. Morley Wickett, (Bureau of Municipal Research; Septimus Warwick, F.R.I.B.A., Montreal; James White, (Commission of Conservation); R. B. Whyte, (Ontario Horticultural Society); Sir John Willison, (Chairman, Ontario Unemployment Commission); J. L. Woodsworth, (Canadian Welfare League); Frederick Wright, (Municipal Journal, Montreal); R. O. Wynne-Roberts, Toronto; J. S. Watters (Pres. Trade and Labour Council).

CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS.

In many cities and towns a great deal has been done to provide facilities for recreation in recent years, and there are many active playground associations which are doing admirable work. There is need, however, for more concerted action, and for an exchange of views regarding experiences in different places. In some cases local action is confined to setting aside open spaces, without any attempt to provide them with the furnishings that are needed to make them real playgrounds. No proper system of parks and playgrounds can be devised and carried out under any scheme which is not part of a comprehensive town planning scheme for a city or town, and there is room for more co-operation between local councils and organizations interested in providing facilities for recreation.

CONSERVING SMALL GARDENS.

Professor Seligman of Columbia University, in his address before the National Housing Conference at Minneapolis, urged as one reason against the untaxing of buildings that the shifting of the tax from the building to the land would tend to the building of skyscrapers for tenements and to the destroying of home gardens in the suburbs of large cities. This thought has been expressed by others who have feared that the taxing of vacant and improved land alike would tend to cover all land with buildings, to the exclusion of sufficient light and air. Professor Seligman admits that such a tax would lower the price of land; the taking of the whole land value would leave merely a nominal selling price. Why, then, as the land grows cheaper, should we expect people to use less of it? The tax of vacant and improved land alike will tend to put it to use, but use does not mean covering it with buildings to the exclusion of light and air, or, in suburbs, of gardens. The more buildings put up, the greater will be the competition for tenants; and landlords with the commercial instinct will provide light and air as an attraction for their buildings. For the same reason the builders of suburban homes will allot ground for garden and chickens.—The Public.