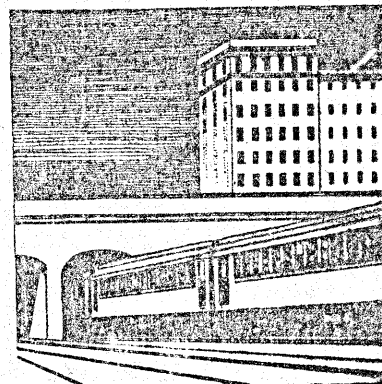
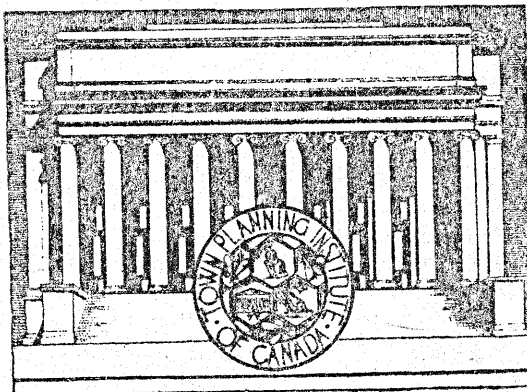
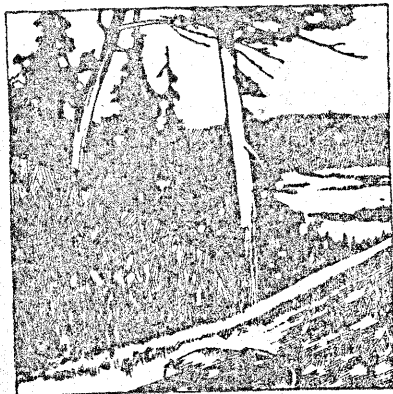


# TOWN PLANNING



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# TOWN PLANNING

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*Town planning may be defined as the scientific and orderly disposition of land and buildings in use and development with a view to obviating congestion and securing economic and social efficiency, health and well-being in urban and rural communities.*

## ALBERTA TOWN PLANNING BOARD -- FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

The first annual report of the Director of Town Planning for the province of Alberta marks a new epoch in the attitude toward planning on the part of a provincial government. That attitude is not a mere frigid concession to the relatively few people who have seen the social and economic value of intelligent planning and have pressed for enabling provincial legislation. It is not the mere passing of a Town Planning Act without any provision for staff officers who know the meaning and technique of the act and are honestly anxious to promote its adoption throughout the province. It is the attitude of men who know that a new principle of urban and rural development which has already received endorsement throughout the civilized world but which is founded upon hard thinking and a new kind of patriotism—cannot be expected to win the suffrages of the hard working masses, nor of that business section of society which sees nothing but its own immediate personal profit, without an educational agency at the centre to popularize the movement and, by every kind of reasonable appeal, persuade the people that what is being attempted will be profoundly beneficial to all sections of the community.

Mr. C. L. Gibbs, the chairman of the provincial town and rural planning board, who is himself a member of the Alberta legislature and a trained architect, writes a foreword to the report and in a few sentences marks the new attitude of the Alberta government to the town planning movement.

"In the last analysis, (he says) the successes of the Town and Rural Planning Office will depend upon the extent to which it can popularize its objectives.

Members of the Legislature and elected representatives generally can exert an invaluable influence in focussing public opinion upon the purposes and possibilities of The Town Planning Act.

It is our confident hope that the leaders in Industry, Commerce and Agriculture will bring to bear upon community building the same principles

of intelligent and conscious planning that they have found so essential to the economic success of their own plants."

### LEGISLATION MAY BE FUTILE

There was a time when the small group of town planning advocates in Canada, conscious of their helplessness in the face of a powerful tradition of reckless land uses, but undaunted in their advocacy of a more scientific and socially-effective method of land development, believed that if the provincial legislatures could be induced to place Town Planning Acts on their statute books the city councils would at once take advantage of them and the movement for better planning of villages, towns and cities would at once sweep the country. They were bitterly disappointed. The civic authorities of Canada, speaking generally, took not the slightest notice of them, and if private groups in towns and cities urged the adoption of them they were treated as social faddists and cold-shouldered into resentful silence. In some provinces, as far back as 1912, such Acts were passed. Years went by and no use whatever was made of them. Men like the late James Ewing of Montreal, who worked himself into the grave in the cause of town planning, came to say that legislation was no good at all. "Look at the Maritime provinces" he used to say, which meant that New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island had all passed town planning acts and made not the slightest use of them. But the fact remained that no progress could be made without legislative authority and Mr. Ewing's colleagues and successors in Montreal are still urging the provincial legislature, at a terrible cost of their time and talent, to give them a modern Town Planning Act, as they were 15 years ago.

In the United States it was also realized that no real progress could be made without State legislation. But there, Secretary Hoover, now President, himself an engineer, called together a national body of town planning advisers who immediately created and distributed educational literature—zoning primers,

enabling acts and the like—and by the time the States were ready to consider the question, literature from the centre had popularized and rationalized the subject, and by this time more than 800 cities, towns and villages are busy with some form of town planning.

The province of Alberta, under the leadership of its Premier, with a sympathetic legislature, some of whose members are socially alive to the meaning of planning, and technically qualified to see its scientific practicability; with an official director and staff who have become within a year a positive educational agency and who see the planning movement as a profoundly important provincial concern, which should reach out not only to established cities and towns for re-planning activities, but also to regions around these towns that have common interests, to the villages and hamlets where bad planning may permanently arrest development and prosperity, to the utilization of areas of natural beauty for provincial parks and even to individual farms where bad planning often desecrates the countryside, and to the preservation of expensive modern highways from the abuses of the advertiser and the refreshment shack, is establishing a new conception of provincial responsibility for wise planning. It is as different from the Maritime method of placing a Town Planning Act on the statute books and then practically saying to the towns "Take it or leave it, it is no business of ours", as a university education is to a foreign grammar stuck in a bookcase which a careless boy may take or leave.

#### ALBERTA POLICY EXPERIMENTAL

The Alberta policy is still in an experimental stage but its broad bases are laid and it is full of promise. The attitude of the government is generous and far-seeing in regard to the executive, so long as good work is being done. There appears to be no rigid restriction of staff activities and the number of men employed. There is also a fine policy of using the brain resources of the province and interesting as many of the permanent officials of the province as possible by assigning tasks to them which they are well qualified to perform. The University is being linked up with the work and where necessary its specialists are called in for the solution of special problems. The departments of the government, agriculture, architecture and the like are called upon for service. The results of this method must be wholly to the good. They must mean the introduction of a new humanism into quarters which often become frigidly academic. There is a wholesome sharing of responsibility and a challenge to technical initiative in new problems and an avoidance of that paralysis of professional jealousy which results from the impression that

somebody wants to do every thing himself, and if he cannot do it prefers to see it not done.

#### THAT WORD PATERNALISTIC

We have been interested to see how a policy that is sometimes called "paternalistic" would work out and have kept an open mind on the matter. We have no fondness for this ugly brick of a word which traditionalists are content to fling at all efforts in social service that seek to enlist the massed power of governments to solve problems which cannot be tackled by isolated groups or individuals.

The Alberta scheme at its inception seemed to leave little room for the private practitioner in town planning. The idea certainly got abroad that the towns in Alberta could be planned by a government department at no expense to themselves and to the exclusion of the independent planner. Under these conditions throughout the country university training in town planning would be of little use to students since there would be little chance of finding professional work in Canada and exhortations to planners to remain in their own country would be rather cruelly ironic. It is already manifest however that a government office, however well supported, cannot possibly do all the provincial work that is needed in Alberta, and that the more town planning activity it stirs up in the province the less will it be able to compass the work itself. It cannot possibly concentrate on one or two schemes and leave the rest of the province neglected, according to its basic purpose. The consequence is already manifest. The wider the work the more demand there will be for professional service and, in any case, the greater the activity of the Alberta central office and the more the whole country will be impressed with the need for planning. This should mean a very expanded field of opportunity for the professional town planner.

#### THE ALBERTA PROGRAMME

We have already set forth on various occasions the character of the Alberta program. Its basic principle is to consider the province as a unit for planning purposes and to reach out to hitherto neglected areas, to the very limits of the province, first with information and second with elementary assistance and to see, as far as is humanly possible, that new settlements, which may sometime be important towns, shall have encouragement to begin their planning right. Areas of extraordinary beauty are rightly considered as the responsibility of the province, whether they belong to private persons or not, and those valuable and expensive assets to the province, provincial roads, are not to be absolutely at the mercy of the hot dog entrepreneur and the gas pump curator—nor at the undiluted mercy of the two-by-four advertiser.

Alberta is not original in its objection to these offenses against public taste and crude exploitation of public improvement. Every civilized nation which can escape from the war terror and concentrate upon domestic welfare is demanding a new culture for public highways, where so much of the life of the people is spent. In this connection readers should take note of the Greater London Regional Plan. But Alberta is original in Canada in finding effective means to reach desired ends and in creating the right kind of agency to bring germinal ideas into fruitful action and to humanize its legislation for the social and economic benefit of the province.

#### IF MEN WERE REASONABLE!

The report is compiled by the town planning director, Mr. H. L. Seymour, who states on the first page that the aim of the movement is to harmonize urban and rural planning. He notes that the new Act was not the beginning of town planning legislation in Alberta. In 1913, at the instigation of a few pioneers, a Town Planning Act was passed but no executive was appointed to popularize the act and not a single plan was presented to the Department for approval. Calgary and Edmonton had expensive plans prepared "on their own" but apparently had not enough local enterprise to experiment with them. Under these circumstances it is common to condemn the planners but the real cause of a buried plan may often be more justly attributed to lack of enterprise on the part of local officials. City councils are usually the most difficult body to educate in town planning matters, and they have all power to do or not to do. The expense of planning, which may be roughly estimated as the cost of a cigar all round, is usually regarded as an insuperable obstacle, while the benefits and economy of planning are commonly not visualized at all. The director admits that though there is much room for encouragement at the end of the year's work, it is difficult sometimes to get over the first principles of wise planning and then to get action, even where reasoning has won the day. Certain ironic philosophers have persisted in denying that man is a reasoning animal. The plan for a garden is allright, the plan for a house is allright, but a plan for a village, town or city! Why, these things in the past have just grown, like the ploughman's family, by the Will of God. It is a sad reflection, and little compliment to the Supreme Being, that man has always been ready to attribute his own absurdities to divine but undiscoverable wisdom.

#### TOWN PLANNING COMMISSIONS MAY OR MAY NOT BE USEFUL

The director announces that 14 town planning commissions have been appointed, including the two larger cities, Calgary and Edmonton, with 10 others in the larger towns, covering 65 per cent. of the urban population. But the experienced director

knows that though this is a necessary first step to town planning activity, it is of little use unless the members of the commission are active and progressive and know something of what it is all about. He has therefore established quarterly meetings at different centres where the members of the commissions and the city officials may compare experiences and provide the wholesome stimulus that comes from exchange of ideas and competition in public service. There is no argument comparable to the argument that "others are doing it." The director's office has prepared useful literature in the shape of model zoning and building bylaws for the guidance of the commissions. The housing problems of the industrial centres have also been under advisement. It would be a great pity if the province of Alberta should allow such housing conditions to develop as are too well known in the Maritime coal regions. The larger cities are appointing full time technical officials for the promotion of town planning studies. Examples of good road planning have been provided for the city of Red Deer, and park and school plans for other centres. Some of the towns are already becoming proud of their zoning laws and seem to be getting along without the customary opposition of those real estate agents who want to build anywhere and anything that promotes their immediate personal profit irrespective of the welfare of the community.

#### GETTING AT OLD INIQUITIES

The model zoning bylaw has some original features and is attempting an agricultural classification for those tax-sale lands which were the rotten fruit of the "business acumen" of the boom period, and is thus looking to the Garden City principle of an agricultural belt surrounding urban centres of measurable size. It is also trying to meet that nuisance of such cities as Ottawa where commercial firms, such as dairy companies, do their loading and unloading in the public street, by insisting that such firms must provide rear yards for this purpose and not permanently occupy the sidewalks and streets of the city for their own convenience. Another provision looks to some control over architectural design, in its broad aspects, and the provision of "light, water-power, street and other facilities" before buildings are passed. These responsibilities the old-time land dealer was allowed to skip, to the serious disadvantage of his victims. There are also wise provisions for the prevention of dark rooms, which cities like New York have spent half a century in trying to eradicate, and so far with poor success.

Emphasis is laid upon the function of the horticultural society in the culture of towns and it is a gratifying example of the humanism of the Alberta method to find credit so generously given to voluntary agencies where credit is due. There is also an opening provided for the formation of regional planning

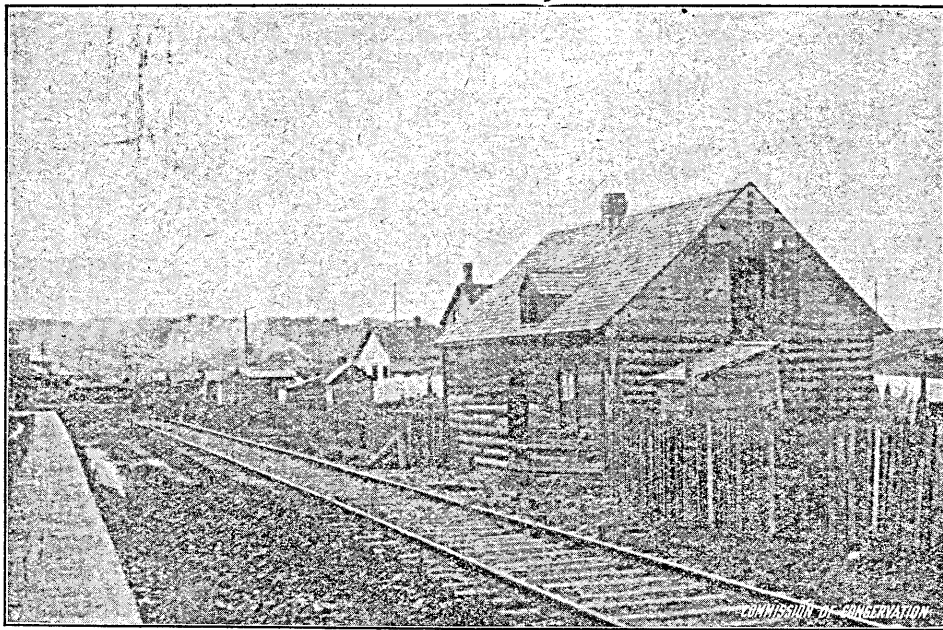
committees where adjoining municipalities have common problems which can best be solved by co-operation and often cannot be solved by weak isolation. Since the Act is not to be regarded as an Act of 1929 and forever, doubtless the larger movement of Regional Planning for big cities and their environs will emerge in due time. Canada is not yet alive to regional planning.

We have already set forth the section dealing with subdivisions, which has some very important and original features. There is to be an attempt to educate surveyors away from the rigid rectangular plan and in the direction of "site planning", and, with certain exceptions, 10 per cent of the total area of a subdivision is to be set aside for public

There is also a provision for the re-plotting of subdivisions so excellently carried out in the Point Grey, Vancouver district. The Act provides that if the consent of 60 per cent. of the owners of land and 60 per cent. of the assessed values agree, re-plotting can be legally carried out in the Alberta Act. There is an additional advantage over the British Columbia Act in that the municipality itself is included among the owners.

#### ALBERTA IS LEADING

We are unfeignedly glad to see the province of Alberta courageously experimenting in all the possibilities of modern planning, not with a dead act, but with an active programme, charged with



purposes. In the case of residential subdivisions bearing on railroads, a 150 foot park strip is required between the nearest street and the railroad right-of-way. The necessity for this will be seen in the barbarous planning represented in the accompanying illustration.

For areas outside cities, towns and villages, and where there are no zoning regulations, there must be registered with that subdivision a caveat, which is in effect a simple form of zoning by-law, to protect such subdivision until such time as it becomes an organized municipality and can make its own zoning regulations.

This means zoning for residences and protection of residences from jumble building. Everyone knows how carefully protected are the houses of the rich in most towns and how unfairly are the homes of the poor subjected to industrial and commercial invasion.

living ideas, reaching out to public welfare and reaching out to the limits of the province, and not less because we have been arguing for such a programme in these columns for many years.

No province can live entirely to itself, indifferent to what other provinces are doing. If Alberta can succeed in its programme and overcome such obsolete opposition as it is now meeting in Calgary, other provinces must become conscious that a new leadership in public service has been created and a new form of patriotism which cannot be neglected in the presence of an awakening demand for the intelligent ordering of rural and urban areas. Sometime it will be seen that such grave problems as the housing of working families, which have tormented social workers for generations, need not drift to the unspeakable tenement if the uses of land are placed under intelligent control and areas are set apart by public ordinance for the proper housing of the workers.



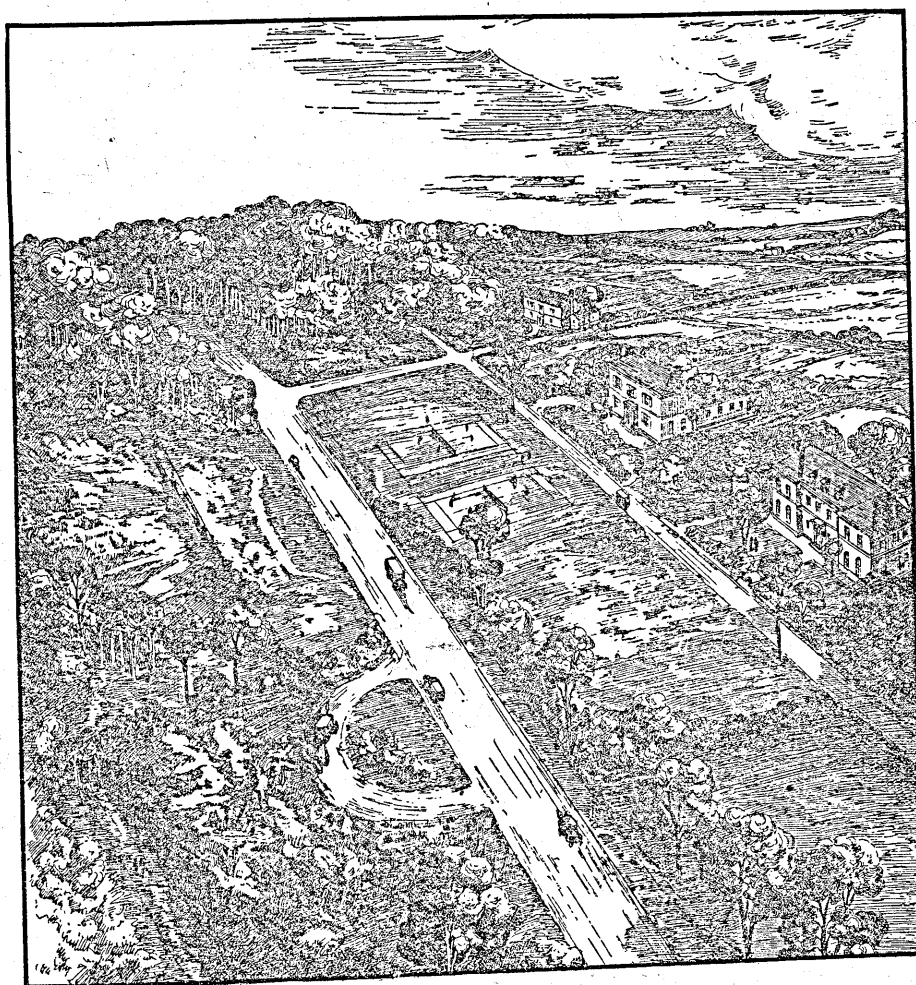
## GREATER LONDON REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

### III. ORGANIZATION AND THE "POOLING OF LANDS"

In advanced town planning countries, the argument for regional planning has been accepted as sound and the discussion concerning it now gathers around questions of ways and means for establishing it as a legal policy and removing obstacles that will be formidable enough until private owners of land are persuaded that regional planning, like town planning, so far from depriving them of privileges, will place at their service expert skill and expert thinking, which will quicken great areas of dead land with new movement and life, and create new values in which they will be bound to share.

be studied for the carrying out of plans, and especially that further legal powers may be created to overcome obstacles that stand in the way.

In our last issue, we outlined the program of the Greater London Regional Planning Committee. Canadian students will be interested to see how this committee has set about the problem of organization. The area that is under consideration covers 1,846 square miles or about 25 miles radius from the centre. It may go without saying that within this area, since England has been engaged in actual planning for thirty years, there will be many public men properly informed on the principles of planning



Parkway Treatment of Highway. (Courtesy of "American City".)

The British regional planners have come to the stage where sufficient has already been accomplished to convince the public that they are already working on the right lines, but great ideas of planning do not carry themselves in virtue of their soundness and the need of first-class organization of forces has become manifest in order that ways and means may

and in sympathy with its aims and ideals.

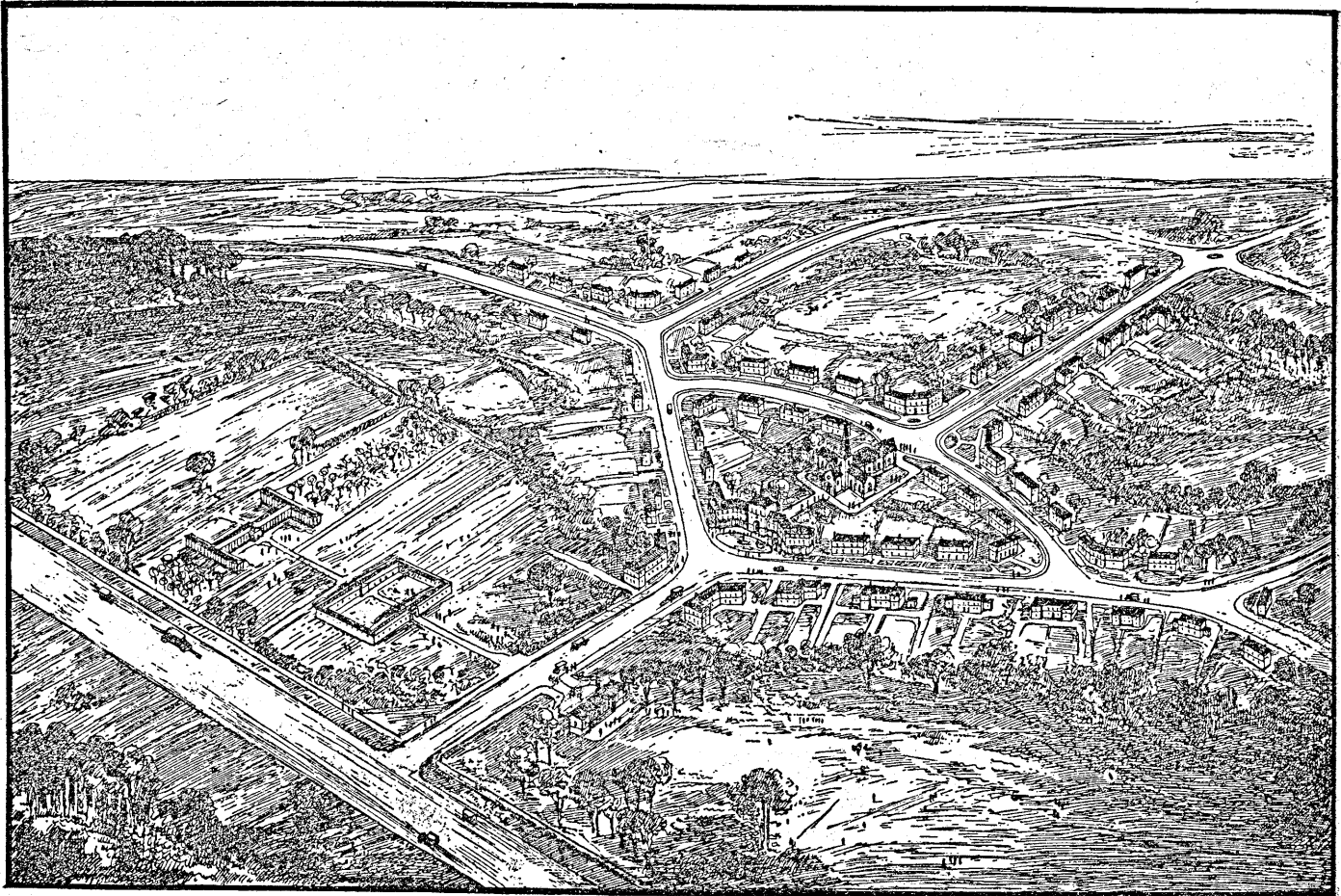
The Greater London Regional Planning Committee was constituted under the auspices of the Minister of Health who agreed to contribute the part time services of a member of his staff as Secretary, a past President of the Town Planning Institute. An Executive Committee of forty-five members was

created representing the London County Council, the City Corporation, the County Councils of six counties, the standing Joint Committee of the Metropolitan Boroughs, the County Borough Councils of more than one hundred boroughs, urban and rural councils.

The Chairman of the Committee is Sir Banister Fletcher, F.S.I., the representative of the City Corporation, and the technical adviser is Raymond Unwin, Dr. Tech., F.R.I.B.A., Past President of the Town Planning Institute, and internationally known as one of the first leaders in the town planning move-

private accommodation for the technical adviser and his staff.

The difficulty of financing such projects is being considered anxiously on this continent as well as in Europe. Some regional planning groups in the United States have achieved some success in this matter by pressing the public authorities of the regions concerned to accept this responsibility. This is the method also adopted by the Greater London Committee. The expenses of the Committee are made up by the different planning authorities in the region in proportion to the rateable value of the areas. In



Sketch of Development Separated from Road Frontage. (Courtesy of "American City.")

ment and to readers for his monumental work on the subject. Assisting him are three other technical experts who were already engaged in various schemes of regional planning within the area,—Professor Adshead, Mr. W. R. Davidge and Mr. Longstreth Thompson, all permanent members or past presidents of the Town Planning Institute. The London County Council have contributed the services of a valuer. The Minister of Health provided accommodation for the secretariat, but it was necessary to provide

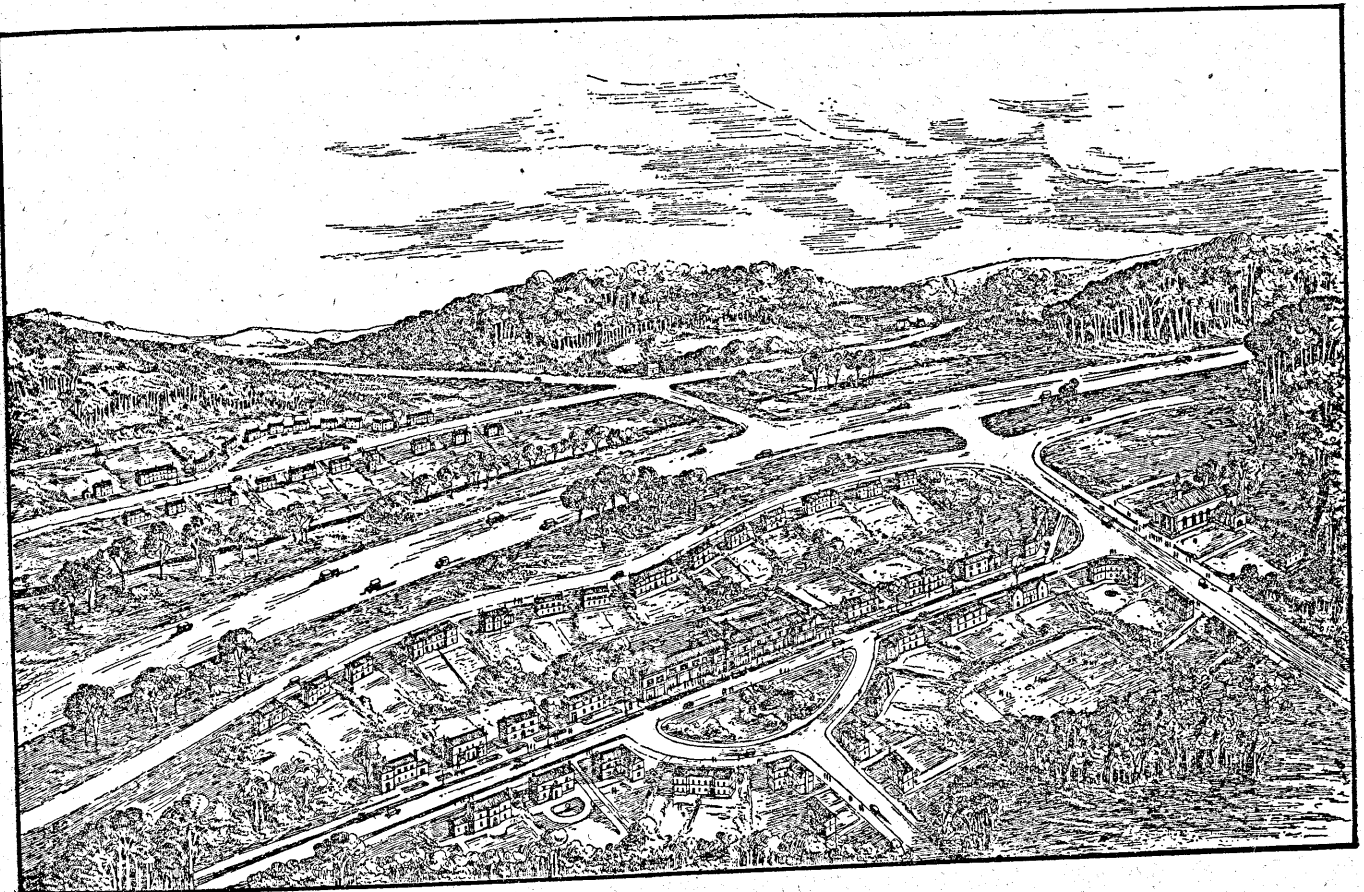
England, this is practical and legal, since town planning authorities exist all over the country and the regional appropriations will therefore be comparatively small for the preliminary expenses. The work involved in the preparation of this report during the last year has cost a little more than \$10,000, and has covered an enormous amount of investigation into "the many and complex problems presented by the tasks assigned to the committee and the various sub-committees. In particular, special and detailed

examination has been made with regard to the decentralization of industries, open spaces and green belt or belts around London and the ribbon development on the main roads."

The main committee consists of forty-five members, but, in addition, subcommittees have been formed dealing with (1) General Purposes, (2) Decentralization, (3) Open Spaces, (4) Traffic and an advisory technical subcommittee consisting of the technical officials of constituent local authorities, together with the special technical adviser of the main committee.

if those owners are regarded collectively.

An appendix on this subject of the "pooling" of lands to make practical a comprehensive scheme deals with the famous German *Lex Adickes*, which we quote at length, since the frequent reference to it in town planning literature indicates its growing importance as a solution of the difficult problem of dealing with a group of owners, some of whom may have legal power to wreck a planning scheme if they are not in sympathy with it or do not care to study its public significance.



Main Highway with no Frontage Development. (Courtesy of "American City")

Dr. Unwin is trying hard to win the intelligent support of the land-owners of the region by showing that:

Were the whole of the lands around the town in one ownership, it would be to the interests of the owner, in order to realize the full value of his estate, to make just such a plan as that which the town planner seeks to prepare for the city region; and this remains equally true in the case where there are many owners

## RE-DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN GERMANY

*NOTE: The following terms may need explanation:—*

*THE MAGISTRAT* is the executive of a town, consisting of a number of officials appointed for a term of years by the elected communal council. It exercises many functions independently of the Council by which it is appointed.

*THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE* is a part of the structure of the local State administration, which deals with police matters in the widest sense of the term and is



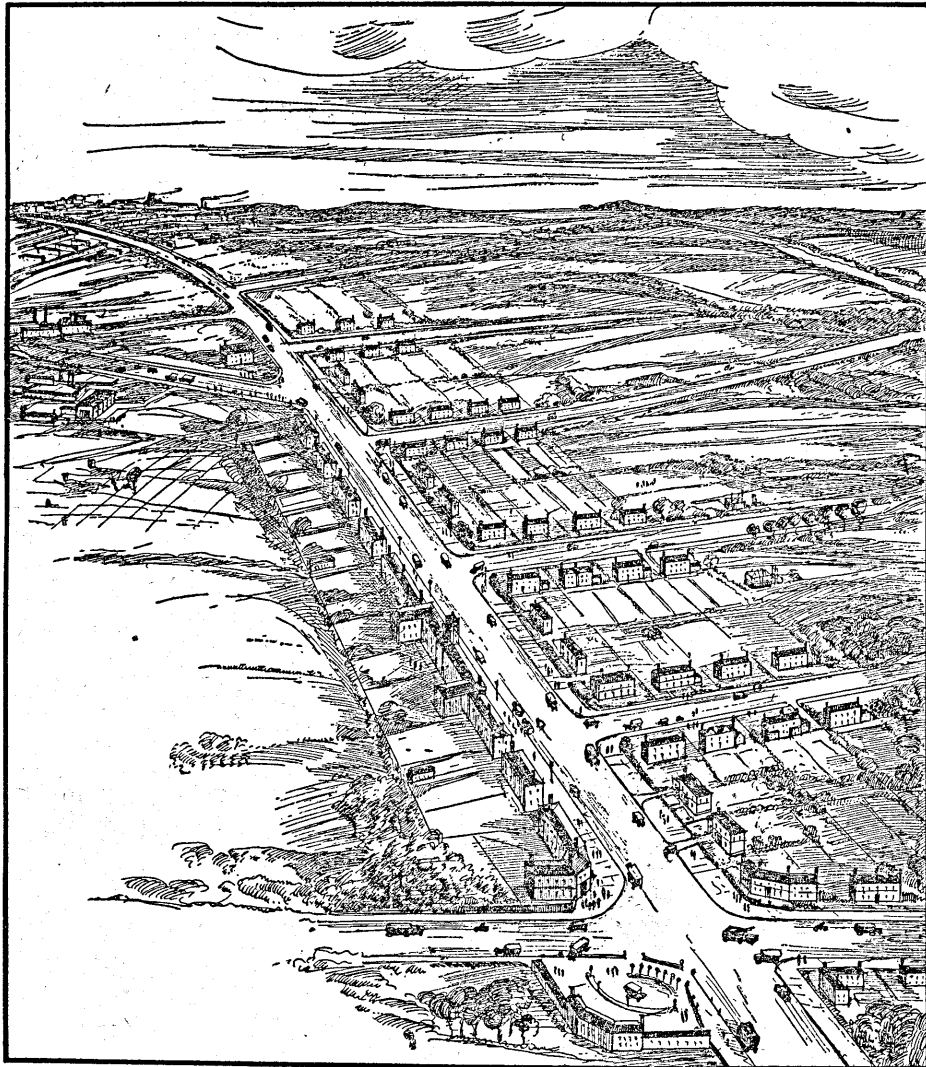
quite independent of the self-governing elected bodies. The "Government District" is an area which includes not only a number of towns and rural communes, but also several "Kreise" (Counties).

THE REGIERUNGSPRÄSIDENT is the head of a Government District: a State Official.

The re-arrangement of land ownerships is a process which has been adopted in Germany for various purposes and in various forms. The widest known of these is the "Lex Adickes," which, as a

local Act passed by the Prussian Parliament on the 28th July, 1902, applying only to Frankfurt-on-the-Main. The Prussian Housing Act, 1918, made it adoptive by any town or rural commune in Prussia, and a large number of Prussian towns have simply adopted the provisions, while in a few cases special Acts have been passed modifying these provisions in certain respects.

The basis of the procedure of the Lex Adickes is the assumption that the re-arrangement of ownerships



"Ribbon Development taking place on Highroads. (Courtesy of "American City".)

method of facilitating building development in urban districts by the re-distribution of ownerships within comparatively small areas, has shown valuable results and has been the precursor of much subsequent legislation.

#### THE LEX ADICKES

This measure, called by the name of the Burgo-master of Frankfurt who initiated it, was in fact a

within a certain area is a matter of public interest in that it will assist development of the area as building land. It is to be applied to land which is mainly unbuilt upon and for which a town-planning scheme (Bebauungsplan) has been finally approved. The area chosen must be no larger than is actually required for the purposes of the re-distribution, and individual plots which are already built upon or which are subject to some special user (e.g. market

gardens, forestry schools, parks) may be wholly or partially excluded.

Action may be taken either (a) on the application of the Magistrat following upon a resolution passed by the communal council, or (b) on the application of the owners of more than one-half of the area of the plots to be re-distributed, provided that the applicants represent more than one-half in number of the owners. Applications under either head must be reported by the Magistrat to the building police authority, a notice must be published giving full information as to the plots which it is proposed to include in the re-distribution scheme and this notice, with a plan, must be deposited for public inspection. Objections may be submitted to the Magistrat within a period of not less than four weeks.

The Magistrat must deal with all objections and report to the District Committee, which, after hearing the local police authority, finally decides whether or not the re-distribution is to take place.

If the District Committee gives the necessary sanction, the Regierungspräsident authorises the procedure and nominates a Re-distribution Committee, of which the chairman and vice-chairman must both be officials in the office of the Regierungspräsident, while its members must include at least one building expert, one highly qualified lawyer, one surveyor, and one land valuer. Members of the Magistrat may not be members of the Committee. The members have the right to be repaid their out-of-pocket expenses and the experts are entitled to fees as in any legal proceedings.

The plots of land which it is proposed to re-distribute, together with the existing public streets and "places," having been pooled together, the next step is to deduct from the pool all the land required for public streets and "places," whether existing or prospective, which is then vested in the commune or other highway authority. The remainder of the land pooled is then divided among the previous owners in the same proportion as those in which it was held prior to the pooling and in such way that the plots are usually at right angles to the streets or "places" and the plot of each owners is as nearly as possible in the same position as that which he previously held. Plots which are already built upon or which have a special value are to be, as far as possible, re-allocated to their previous owners before the re-distribution takes place.

Owners are entitled to money compensation in respect of land reserved for streets or "places," so far as this exceeds 35 per cent. of the pooled plots where the procedure has been initiated by the commune or 40 per cent. where it has been initiated by the owners.

So far as the value of a re-allocated plot is less than that of the plot of the same owner before the

pooling, the owner is entitled to money compensation in addition and such compensation is also payable in the case of the appropriation of buildings, for the loss of value which appertained to the pooled plot on account of special natural qualities or on account of expenditure thereon, or for the loss of business due to the use of a building or the special characteristics of a plot. Increment of value due to the re-distribution itself must not be taken into consideration in assessing compensation.

The compensation mentioned in the foregoing paragraph is made out of a fund formed by a "re-distribution levy" from the owners in proportion to the value of their new plots, which are assessed according to their value at the date of transfer after the re-distribution.

The Committee are required, so far as possible, to settle the re-distribution by agreement among the persons concerned in such a way as to avoid the necessity of money compensation.

Where a re-allocated plot is so small as to be unsuitable for building and no satisfactory arrangement can be made for grouping it with other plots, the Commune must pay full compensation. If any question arises as to this or if the Commune is liable for payment of compensation for reservation of land for streets and places in excess of 35 or 40 per cent. as the case may be, the Regierungspräsident must appoint a representative on behalf of the owners to defend their interests.

When the re-distribution scheme has been settled, an inquiry must be held by the Committee, at which any person concerned may make representations and the local police authority must be given an opportunity of taking part.

The final decision on the scheme is made by the District Committee. This must be publicly notified by the Magistrat, copies of the scheme, with maps and plans, must be given to the Magistrat, the owners and their representative, and all other persons concerned must be informed. There may be an appeal to the Courts, within two months, in the matter of compensation.

Before the erection of any building in Germany, a permit must be obtained from the local police authority. Where a re-distribution scheme has been made, this authority may not grant building permits for plots included in the scheme without having first given the Magistrat an opportunity to express his views, and permission may be refused or conditions laid down if the re-distribution would be made more difficult as a result of the erection of the building. No compensation is payable on account of this restriction on building.

The costs of the proceedings are borne by the Commune, except that all costs involved in clearing the land required for streets and places may be recovered by the owners.

**FURTHER GERMAN LEGISLATION**

Besides the Prussian Act of 1918, enabling any commune in Prussia to adopt the *Lex Adickes*, legislation has now been enacted in every German State based on the same principles. Measures expressly designed for this purpose only are the Bavarian Act of 1923 and the Wurtemberg Act of 1926, while the General Building Acts of Saxony, of 1900 and 1904, and subsequently amended, also make provision for re-distribution.

Moreover, the Prussian Parliament has been labouring, for some years, to pass a comprehensive Town-Planning Bill, which would include amended provisions regarding re-distribution. These latter have now been temporarily dropped, it being stated that, in view of the many legal points involved which are governed by Reich legislation, it will be necessary to deal with them in a separate Bill.

The amendments to the *Lex Adickes* introduced into the legislation of the other States and proposed in the Prussian Bill are mostly based on the view that, while the original Act was sound in principle, the procedure under it is too complicated, costly and dilatory.

The Prussian Bill also proposed to extend the system to built-on land, for purposes of sanitary improvement, for the separation of residential and industrial areas and for the reservation of building and garden land for small and medium dwellings.

The sites to be reserved for streets and places will in the case of Prussia, Bavaria and Wurtemberg, be taken from the owners at once, but in Saxony not until actually required. The percentage of land which must be given up by the owners for this purpose without compensation, which was either 35 or 40 per cent. under the *Lex Adickes*, was fixed at 30 in Wurtemberg and 35 in Bavaria, while no definite percentage was adopted in Saxony. The proposal in the Prussian Bill was to make the figure 50. To this there has been great opposition, but on the other hand it is suggested that owners whose land has increased in value owing to the re-distribution should give up all land required for streets without compensation, as in the case of the fortress of Cologne.

There is a certain controversy as to whether the re-distribution of plots should be by value or by area. The former is the law in Baden as well as in Saxony, but it is said that in both of these States proceedings under the Act have in practice been replaced by voluntary re-distribution according to area. On the other hand, in Prussia, Bavaria and Wurtemberg, where the re-distribution is nominally by area, some critics allege that it is in fact by value. Supporters of each system declare that the other is unworkable. The controversy, however, appears to be a barren one, for if value is taken as the basis, the area must necessarily be one of the factors

of the value, while, if area is taken, it is impossible to ignore the situation (corner plots, etc.) which at once brings in the element of value.

The Acts of all four States and the Prussian Bill make the commune the provisional bearer of the expense of the procedure for which, however, the owners are to be eventually liable, and the Prussian Bill, in particular, aims at covering all expenses by means of the pool. A contribution from the commune would, however, always be possible.

Under the Wurtemberg Act, which differs in this respect widely from the *Lex Adickes*, the Re-distribution Committee is appointed by the Communal Council and consists of from one to three representatives of the Council, with deputies, the same number of representatives of the landowners concerned, with deputies, a qualified surveyor and a building expert. The Committee appoints its own Chairman. The Prussian Bill adheres to the official system of the *Lex Adickes*, to which the municipal organisations are opposed.

Appeals against assessment for compensation are dealt with in different ways. Bavaria and Wurtemberg leave the appeal in respect of all money requirements to the ordinary Courts, which may grant the owner a higher payment even if it is recognised that he has been fully compensated for the land he has thrown in the pool. In Saxony the appeal to the ordinary Courts is severely restricted. Prussia permits the appeal only in so far as it represents a demand for full compensation and, with a view of ensuring that the legal force of the re-distribution scheme is not weakened, the new Bill would provide that there shall be no appeal to the ordinary Courts in respect of any matter under the Scheme.

The Bavarian Act goes, in some respects, further than any other existing legislation, since it permits re-distribution procedure to meet any needs of public traffic and also for any other cases in which it is to the interest of the community to keep land free from building. The town of Nuremberg, in particular, has taken great advantage of this Act. Since 1924, 29 re-distribution schemes covering 772 acres have been undertaken, of which 14, covering 182.42 acres, have been completed. A number of open spaces have been acquired without expense to the municipality and a special instance is that of the provision of a tramway-siding, the acquisition of land for which was found impracticable by any of the ordinary methods, but was successfully effected, without payment of any compensation, by means of re-distribution.

**CAN ANY MEMBER SPARE VOL. 1, NO. 6 ?**

The number of this journal for October 1921, (Vol. 1, No. 6) is out of print and is much needed by the Executive to make up complete sets for sale.

If any member can spare a copy of this issue and would send it to the Editor he would be contributing substantially to the support of the Institute.

## THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN THE UNITED STATES

### SITTING ON A DOCTRINE

In December of last year Mr. Lawrence Veiller, editor of "Housing", that excellent medium of world news on efforts to establish civilized housing conditions for working families of small income, but critical always of government assistance to this end, contributed an article to the *British Town Planning Review* entitled "The Housing Problem in the United States". He has re-issued this article as a booklet with the American National Housing Association.

Canadian thinking on this important question is largely confined to a few socially-minded town planners who believe that this problem can only be solved by scientific control of the uses of land and the fine band of social workers—mostly women—who come in personal contact with the tragic results of the failure of "private enterprise" to supply decent homes for those working families who have no margin to their incomes and can only take refuge in rented rooms of poor quality, where, as Mr. Veiller says, the word "home" is a mockery. When these fine women tell their pathetic stories at conferences and ask if we have the right to use the word "civilization" with such conditions hiding behind what is being called "fabricated optimism" and "prosperity propaganda" they are apt to run across the doctrine that this is the field of private enterprise and any release of the massed power of governments—for scientific demonstration of how the problem could be solved, such as by the controlled use of land, by the cutting away of parasitic profiteering, by the responsible use of government credit controlled by socially-minded and technically-qualified men—is unorthodox on this continent, though it is quite orthodox on the European continent and, as a practical and indeed inevitable means to meet a deplorable situation, has built millions of houses in Europe for the low-paid wage-earners whose housing needs are not being met on this side of the Atlantic.

When these women ask if the orthodox doctrine has built any houses for low renting in decent environment for families of lower incomes the answer is in the negative. There is no money in them. Even Mr. Veiller, the chief apostle of this doctrine in the American field of exposition, has to admit that few houses have been built for this large section of the American population since the war. There have been many conferences but few houses built for the working poor. Some of them, clearly, are ceasing to have children, for the birth rate is decreasing.

But the orthodox doctrine must be maintained, according to Mr. Veiller, even if it builds no houses for the working poor. "The observance of these principles (says Mr. Veiller) is essential to the

preservation of a democracy". Yet democracies are surviving and are acting strongly on the conviction that, since private enterprise has fallen down on the job of providing decent homes for the working poor the massed power of the democracy—for its own preservation—must be utilized to solve an otherwise insoluble problem.

Under the heading "A Land of Private Enterprise" Mr. Veiller writes:

It is obvious, therefore, that the United States is a land of private enterprise and that government housing plays no part in the solution of its housing problems.

The motto of the American people is to keep government out of private business and to keep private business out of the government. The observance of these principles is essential to the preservation of a democracy.

These words were first written for British readers. Some of those readers who have toiled so hard,—first to get a national housing movement going, second to rescue it from profiteering "private enterprise" which at one time doubled the normal price of houses, and, finally, to reach the present state of comparative efficiency and develop a national program with fair prices for perhaps a million more houses till the whole nation is properly housed—we can imagine smilingly replying: "This is also a land of private enterprise—and of *public enterprise* as well. We are discharging a debt to a class of men which has not had a square deal in the making of British wealth. Our conception of democracy is leading us this way. There is danger in plutocracy. Moreover, nearly half of our million and a half houses have been built by private enterprise. Private enterprise had to be shown how to do the job and had to be shown to do the job at a reasonable profit. We, too, had a doctrine like yours. We have scrapped it. It produced no houses for the working poor."

We have to doubt whether the American outlook on the housing problem is so uniform as Mr. Veiller represents. There are some anxious and earnest students, such as Dr. Edith Elmer Wood, who would be glad to see in the United States some whole-hearted experiment in European method. There is also an influential group in Detroit which believe that government machinery, at any rate, could be used to make possible, on business lines, the acquisition of homes by the lower paid wage earners at half the present prices and the *American Survey*, we notice, looking at what is actually being achieved in Europe, is calling upon America to "wake up" and stating that "America, with every civilized country, should take steps to meet the housing shortage." Says *The Survey*:



Since the World War, London has erected new homes and modern tenements for nearly 200,000 families. Vienna has built apartment houses, providing quarters for 45,000 families, and plans by 1932 to complete its program with an additional 15,000 apartments. By 1937, Paris hopes to complete its housing projects providing new homes for 130,000 families. Since 1924 Berlin has provided homes for 100,000 families and plans to continue its construction program at the rate of 20,000 apartments each year until sanitary homes are available for its entire population. These are but a few of the housing programs being put more or less speedily into operation in European cities. It is true government subsidy in one form or another is the basis of these accomplishments. Government subsidy is not a popular method of promotion in America. But the same problem of insufficient houses which meet approved standards, is here just the same. To subsidize or not to subsidize, that is but one aspect of the question. If America is not willing to accept government subsidy as the answer, it must look elsewhere for a solution, for housing for one hundred per cent of the population is a fundamental need—a need that America with every civilized country should take steps to meet.

#### "NATION WIDE EFFORT"

When we turn to a survey of what is being done in the United States to meet the need, under the title "Nation Wide Effort" we are rather surprised at the note of satisfaction in Mr. Veiller's "private enterprise" paragraph and at the temerity of Mr. Veiller in presenting such a "nation-wide effort" to a nation which has built modern homes for about six million people for immediate occupancy at a rental of \$8.50 a month, while Mr. Veiller and his orthodox confreres have been sitting on a doctrine. It is true that Britain has created an enormous debt, but much of this will be liquidated by the normal payments of the beneficiaries and at least the expenditure will be more profitable than building battle ships at the cost of forty million dollars apiece. Moreover, in the case of the American Farm Loan of five hundred millions dollars, it seems that the federal government of the United States does not object to take part in private business when the emergency seems to demand it. When we come to read Mr. Veiller's record of what has been done under the influence of his proud doctrine, we find a few efforts at national housing under pressure of the War which were promptly squashed with the return of peace and the ascendancy of the national doctrine. (Strange how doctrines collapse when the rich are in danger as well as the poor!)

Under the title "Nation Wide Effort", we find listed the work of the National Housing Association,

which is an educational association solely, sternly opposed to government assistance; the Better Homes movement, whose aims are also highly educational but whose actual achievements Mr. Veiller does not announce; a Government Housing Bureau which Mr. Veiller says is largely concerning itself with city planning and the zoning movement, again highly educational and wholesome; a national City Planning organization, once more, a very important educational body; a realtors' organization, which is of course a business association mainly interested in its own affairs; the great Zoning movement in the United State has an indirect effect upon housing but it builds no houses; the Tenement House law, which owes so much to Mr. Veiller's initiative, but builds no houses; some model tenement blocks of excellent quality have been built but "not of course for the lowest paid element of the workers or even for the so-called common labourer"; Building and Loan Association which have been directly provocative of much building in providing funds and on a scale that certainly strikes the attention, but even here, there are multitudes of workers who are not reached because they have no margin to their incomes and cannot find the "\$500 down" which is necessary to take possession of a house. In this connection, Mr. Veiller says that "nowhere in the world can there be anything found, even remotely suggesting a parallel" to the achievements of the American building societies. Yet the English Building Society has been an institution for fifty years and, if its aggregate resources do not reach seven billion dollars, they are at least stated to reach one billion dollars and, allowing for difference in population, these resources must be considered as "suggesting a parallel". Indeed, in our last issue, our President, Mr. Dalzell, stated that the Halifax Building Society, with assets over \$275,000,000 is the largest individual building society in the world.

There is no doubt that houses are being built in Philadelphia and other cities, assisted by the building societies. But the lowest in price involve a cash payment of \$500. (The prices are always stated at \$3990.00 and the "payment down" at \$490.00) but many of them do not compare with the British house costing about \$1600. Our judgment of many of them from personal examination led us to classify them as birth control houses. They were provided with garages, but it is admitted that at least four out of every five persons in the United States do not possess automobiles. This accounts for a population of 16,000,000 for whom even these birth control houses are out of reach.

And it is just for these people that the British scheme of government-assisted housing has been carried out, as a debt owed to them from past economic exploitation and as a health measure for the nation and it is this class, by admission, for whom

American housing is making no provision whatever in spite of all the educational societies that exist.

The fact is there not enough money in it for profiteering purposes and if American housing for the 16,000,000 who cannot afford motor cars has to wait for the economic move and solely depend upon it, there seems to be little chance that the conditions which Mr. Veiller deplors will be radically changed and, at this date, there does not seem to us, considering the seriousness of the problem, very much room for complacency. The conditions will certainly not be changed by sitting on a doctrine and refusing to call in massed power when individuals and educational groups can do little but complain and preach.

There are sections of Mr. Veiller's booklet which we do not find consistent or even coherent but the humane statement of the deplorable housing conditions of some parts of the great cities, we do admire. Mr. Veiller wrote this article for the December issue of the *British Journal* and has reprinted it, so far as we have observed, entire. Under the sub-heading "The Present State of the Nation", he says that at present United States is enjoying a general well-diffused stable prosperity; wages are high, the purchasing power of the people is at a stage that it has never before reached in the history of the world and yet, during these last three or four months, American journals have been telling us that five or six million unemployed are walking the streets and that "fabricated optimism" is no use. Says *The American Republic*:

Financially, the United States can of course afford to build a billion dollars' worth of ships. We are now, as our Fourth of July orators never tire of telling us, the greatest and richest nation on the earth. Yet the present moment, when five or six million unemployed are walking the streets, when there are five million illiterates and fifteen million semi-illiterates in the country, when such fundamental industries as agriculture and textiles are gravely depressed, when we so badly need roads and schools and a whole new system of penal institutions, seems a poor moment to take even a billion dollars of the national income and pour it down such a sink hole of unproductive activity as building ships merely in order to change theoretical parity into actual equality. Certainly, if we are to do that, the big-navy people will have to come forward with more convincing arguments in its favor than we have yet heard.

On the same page on which Mr. Veiller tells us of the "stable prosperity" of the United States and the high wages and the high purchasing power of the people, he informs us that:

With the war there came a greatly decreased purchasing power of money, resulting in higher cost of building, along with higher cost of all

commodities. Even today the dollar is worth but 66 cents compared with what it was worth in 1913. That is, it will buy to-day but 66 per cent of what it bought sixteen years ago. Along with this decreased purchasing power of money there has also been both a normal and abnormal increase in the cost of building.

Official statistics made public within the year show that the cost of the average small home in the United States has increased 19 per cent. during the past six years and is still climbing. These conclusions are reached as a result of an annual survey, made by the United States Bureau of Labour Statistics, of building operations in cities of the country having a population of 25,000 to 100,000. It is not without significance that during this same period wage rates in the building trades advanced 24 per cent. [Theodore Dreiser says that union labour had to indulge in 367 strikes in the first three years of the war to obtain a 20% increase of wages]. In this increased cost of building labour many thoughtful observers find the reasons for the ever mounting cost of building construction. This increase in the cost of building is out of keeping with increased costs of other commodities. Official figures show that since 1913, food prices in the country have increased by 59 per cent.; clothing by 65 per cent.; and fuel and light by 81 per cent.; house furnishings by 106 per cent.; while building costs increased by 110 per cent.

From an official survey of building conditions in 294 cities in the year 1926 covering all sections of the country, it appears that the average cost of a one-family dwelling at that time was \$4684, as compared with \$4567 in 1925 and \$4314 in 1924. It is thus evident that the cost of building, though we are 10 years away from the War is still on the increase."

The Mayor of Evansville, Indiana, writes to *The New Republic* to say that he is overwhelmed by men seeking employment. He has 200 employees under him and approximately 4,000 men are seeking these positions which they cannot have unless the present employees are displaced. The whole thing, he says, is a nightmare.

I have had applications from college men, accountants and school teachers who are willing to accept the lowest paid type of employment to earn bread and clothing for their families. Very few of our industries are running full time or with their full quota of labour. I would gladly recommend to our boards that they are to undertake unusual developments in order to give employment, but we stumble into the fact that our budget funds were not provided for such improvements.

A section of Mr. Veiller's booklet asks if the American home is disappearing and shows that in

six years, from 1921 to 1927, the proportion of American families leaving the home for the multiple-family dwelling was doubled. 51 percent of the annual increase in the urban population is being housed in some form of dwelling other than single family home. The size of the family is constantly decreasing yet Mr. Veiller tells us that "there is every type of house, for every kind of person, for every need, and for the purchasing power of the various kinds of householders." Then follows the statement from the Official Report of the New York Committee on Plan and Survey, appointed by the Mayor of New York as "an accurate portrayal of the conditions that exist in that particular city":

No truthful person can say that the great mass of the people of New York are either adequately or well housed.

A third of the city's population—over two million people—live under unsatisfactory conditions, many under distressing conditions, some under disgraceful conditions. For thousands home is a mockery. It consists of two or three small rooms of which but one is adequately lighted—and often, even not that one—and none of which is adequately ventilated; rooms that in the hot summer days and nights become an inferno of torture to little children, the sick and the weak.

For the persons living in these homes there is little privacy; there are no reticences; they must share the processes of living with other families; they must use a common water closet; they must get all the water they use from a common faucet in the public hall; the fire peril menaces them at all times—at any hour of the day or night they may be called upon to leave all and flee for their lives.

This is the state of two million people, over a third of the city's population, viz., those who live in the so-called "old law" tenements, or those erected before the tenement house law of 1901 worked its beneficent changes.

Half of the city's six million people, it is true, have the benefit of living in the "new law" tenements, viz., those built under the law enacted in 1901, and may be said to enjoy rooms that are moderately well-lighted and ventilated and have proper sanitation, such modern conveniences as running water, bath tubs and modern plumbing, such privacy as can be expected in multiple-dwellings, and comparative safety in case of fire, with at least a fair chance for escape in that event.

But great as the advance is in the conditions under which these three million people live, as contrasted with the less fortunate two million who live in older buildings, the homes of all the people in this city are still far from what the homes of the people should be in a great city like New York.

There is neither adequate light nor sufficient ventilation in most dwellings. Back yards and courts which furnish all the light and air that many rooms receive are still much too small—too narrow to admit sufficient light or a free sweep of air. Such open spaces, sufficient in size for buildings of low height, cease to be so when buildings are erected to a great height.

Buildings are much too high. Such buildings shut off the light and air not only from their occupants but destroy neighborhood amenities. One tall building in New York at noon casts a shadow one-sixth of a mile in extent. The number of high buildings is steadily increasing. The tendency is to build higher and higher.

No laws thus far enacted restricting the height to which buildings may be erected have dealt adequately with the situation. Apartment houses housing many people are now being erected to heights of fifteen or more stories. Were a serious fire to break out in such buildings, under certain circumstances, the fire department would be helpless to stop its progress, and there might be a great calamity.

With high buildings increasing in number, existing public open spaces have become inadequate, hemmed in as they are by canyon walls.

The city is becoming a sunless city. Few rooms now receive the direct rays of the sun, and many never receive them at any hour of the day or at any season of the year.

The population through intensive occupancy of the land is becoming much too densely housed.

The concentration of population that is found in many parts of the city is unparalleled. Nowhere else in the civilized world can similar conditions of over-crowding be found—or even conditions remotely approaching them."

And with all the work of the organizations listed by Mr. Veiller he has to admit that, "In most parts of the country there have been few houses built since the war for the occupancy of the working man. He has to be contented with the older houses, houses that have been vacated by more prosperous people."

It has been the custom, for many years, for the American writer to declare, much to the surprise of visitors, that there were no slums in America. In this pamphlet, it is admitted that "Some cities of America not only have developed slums but have the worst slums in the civilized world." These are not great in extent, we are informed, and can be remedied. Yet Mr. Veiller tells us that slum clearing in New York could only be undertaken at tremendous cost and that to acquire one ordinary city block in the tenement section in a city like New York covering an area of 200 ft. x 600 ft., costs about a million dollars.

We have given extended attention to this subject once more because it seems to us that the tremendous significance of the European movement to provide decent home accommodation for the multitude of families of small income for immediate renting within their small means is being smothered on this continent by a sterile doctrine of the rights of private enterprise to supply a social need which private enterprise has no intention of supplying because there is not enough money in it and a doctrine which makes the term "private enterprise" an ironical absurdity. What is needed on this continent to make decent life possible for families of low income is public enterprise, massed power that will acquire land or control its uses in the interests of civilized home life for the multitudes of working families who are doing the hard work of the world and cut away the adventitious profiteering that is driving such families into overcrowded tenements and the cast-off dwellings that have already served their normal life.

## News and Notes

### TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION FOR REGINA

The City Council of Regina passed a bylaw on May 1 establishing a Town Planning Commission. The Commissioners named are L. A. Thorntan, P. H. Portnall, F. N. Darke, J. N. de Stein and A. C. Garner. The stated duties of the commission are to prepare a town planning scheme which we gather, will incorporate the zoning bylaw of 1927, with necessary amendments.

It is many years since we began to chronicle the aspirations of a group of intelligent citizens in Regina to do something worth while in creating a Plan for Regina. Some of them have given an enormous amount of unpaid labour to this end, only to have their work neglected and scrapped by successive city councils who could not see the importance of it.

Regina was one of the first Canadian cities to order a plan and pay for it with the tax-payers' money and then file it away as so much waste paper. We seem to have heard that it was considered as too imaginative, but imagination is doing great things in the planning world and a little extravagance in imagination is better than none at all. We are constantly asked to bow down before the superior intelligence of business men, but business men ruined Wren's plan of London and L'Enfant's plan of Washington because they could not see far enough and the main difficulty of the Canadian planner is to have to submit to the control of business men who can see no farther than their own lot and their own store. It is time to recognize that the modern planner is a first-class business man whose practice it is to study the welfare of a whole community and to

find room to play for children and adults and some beauty for tired minds as well as expansion room for industries, convenient areas for commerce and room for modern traffic to move at reasonable speed. The planning of the past has failed badly enough in all these directions to warrant an intelligent study on the part of public officials of the aims and purposes of modern planning.

Regina should aim at something more comprehensive than a timid zoning bylaw. Study of the Vancouver Plan will show that the section on zoning is only reached at page 211 and is only one of half a dozen major sections of the Plan and is rightly considered as not the first but almost the last thing to be considered. Before it come Major streets, Transit, Transportation, Public Recreation and following it come Civic Art and Execution of the Plan.

And Regina should also look at the plain fact that the planning of a city is no spare-time job for anybody. The Vancouver Commission spent an enormous amount of time in testing out the various ways to get town planning done. They decided to appoint a special firm, which had done this kind of work many times and knew how to do it quickly and efficiently. They decided that the work should be done at a certain cost and within a given time. The work was completed well within the time. The commission has had enough to do as a mediator between the planning firm and the city council and as an educational and publicity body to keep the people informed, and its most important work is still to be done—to see that the plan is carried out and not filed among forgotten documents.

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### THE FRUIT OF TOWN PLANNING—IN HOLLAND. WHERE PUBLIC ENTERPRISE HAS WON OUT

"Once again the genius that created these towns is active and alive. It is building, and already it has a tradition. The Dutch went through their century of pomposity and tasteless profusion, as we did. It is over. The new technique of construction has stimulated their architects to think out their problems afresh. As one goes about in the new quarters of The Hague and Amsterdam, one suddenly realizes that men are personifying themselves again in brick and concrete. In the nervous lines of these buildings one meets, as it were, a sentient creature. It might almost be some unfamiliar animal, its muscles rippling in movement under its responsive hide. These buildings are not repetitions of dead men's thoughts, nor is there the awkward self-consciousness of a raw revolt. This modern art has manners and self-control.

"As I grew familiar again with these Dutch towns, something began to strike me even more forcibly than the occasional buildings which showed unusual talent. I became aware that the new suburbs were



growing under a plan. Everything had shape and harmonious relation. Through a wide archway one would pass into a pleasant square with its garden and its sandpit for children's games. The sky-line had been studied. The buildings, though far from monotonous, were all in the same twentieth century style. Midway in the long side of the rectangle was a school. It was part of the pattern. With rather more ambition, and on a greater scale, it repeated the style of the houses. It was, so to say, a public home, rather more beautiful and splendid than the private homes, yet cast in the same mould. At the far end was a church, which astonished and delighted me. It, too, had come from the same mould. Yet with a modernity at once reverent and bold, it conveyed, in a wholly novel way, something of the suggestion of Gothic, it aspired, it rose above the earth.

"This church set me asking questions. How did it always happen that the public buildings conformed with such perfect harmony to the style of the houses? Did it never happen that pastor or congregation wished to erect a conventional church in the fatigued style of nineteenth century Gothic? My companion smiled, and seemed at first hardly to understand my question: "No, it simply would not be tolerated." At last, after many questions to him and others, I probed the secret. Under the building bylaws, every city in Holland, even every village, has its "Schoonheids-commissie" (Æsthetic Committee), on which sit architects who have the right to censor building plans on grounds of good taste. They may reject a plan, or require its alteration, not merely because it is structurally or hygienically defective, but frankly because it is ugly or vulgar, or even because it fails to harmonize with the buildings old or new, whose neighbor it will be. The employment of an architect is obligatory. Gradually, and not without a struggle, a tradition of taste has been formed, which is among the most hopeful manifestations of the modern European mind. Nor is the great past forgotten. Each town has its register in which is entered every old house that has any architectural merit, and the Municipal Council may forbid alteration or demolition. As for these spreading suburbs of workers' or middle-class dwellings, built either by the municipality or by co-operative they are all designed on a plan and most of them are associations, which enjoy a state subsidy, on condition that they make no profit." H. N. Brailsford.

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#### 856 CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES UNDER ZONING LAW IN U. S. A.

On January 1, 856 cities, towns and villages in the United States had adopted zoning ordinances, covering a population of 39,000,000. Forty-seven states and the District of Columbia had granted zoning authority to municipalities.

While it is being widely recognized by United States planners that zoning is but one part of a town planning programme and signs are everywhere manifest that American thinking is passing on to comprehensive planning, this amazing record of the adoption of elementary planning by one third of the American people should convince Canadian city councils that a peaceful revolution in the concept of town development is proceeding to the south and that at the rate of about a hundred towns a year. In the state of New York there are 143 zoned cities, towns or villages; in New Jersey, 104; California, 80; Illinois, 78; Massachusetts, 68.

In all these cities, towns and villages the principle has been accepted that the public authority has the right, as it has now the power, to designate certain areas, whether in private or public ownership, for different social uses such as residence, commerce, industry and that this is the only way to ensure the development of an orderly and efficient town and arrest the jumble of buildings that destroy the character of a town, just as bad manners, ugly behaviour and careless clothing destroy the character of an individual.

In these cities the arguments that are now holding up the zoning movement in Calgary—such as that zoning will arrest building development and that every land-owner must be allowed to do as he likes with his land irrespective of public welfare, public convenience and public amenity—have been scrapped for a decade, the former because results have proved it untrue and the latter because it ignores the rights of the community and has been responsible for all the ugliness, inefficiency and squalor which can only be mitigated at public cost and in many cases can never be cured.

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#### SASKATOON CONVERSATIONS ON THE ZONING BY-LAW

The City of Saskatoon has given third reading to its zoning bylaw and has met no further trouble than the usual difficulties of adjustment where mixed residential and commercial building has been allowed to develop. According to the newspaper account these difficulties have been freely discussed by the city council, the town planning commission and the residents concerned in a reasonable fashion, and there seems to have been no emergence of the old-stock arguments against zoning as such. This means education to the view that a community, for its own protection against reckless building, which creates obstacles to public convenience and welfare, has the right to designate certain areas for certain uses, whether those areas are private or public property. And this itself is a great step forward towards community planning, though it has long been shadowed in the building restrictions that have

been so freely asked and granted to the more expensive residential properties in most growing towns. No one but a snob or a business maniac could argue that while the residences of the well-to-do should receive protection from the intrusion of commerce or industry, the homes of working families should take their chances in jumble development.

In the newer towns in England, called garden cities, these controversies concerning mixed building areas do not arise, since zoning was completed before any buildings were erected. The smaller towns of Canada might save themselves an enormous amount of trouble and cost, and lay the foundations of future prosperity, by designating their areas at an early stage. For some time to come the main difficulty and source of controversy and irritation in the planning movement in Canada will be due to the fact that it did not begin early enough. It may seem impractical to ask the local authorities of a small village or town to designate its areas for future development, yet this is just what the villages of the United States are beginning to do. Observation of the planning and replanning difficulties of the larger towns and a little thinking and foresight are convincing them that the most sensible step they can take is to select their areas for various uses and to establish the principle of community control for land uses. There can be no orderly development, no culture of the idea of community good manners contained in the word "urbanity" until the owner of land can be persuaded or compelled to consider the common good in the erection of buildings. In Holland there have been created what amount to committees of civic art to whom all new building plans must be submitted before they can be erected. They must be, not only in the right place in relation to other building, but they must also satisfy a reasonable standard in appearance. It will be seen there has been considerable movement away from the idea that the owner of land owes no responsibility to anyone but himself in the erection of buildings.

It is interesting to see that there were only three objectors to a clause in the Saskatoon bylaw which intends to put an end to building separate houses on 25 ft. lots. There is also an effort to veto apartment builders from building up to the property line, thus creating canyon streets and dark dwelling rooms and leaving no room for the traffic necessities of their own tenants—who will inevitably claim monopolist rights in the public street.

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#### TORONTO'S NEW CITY PLAN

A new "city-wide" Plan of Toronto—but apparently leaving the "down-town" section, the area covered by the rejected Plan of the Advisory Commission, in the realms of controversy,—has been

presented to the gladiatorial City Council by the departmental heads.

We quote from *The Canadian Engineer*:

Suggested major improvements, city-wide in their scope, were presented recently to the Toronto City Council in a master plan for street extensions and street widenings. These were accepted by members of the council, proponents and opponents of town planning in the last municipal election, as answer to the criticism of inactivity.

The plan was presented by R. C. Harris, works commissioner, on behalf of departmental heads, who frankly admitted it was a skeleton only, and that, except in the case of improvements which have been endorsed by council, neither detailed surveys nor estimates had been prepared. To make the necessary estimates would require a special staff at work for at least two years.

More than one hundred suggestions on street extensions and widenings were presented by members of Council when they assumed office, and all have been incorporated into the plan, which will give councillors the opportunity of justifying their stewardship when they return to their wards.

The major improvements include Dundas Street East from Bolton Avenue; Yonge Street widened north of Bloor Street; widening of Queen Street from Soho to Sherbourne Street; extension of Bay Street to St. Clair Avenue; the extension of Royce Avenue easterly; the extension of Richmond Street from Jarvis Street to George Street; the extension of Avenue Road to York Mills Bridge, and extensions already dealt with.

Looks as though Toronto has a great programme of town planning—controversy ahead for the next few years and a great band of aldermen in training as professional planners. "Reccurds" will now take on the character of authorship. "I was the author of the Paradise road extension!"

We quote from *The Mail & Empire* what seems to be an excellent example of dramatic reporting:

"This is not a master plan—it is a partial master plan. It does not embrace an important area. What I consider unjustifiable neglect may introduce an element of politics which will be very undesirable."

"The plan is better than I expected," said Controller Robbins. "I think it goes plenty far enough. I won't support the amendment because it refers to projects which the citizens rejected last Jan. 1."

Mayor Wemp was taken to task by Alderman Ramsden for having had the downtown area left out with the purpose of forcing a division, for political reasons, upon the master plan. He for one, however, would foil such designs by voting for the plan even though the amendment which

he had seconded were defeated.

"I shall be glad to support the report," he said, "which the mayor has brought in, even though he has not consulted his board of control—even though it is a one-man report.

"In this amendment we are not asking you to adopt anything for the downtown, we are not asking you to commit yourselves to anything. We are only asking that you give this section the same chance as other sections. We want a full measure of town planning."

"If the citizens had been offered such a plan as this," declared Controller Pearce, "on the same financial basis as the town plan, there can be no doubt it would have carried. I hope the financing recommendations will be brought in soon. If they provide for a period of 25 or even 40 years never again will this city be faced with the traffic problems confronting us today."

"I am amazed at the prolonged discussion which my amendment has provoked," said Alderman Factor. "I thought it would be adopted unanimously. I am more than amazed at Mayor Wemp's evident determination to bring about a division of this council on so important a matter.

"On Jan. 1, 27,277 people voted for the concentrated town plan. It was defeated by a margin of only 2,403 out of a total vote of more than 55,000. To say the downtown plan was defeated decisively it to depart from the truth. I can't see why any member opposes the amendment unless it is to create a political division on a civic improvement. I am heartily in favor of the report as far as it goes, but I don't want the heart of the city neglected."

Alderman Burnese: "Additional recommendations which anybody may want can be brought to the works committee later."

Alderman Beamish: "I guess this is a fine plan. There seems to be something in there to make people in all the different sections of the city feel pretty good. No doubt it includes all the things which aldermen from the various wards have written into it. As a partly completed plan it is pretty good—it's good propaganda, I suppose, a little early in the season, possibly but here it is.

"I am sorry that the mayor has re-opened an old sore by his attitude on the downtown section. Council should adopt the amendment. It cannot do any harm and it might do a lot of good."

Alderman MacGregor: "This plan is exactly what the people have been calling for."

The final judgment quoted should make the planning committee feel, with "the different sections of the city," "pretty good"—though it must be doubtful whether they can feel that it goes "plenty far enough". But there is the consolation that "ad-

ditional recommendations which any body may want can be brought to the works committee later". The planning committee have wisely demanded a couple of years to work out the cost of the new plan. By that time the Toronto method of planning a great city, with the technical planners "on tap" for "recommendations which anybody may want" should have tried itself out. None of your Haussmann methods at Toronto! It will be remembered that Baron Haussmann, planner of Paris, got so tired of councils that he proposed to the Emperor that there should be a committee of two—the Emperor and himself. The Emperor should be chairman of the committee and Haussmann the executive. So Paris was planned and is now the glory of the world.

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#### CHURCHILL AND ITS LAND POLICY

Churchill, the Port of the new Hudson Bay railway, will, in all probability, be open for settlement some time next year. There is general expectation that the orgy of land speculation, which has marked so many examples of public enterprise and public expenditure, will be avoided by the adoption a leasehold system of land tenure. But it is yet too early to state that this is the declared policy of the Manitoba government, since no such official declaration has been made. There has been no official decision on the matter.

But it seems likely that the long view will prevail. If Churchill is to be successful, from an urban point of view, there will have to be some powerful attraction—in view of the climate and the long distance from urban amenities. And the old attraction to a small group of land speculators, who raise the price of land according to the demand and eventually kill the goose that lay the golden eggs—that is the home-makers, is by this time seen to be a vicious obstacle to economic and social prosperity. All over the west are thousands of unoccupied "lots" that are the rotten fruit of the speculative orgy.

The modern leasehold system, inaugurated by the English garden cities and triumphantly vindicated in providing sites for homes, commerce and industry, with no capital outlay for land and with permanent protection against incongruous surroundings, will prove an attraction to settlers at Churchill with which land speculation—benefitting about one per cent of the community and victimizing the rest—will not be able to compare. The new leasehold system has little in common with the old. There were iniquities in the old leasehold system which led early settlers to Canada to sigh for freehold as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. The new leasehold system is practically perpetual. It gives all the "feeling" of ownership—the present writer has a lease at the First Garden City for 999 years—and it gives protection to surroundings such as freehold

cannot give, not even with the special restrictions sometimes attached to freehold, which usually fade away with change of ownership.

If the Manitoba government decide to adopt the modern leasehold land policy, it will be a real "noble experiment" and it will be a shot for economic wisdom and social good that will be heard all over Canada. It is said that the public expect it and this should count heavily with the Manitoba legislators.

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#### MASTERING A METROPOLIS, by R. L. DUFFUS.

The Greater New York of the Future is pictured by Mr. Duffus in this very readable volume as it is seen through the eyes of the Committee on the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs in their ten-volume report.

It is a proposal to take the natural and man-made foundations that we have and upon them to erect the most splendid metropolis—the most magnificent regional community—the world has ever known.

The plans consider the New York Region, an area within an approximate radius of 40 miles from City Hall, with a bulge to the north up to Newburgh, as one city.

No more haphazard, unrelated building, but a planning of each unit in its relation to the whole. Railways, highways, parkways, waterways, rapid transit, are all carefully fitted into each other for the greatest efficiency. Homes with ample provision for light and air, parks and playgrounds, churches, schools, factories, office buildings and retail stores; this is the Master Plan for the city of the future.

Mr. Duffus stresses the point that although vast sums of money are necessary for the making of such a city, no more will be required than will be spent by continuing to build at cross purposes.

Stupendous as may be the task of building such an envisioned city, it will be a far greater problem to educate the polyglot populace to a feeling of individual responsibility for community interests. To this problem the present volume is dedicated.—*City Club Bulletin, New York.*

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#### THE SAD CASE OF THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

It is this way. One or two thoughtful members of the service clubs notice that their city councils seem to be entirely indifferent to the planning movement, which many American and European cities have accepted as a reasonable and scientific means of providing better social and economic order in the development of towns and cities. They ask some professional town planner of recognized ability to "come down" and give them a lecture, frequently at his own expense of time and money. He sketches

on broad lines what should be done in this particular town to ensure town planning control for the future development of the town and to correct the glaring inconveniences that have grown up as a result of bad planning. The question of expense is mooted. He gives a rough estimate of the expense of employing a competent planner, which will practically work out at the cost of a cigar for every male person in the town. He is accompanied to the railway station and the final question is: "Don't you think that the city engineer and one or two of us could do all this without any cost at all?"

The answer of course is that the city engineer is probably too busily employed with ordinary duties to take on a task of this kind, which means concentrated study and full time devotion and special knowledge; that he may not have qualified himself for this particular job; that he is usually cluttered up with local instructions and paralyzed by local knowledge of the expectations and predilections of non-technical persons who judge everything by the immediate expenditure and the effect upon the voting tax-payers of any forward-looking development; that, in short, town planning needs the direction of a trained expert who should be absolutely indifferent to local predilections and see only a scientific problem to be worked out on scientific lines, and that he should be paid for his work just as the expert engineer and lawyer is paid for his special work; and that he should not be robbed of his ideas on the assumption that he is a social St. Francis or be asked to see his ideas bungled or battered by inexperienced persons.

Surely the time is at hand when the town planning expert should be treated with some decent consideration. An eminent Vancouver public man recently declared that "all classes and communities pay tribute now to the town planner because they need him. The cities, he said, are dragging him forth from his retreat and dusting away his modesty. The town planner is an integral and necessary part of our community government. He is here to stay for his work continueth greater than his knowing."

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#### GETTING THE IDEA

Salmon Arm has suffered much in its buildings and layout. Twenty-five years ago, few anticipated the rapid changes which would be made in traffic conditions and also in the desire for modern model buildings and many towns are now feeling the result of immature planning.

While no one wishes to work a hardship upon those who acquire land and desire to build, it has been found that it is essential to make rules and regulations which will bring new erections into line with up-to-date conditions.

No one would feel justified in building an ex-



pensive home or business premises adjoining a bunch of shacks but there is no means of stopping the erection of shacks next to valuable property. The amenities of a district may be very easily destroyed by such shacks. Country towns in particular could have delightful boulevards and pretty lawns before each house, had care been taken in early years to plan for these.

We think, however, that although this has been overlooked in the past, both city and district councils should consider better building regulations and have power to prohibit the erection of unsightly buildings where good ones at present exist.—*Salmon Arm Observer*, (B.C.)

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#### FINANCING A TOWN PLAN FOR QUEBEC CITY

The Quebec planners were not able to get their proposed Town Planning Act for the province of Quebec through the legislature and Quebec still remains the only province in Canada without a Town Planning Act. The reason assigned was that there had not been sufficient time to study so complicated a document.

An amendment was, however, passed to the Quebec City Town Planning Act, which authorized the city to raise by debentures a sum not exceeding \$50,000 for the creation of a comprehensive Plan of Quebec City. The Town Planning Commission for Quebec City, with excellent and, in some respects, very advanced legal powers to arrange for the planning of Quebec City had not been able to make much progress for lack of funds. The amendment authorizes the city to raise the necessary funds. Whether the city will do so or not remains to be seen.

#### SASKATCHEWAN MUNICIPAL RECORD

We have received the first issue of the Saskatchewan *Municipal Record*. It is described as "a monthly magazine devoted exclusively to the interests of the municipalities and municipal men of Saskatchewan". We searched in vain for any consciousness that such a thing as town planning exists. We did not discover any mention of the term. A movement that is a vital part of the progress programme of 856 cities, towns and villages in the United States and of the same number in Britain; a movement with a world federation of about forty different countries and specially "devoted to the interests of the municipalities" throughout the world and that is actually legalized in the province of Saskatchewan under an excellent provincial Town Planning Act does not receive a word of reference! It may be that "the quality of municipal government has made remarkable progress" in Saskatchewan but we are frankly surprised that the founders of this new magazine do not seem to see the relation of town planning to municipal progress. We should think this a good

topic to assign to the Saskatchewan director of town planning for some future number.

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#### TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION FOR YORK TOWNSHIP

The constant requests for restricted building areas seem to have driven the council of York Township to the sensible step of appointing an Advisory Committee on Town Planning with a zoning mandate so that residents and builders may have a comprehensive ordinance to guide them instead of the obsolete custom of appealing to the council for special jurisdiction on every building demand that arises.

This is all very well, and zoning is, of course, a mark of progress and of town planning consciousness, but it is not a complete town planning programme, as we are constantly insisting.

Now is the proper time for the council to consider why such cities as Toronto have such well-nigh insoluble problems of traffic congestion and the like. The reason will be discovered with a very little thinking and it will be discovered in the plain fact that nobody drove for town planning early enough to avoid the difficulties that might have been prevented by a proper planning programme.

York Township should have not only a zoning plan but a comprehensive Town Plan that will attend to more problems than zoning.

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#### MONTREAL

Mr. Frederick Wright has "served his country" for many weary years as an undaunted advocate for a Plan of Montreal which would stand some comparison with the great city plans such as the Vancouver Plan, the Chicago Plan and others too numerous to mention.

Now that the railway problem is, at least, partly settled he has returned to his plea and urges, in the *Montreal Gazette*, that the first necessary step should be the creation of a Town Planning Commission whose business would be the shaping of a comprehensive Plan for Montreal. He writes:

Now that the location for the C.N.R. terminals is determined upon, and actual construction will soon be under way, there is no longer any reason for delay in making a start on a city plan. Those, and notably the Committee on Town Planning of the City Improvement League, who have been most active in trying to bring about town planning in Montreal during the last few years have always realized that until the railway terminal question was settled nothing could be done in the way of a comprehensive plan for the district of Montreal, consequently their energies have been confined to general propaganda, and in the preparation of a town planning and zoning act,

which, while operative throughout the province of Quebec, is particularly applicable to Montreal—the present laws governing town-planning being disconnected and therefore not workable.

The time has now come for the propaganda to give results in the way of a comprehensive plan, but before any city plan can be brought about there must be a town planning authority that has real powers, otherwise no progress will be made. The present Montreal Town Planning Commission is an advisory body only, subject more or less to the will of the Director of Public Works, whereas a City Planning Board, such as the City Council has the power to create under the City Charter, would be more independent, and consequently in a position to see that any plan it prepared or adopted was actually carried out. Mr. Percy E. Nobbs, who has devoted so much of him time and energy to urging town planning on Montreal, and who is the prime mover in the "Town Planning and Zoning Enabling Act" is fully in accord with the writer on this point, he being sure that much important preliminary work could be done by a city planning board during its first year while awaiting the powers which the enabling act would give.

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#### ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL

Vancouver has gone a great distance since the day when the owner of a lot anywhere in the city could erect any sort of building he chose on it and turn it to any purpose. It was the danger of fire that first brought us to our senses and induced us to establish building regulations. We made rules as to the materials to be used, as to chimneys and wiring. Health considerations came in and there were regulations as to plumbing. Later, we established building lines and setbacks and attempted to regulate the height of buildings.

Zoning followed. Buildings were grouped according to use, heavy manufacturing in one district, or group of districts, light manufacturing in another, business in a third. Residential areas were protected against the encroachment of undesirable structures, and attempts were made to herd apartment houses together, not only because the owner of single residences resented their intrusion, but because the facilities required by congested areas could be more efficiently and cheaply supplied when these areas were kept compact and not scattered. In its development, zoning concerned itself with such questions as light and air, and provisions were made for front yards and side yards and rear yards, the size of these yards depending, in some degree, upon the size and height of the building.

Now, we are going a step further. Experience has shown that it is desirable to control more than

the height and width of an apartment house or a dwelling. It is desirable to control its design as well. It takes a public protest, sometimes, to impress the city council, and the recent very vigorous protest from Kitsilano residents against the erection of a particular building in their neighborhood has had its effect. The committee on town planning, parks and boulevards has taken the matter up and has asked the Town Planning Commission to investigate the matter of architectural control and report on it.—*Vancouver Province.*

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#### WHAT TOWN PLANNING DOES—AN EDUCATIONAL SERIAL

By grace of the *North Shore Press* the chairman of the North Vancouver Town Planning Commission. Mr. W. B. Young, assistant engineer of Vancouver and Member of the Town Planning Institute, issues occasionally a condensed syllabus of town planning philosophy as a peradventure for public education and admonishes his readers to "Watch for information." No long articles, but just "snappy" paragraphs, so that the wayfaring man, even though an orthodox alderman with lots to sell, may not err therein. Such as follow:

1. It segregates certain residential areas from business and industrial aggression and thereby establishes restricted areas for residences known as first-class.
2. It defines areas for major and minor industries, wholesale and retail businesses and for three classes of residences.
3. It determines or suggests at least the orderly survey for, and the establishment of transportation and water-front development.
4. It plans for the systematic planning of what is known as the "Major Street Plan," creates distributor streets and makes a study of transportation problems.
5. It works for the best interests of the city and by so doing works in the best interests of all the citizens.
6. It aims to make a city really "Beautiful" by the cultivation of parks, boulevards, streets and public school grounds along sane and practical lines.
7. It seeks to prevent the recurrence of the many expensive mistakes in the past by adopting truly scientific methods in town or city planning or re-plotting.
8. It seeks to determine a "Civic Centre" and to create the foundation for cultural activities to the good of the whole community.
9. It is the greatest socializing factor in modern movements, for it touches every phase of community life and cultivates desire for the aesthetic.
10. It aims to make conditions in industrial and commercial areas not only of practical and economic value, but such as will enable the worker to do his or her best.
11. It undertakes re-plotting and re-contouring of a town or city—from its original plan to meet the growing needs of modern transportation.
12. Town Planning is a real science; its function is to assist the authorities in any community to plan to re-plan for the public benefit; and to visualize the needs of coming years.

## Regional Planning in Germany. Architectural Control. Slum Clearing in England

The International Federation for Housing and Town Planning publishes a quarterly bulletin of great value, since it presents in the briefest and most direct fashion the advance movements in all parts of the world towards regional and town planning and housing for working families.

Bulletin No. 22 contains three reports of special interest. Dr. Robert Schmidt describes the rearrangements of local government boundaries in the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area that have resulted from the Prussian act of 29th July 1929 and the effect they will have on regional planning. Ministerialrat Andreas Liber writes on architectural control over town planning in Budapest and gives interesting details regarding the preservation of amenities. Mr. H. Chapman describes the New Housing Bill introduced into the British House of Commons for dealing with slum areas and summarises the procedure and financial provisions. Each report is in English, French and German.

Dr. Schmidt is known to all town planners who keep abreast with the literature of the movement as the founder and leader of the regional planning project for the vast industrial area known as the Ruhr Region. Gradually his ideas have found acceptance with the German legislative authorities and last year the Prussian Landtag passed an Act by which local government in the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial district (of which the Ruhr Region is a large part) is being reorganized. Already the Ruhr Regional Planning Federation has set the example of inducing groups of local authorities and councils to sacrifice their isolation and join together for objects that affect whole districts, irrespective of municipal boundaries, and appoint what amount to regional commissions to represent their regional interests and to carry out joint projects which the old-time isolation made practically impossible. Under Dr. Schmidt's leadership this movement has passed from the merely advisory stage to the stage of legal authority, which means the adequate financing which advisory regional committees find the most difficult obstacle.

We quote the following paragraphs from Dr. Schmidt's article:

### Administration.

It is clear that by putting large areas under unified control many causes of conflict will be avoided and thus release energy for creative activities. Before the Act was passed it was often asked whether it was right to extend the boundaries of towns (especially where it meant including what had belonged to a *Landkreis*) thus giving

up further areas to the defects of urban development. This question was wrongly stated. Adding new areas to great towns no longer involves the continuance of mistakes in urban and regional development; it provides the only possibility of remedying former mistakes. The incorporation of new areas does not mean that autonomous administration ceases to exist. The co-operation of the inhabitants in shaping the future is assured; for instance, in Essen a decentralisation of administration comes into operation that will guarantee a far-reaching co-operation by the former local authorities in the development of their areas. It would certainly be a mistake to administer by urban regulations areas that are likely to remain agricultural for some time to come.

### Joint Boards.

For the further development of administrative arrangements the Act introduces a new idea, that of joint boards (*Arbeitsgemeinschaften*). These joint boards may set up public bodies empowered in definite areas to carry out common public duties by mutual agreement. This idea corresponds more or less to a suggestion contained in the memorandum published by the Ruhr Regional Planning Federation in August, 1928, proposing the creation of special areas within which co-operation among the various local authorities was deemed advisable.

Councillor Liber's article shows the remarkable advance in Budapest towards the concept that a community has the right to protect itself from the erection of buildings that destroy "the beauty of the town picture" and "the amenity of town development."

He writes:

We deal with this subject in the sense that not only building regulations, but all regulations that protect the beauty and the amenities of our town encourage good development

### Control over Building.

The building ordinance for the metropolitan area issued by the Metropolitan Building Board (Fovarosi Kozmunkak Tanacs) in 1926 and brought up to date from time to time is extremely important. It deals with the building permits, and the arrangement of pipes and cables for water, gas and electricity. It determines building zones, of which there are eight at present. These zones determine the size of building plots, the building types (whether they are to be "closed" or "open"; with front gardens or centre courts, etc.), the

height of buildings and number of storeys, the size of courts, space about buildings, etc. The paragraphs that contain these regulations are of the greatest importance for ensuring good development in the different zones and for protecting the beauty of the town picture in areas of special interest, e.g. the banks of the Danube, the Royal Quarters, etc. Other paragraphs relate to the alignment of projecting part of buildings, to the building of factories, boundary walls, etc., to façades, height, gables, masking of exterior walls, exterior decorations, friezes, ornamentations, etc., etc. All the regulations on these points provide for an agreeable town picture. Façades of glaring colours are forbidden. Public property in the streets or on buildings, monuments, road surfaces, streams, trees and shrubs, lamps, street signs, house number-plates, public services, etc., are protected from damage or uglification due to building operations being in process.

Mr. Chapman's article on "A Bill for Abolishing Slums in Great Britain" shows that the British Government have decided that nothing but public enterprise can deal with this national evil and that some old doctrines have to be scrapped to get the job done. Possibly the cost will be met by the saving on a few swagger and useless battleships.

Futile discussions on this subject have filled so many books and journals that we must quote Mr. Chapman's admirable statement of the British programme entire:

## A BILL FOR ABOLISHING SLUMS IN GREAT BRITAIN

By H. CHAPMAN

During the period since the war over 1,463,000 houses for the working and lower middle classes have been built in Great Britain. Of these 524,000 have been built by unassisted private enterprise and 939,030 with the aid of public subsidies. The present Government subsidy (Wheatley 1924 Act) is £7 10s. per house per year for forty years in towns and £11 in agriculture parishes. The local authorities make an additional annual contribution of £3 15s. per house, also for forty years. The regulations are such that speculation for private profit is practically impossible. This form of subsidy is to be continued for houses intended to meet the shortage.

The Minister of Health, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, has recently introduced a Bill for dealing with another aspect of the housing problem, namely the abolition of slums. This Bill is partly a re-statement and codification of existing legislation, but it also implies and expedites procedure and increases the Government grants for the re-housing of persons taken from the slums. The following is a brief summary of the main points.

### Methods of dealing with Slums.

There will be three methods of dealing with slums.

**Clearance Areas.** Where an area is so bad that the only remedy is to clear the site it will be dealt with as a "clearance area." This may be done in one of two ways: (a) The local authority may make a clearance order requiring the owners to demolish the property. If the order is sanctioned by the Ministry after public enquiry and the owners do not arrange for the demolition the local authority may do so at the owner's expense. The cleared site may then be used by the owners in accordance with the building by-laws and the town planning scheme, if one has been prepared. (b) Instead of making an order the local authority may purchase the site and buildings. If agreement cannot be reached about price they may apply to the Minister for compulsory powers, in which case a public enquiry must be held. Compensation is paid on the basis of site value only, with a reduction of price where the land is to be used for an open space or working class housing. The local authority must then demolish the buildings. Allowances may be made for cost of removals or loss of trade. Where it is necessary to include land adjoining to or surrounded by a clearance area, so as to make a comprehensive scheme, the local authority may apply for powers of expropriation. Compensation for land and buildings is payable with the same safeguards as mentioned below under (b) in "Improvement Areas".

**Improvement Areas.** Where an area is not bad enough to justify complete clearance it is to be dealt with as an improvement area. Some of the houses will be too bad to be saved, others will need repairing. Where too many houses are closely packed together some will have to be demolished to let in light and air and permit new streets to be made. The local authority must define the improvement area on a map, pass a resolution to this effect and advertise it. Before passing the resolution the authority must satisfy the Minister that the work can be done in a reasonable time and that arrangements will be made for the inhabitants displaced, and after the resolution has been passed the Minister may require the local authority to undertake the re-housing within a specified time. The local authority must then deal with the area as follows: (a) Arrange for the demolition or repair of individual insanitary houses (see below); (b) Purchase by agreement or compulsory powers the property required for opening out the area and demolishing the buildings where necessary. In assessing the price to be paid no compensation may be given for any extra rent owners have been obtaining by overcrowding. If a house is defective it will be taken at what its estimated value would have been if it had been put into good condition minus the estimated cost of such repairs. If a demolition has added to the value of other premises



of the same owner the amount of compensation may be reduced. (c) Adopt and enforce bye-laws that will prevent the houses from being overcrowded and again becoming slums.

*Individual Insanitary Houses.* These can be dealt with either inside or outside of an improvement area. Where an individual dwelling house is unfit and can be made fit at a reasonable cost the local authority may serve a notice requiring the owner to do this within a specified time. Appeal is to the County Court. If the appeal fails and the owner does not comply with the order the local authority may do the work at the owner's expense. Payment by instalments over a period of years may be permitted. Where a house would cost too much to put in repair or is not fit for it an order for demolition can be served, against which there is the same right of appeal. If the owner fails to comply the local authority may carry out the work at the owner's expense, and if they buy the property they can do so at site value.

#### Subsidies.

Under the 1923 Act the government bore half the estimated average annual loss incurred by local authorities on slum clearance schemes. The new proposal is that the government pay a *per capita* grant for each displaced person (adult or child) for whom new accommodation is provided. The amount is to be £2 5s. per person per year for forty years in towns, £2 10s. in agricultural parishes, and £2 10s. and £2 15s. in Scotland. Where it is necessary to build in tenements of more than three storeys (ground floor and two storeys over it) on the cleared area, or where a scheme has been approved with land at more than £4,000 per acre the grant will be £3 10s. per person; but these will be quite exceptional cases. Taking £2 5s. as the normal figure and five persons as the average number in a slum family the government subsidy will be equivalent to £11 5s. per family re-housed. This is considerably more than the 1923 government subsidy. Adding the £3 15s. per year per house which the total authority are obliged to contribute, the total will be £15 annually for forty years.

Societies and companies limiting their dividends will be eligible for the grants.

County councils will be empowered to make grants of £1 a year for forty years to rural districts in respect of agricultural workers' houses; thus reducing the contribution of the rural authority to £2 15s. per house. The county councils are also empowered to build themselves.

Assuming that five persons are re-housed in one house the capital value of the government subsidy at £2 5s. per person per year is estimated at £195 per house.

Subsidies are also to be given for providing

smaller houses for aged persons: the government grant will be £5 per house for forty years, which is equal to a capital grant of £86 per house.

#### Rents.

The local authorities will be required to devote the subsidies to the reduction of rents. For example in a scheme that provided for re-housing 500 persons in 100 houses the annual government subsidy would be £2 5s.  $\times$  500 = £1,125, while the annual municipal subsidy would be £3 15s.  $\times$  100 = £375, making a total of £1,500 annually for forty years. But as the life of the houses may be said to be sixty years the capitalised value of the subsidy would be equal to a reduction of £1,340 on the annual rentals (or £13 8s. per house) for sixty years. The local authorities will be able to differentiate between the rents charged to families that are very poor or have many children and families that can afford to pay more. But as the subsidies on these houses are higher the general level of rents will be lower by about 2s. per week than those of the houses built under the Wheatley Act to meet the general housing shortage. It is hoped that this will do something to meet the needs of the poorest classes. The houses will not be inferior to the Wheatley houses and there will be no intentional segregation of the very poor.

#### Cost of the Scheme.

Slum clearance has not been going on rapidly since the war, partly owing to cumbersome procedure and partly to the efforts necessary to combat the shortage of houses. During the last ten years 121 schemes have been approved in which were 15,000 houses and other buildings. Between 8,000 and 9,000 of these have been demolished and 9,743 new houses erected in their place. Of the above schemes forty-one have been completed.

Local authorities will now be expected to prepare a five years' programme of work to be submitted to the Minister, beginning in 1930, and further programmes every five years. It is not possible to give an estimate of the total annual cost of the scheme, as this will depend upon how far the local authorities take advantage of it. Assuming, however, that schemes are put forward for 20,000 houses per year for ten years to re-house 100,000 persons per year, the cost to the government in the first year would be at least £2 5s.  $\times$  100,000 = £225,000 per year; in the second year it would be £450,000 per year, and by the end of the ten year period it would be £2,250,000 per year. The cost to local authorities would be at least £3 15s.  $\times$  20,000 = £75,000 in the first year, £150,000 in the second year, and by the end of ten years would be £750,000 per year.

The Bill gives the government power to enforce the scheme, also to carry out schemes themselves and recover contributions from the local authorities.