

so praise without food is dead also. Do me the honour to accept this turkey at my hands." Praise alone, but handsome praise, poured in from the other colonies, in newspapers and letters, and from the United States and Great Britain, where his fame had spread. In Halifax he was the most discussed man of the day, yet still unknown even to Lord Dalhousie, with whom he had begun a private correspondence some months earlier.

"Agricola's" unique achievement ended with the adoption of his program. It is too much to expect that any man in like circumstances would be disinterested enough to forego the laurel wreath and whatever went with it; but if Young had remained anonymous and allowed others to carry out his plans, the move-

ment he began might have continued without interruption, for he unfortunately became a personal symbol for attack in the next seven years. Other reasons for the breakdown at the end of that time, however, may be found in factors that were more general and impersonal. These it is not possible to discuss in this space; but one in particular was illuminated in Young's shrewd fear expressed in 1823 that "the days of our adversity have not been of sufficiently long continuance to correct our faults, and make a serious and lasting impression." The farmers were beginning to feel the upswing of better times. To-day co-operative leaders watching the effect of war-time wages express a similar fear.

Municipal Government In Newfoundland

By H. B. MAYO

NEWFOUNDLAND has very little of the apparatus of local government. There is no widespread system of municipal, district and other local councils such as one finds in politically developed countries. The very term "local government" is not widely understood. I once gave a simple radio talk on the need for local government in the island. Next day a dear old soul remarked, "Ah, yes. You want us to get back our own responsible government. How nice!" She had confused local government with autonomy for the country as a whole.

Such local authorities as do exist are the Municipal Council of St. John's; the embryonic town council at Windsor (formerly Grand Falls Station); and, scattered around the country, various *ad hoc* authorities such as local Boards of Health, School Boards and Harbour Boards. Certain local affairs, normally

regarded as the duties of a town council, are looked after in St. Anthony by the International Grenfell Association and, in the paper mill towns of Corner Brook and Grand Falls, by the paper companies.

The St. John's Municipal Council—dating from 1888—now operates under the Act of 1921 and amendments thereto (the "City Charter"). There is a Mayor, a Deputy Mayor, and seven councillors. Elections occur every three years, and the franchise is open to all householders and to all male non-householders over 21 who pay a poll tax of \$5. (Very few do pay a poll tax). Party politics do not enter into municipal elections.

The Council's main responsibilities are streets and street lighting, water supply, sewerage and public parks. The usual utilities such as tramways, bus system, electricity, gas and telephone services are in private hands. The Council has nothing to do with elementary and secondary education, which is in charge of denominational school boards.

Power of the Council to raise loans

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is subject to the consent of the Government. The largest single source of revenue is the property tax, the rate of which stands at 16 per cent of the estimated rental value. Another large source of income is the customs tax on coal, collected by the Government and passed over to the Council. There are a variety of other taxes, some of which yield next to nothing, ranging all the way from bank taxes to junk dealer's licenses.

Since this Council is virtually the only piece of political democracy in Newfoundland (for the Commission of Government is an appointed body), its working is of particular interest both to Newfoundlanders and to students of government outside the country. Its public deliberations and reported activities in the newspapers do not particularly reassure one that Newfoundlanders have learned the lesson of that humiliating February in 1934 when a bankrupt democracy voluntarily retired in favour of a benevolent dictatorship. But perhaps it is not fair to judge an organ of democracy by its debates. Even the Mother of Parliaments has been called, rather scathingly, "Yon towers of talk at Westminster." A better criterion is the kind of public service it renders.

St. John's is magnificently situated on the side of a hill around a land-locked bowl of a harbour, but the work of man has not enhanced the beauty of its setting. The city has never been the subject of any comprehensive town planning, and the many shabby houses, wretched streets and horrible slum areas do not betoken enlightened government. Until a few years ago there was no public library in the city, and even to-day the library is not a Council affair, but is managed by a separate Public Libraries Board and financed by the Government. The city's finances were anything but healthy in 1933, and it has been said that good fortune more than good management enabled the Council to avoid the fate of the Government in 1934 when it was put into the receiver's hands. And according to one who should know, em-

ployment in the municipal service is nothing like as graded and effective a system as the Commission of Government has made of the Civil Service.

Although these and other charges may be brought against the Council, of how many cities in Canada and elsewhere could not the same things be said? There is, too, a brighter side to the picture. The city administration has not suffered the same corruption that is commonly charged against the Government of the old days. If not progressive, it has at any rate been honest administration. Now and then too a city father of vision has appeared in the Council to raise the whole tone of policy. And in recent years the city has improved in many respects—streets are gradually getting better, the sewerage system is steadily improving and the public gardens are better kept. Even a housing scheme has been mooted, and there was an attempt to gain some of the public utilities for municipal ownership (thanks in both cases to that energetic and alert councillor, J. T. Meaney). A town-planning commission was set up in 1931, and though its report is a closely guarded secret, and the commission was allowed to become defunct, some of its ideas are being slowly carried out by the Council. There is some "zoning," and rebuilding is banned in the worst slum area. Moreover the Government cannot escape its responsibility for municipal housing. It is hard to see how any re-housing on a large scale, that could substantially alter the face of the city within the lifetime of any now living, could be carried on without the fullest assistance of the Government.

A Local Government act was passed for the outports (i.e. settlements outside of Saint John's) in 1933, the last year of the elected legislature, giving towns with a population of 1000 or more the right to form a town council. Certain towns, mainly industrial centers, were exempted from the Act on the ground, probably, that they are well looked after by the companies. Councillors were

to be appointed for the first term and elected thereafter. The Act has never been more than a dead letter. Another Act concerning local administration was passed in 1937, also providing for councils, and cutting out many of the numerous taxes which marred that of 1933. But there was no mention that the councils were ever to be other than appointed. An interesting theory has been put forward by a student of government¹, that the two acts reflect the nature of the different authorities which passed them: the democratic government provided for elected councils, the appointed government for appointed councils.

This latter Act has borne two fruits. A Board of Management has been set up for the town of Windsor, and, securing funds from local taxation, is attending to the more urgent problems such as sanitation. Judging by the newspaper reports, the experiment is not an unqualified success. This, however, is not to condemn the undertaking, for many initial councils in other countries have also had difficult going. In any case Windsor is hardly the most favourable spot in Newfoundland for an experiment in local government.

The other fruit is that the Commissioner for Public Utilities has declared the Newfoundland Airport a local government area under the 1937 Act, and will be responsible for the administration of its local affairs. This is perhaps as satisfactory as any arrangement that could be made, for the airport is not a town in the ordinary sense. It is an air base—an overnight growth—and of high strategic importance.

The *ad hoc* authorities such as School Boards, Boards of Health, Harbour Boards, are the nearest thing to local government organs in the outports of Newfoundland. They are usually appointed, on recommendation from the locality, so that they are virtually elected, and hence are held responsible by local residents. The school boards are most numerous, and cover the country. They are denominational, for education in

Newfoundland is along church lines. Many of the Boards of Health are doing a fine job, especially in areas where cottage hospitals have been built in pursuance of the vigorous policy of the Department of Public Health and Welfare. Some of the Harbour Boards are also alive and have been known to raise loans and tax shipping in the course of their responsibility for the harbours.

Newfoundland has had representative government since 1832, and responsible government since 1855. In spite of this fairly long history of autonomy—long as Dominions go—there has been, outside of St. John's, no development of government on a local scale. Observers have not been wanting who have had grave doubts about the success of a central government that was not broad-based upon a system of local authorities. Among them were Sir Alexander Harris, a former governor, and J. D. Rogers. The latter in his *Historical Geography of Newfoundland* says: "In 1855 coping-stones were placed on the constitution, but the humbler offices on the ground floor are still lacking." And these humbler offices are still lacking.

Is there a positive correlation between this absence of the spirit and organs of local government, and the bad government which contributed so much towards paving the way for the debacle of 1933? In at least two ways, I think, there is.

First, local councils would have provided a training in the art of politics. The touch of direct taxation might have wakened the electorate to a conception of the duties as well as the rights of citizenship. The burden of indirect taxation, so characteristic of Newfoundland, is not so readily seen and hence the representatives were not often called to give an account of their stewardship. Out of the local authorities might also have come valuable, trained leadership to pass on to the central legislature.

In the second place, the absence of local authorities led to an inevitable concentration of too much power and too little responsibility in the hands of the district member. He was the mouth-

(1) Mr. Isaac Mercer, LL.B.

piece for the district in the legislature, and the channel through which public money flowed to the district.

The Amulree Commission saw clearly a close connection between local government and good government on a national scale:¹ "As there was no local government, he (the member) was expected to fulfil the functions of a Mayor, and of every department of public authority . . . This political system, combined with the effects of the credit system in the fishing industry, weakened the fibre of the people." And again: "The absence of any form of municipal government and the conduct of the entire administration from St. John's . . . have had an unfortunate effect upon the people in retarding the development of a public spirit and a sense of civic responsibility."

With this in mind the Amulree Commission naturally enough went on to conclude: "The formation of municipal governments in the more important outports, under proper control, and with the proper safeguards, would do much to induce a sense of responsibility in those called upon to contribute towards the expenses of such governments. We hope that steps will be taken to form municipalities as times improve, and we recommend that the new Government should do all in their power to encourage such a movement."

This recommendation has never been

¹ Report of the Newfoundland Royal Commission 1933, pp. 82, 83, 217, 218.

carried into effect, and there is no indication that the Commission of Government has given the matter the slightest thought. Perhaps the argument is that "times have not improved."

The danger is that autonomy may again be restored to Newfoundland without any preparation being made for that event. The restoration may come either as a demand from the people, as the Commission grows more unpopular or, at the end of the war the British Government may freely confer it under the impression that it would be a suitable reward for faithful war service.

The Commission of Government will have to realize, with more clarity and unanimity than it does now, that it is essentially a committee of reconstruction as well as a watchdog for the bondholders. One of the biggest jobs of reconstruction is to prepare Newfoundland for the resumption of self-government. And that of necessity involves the fostering of a system of local government, along municipal, regional or other lines. Too much centralization will merely lead again to "apoplexy at the center and paralysis at the extremities."

Perhaps, after all, the initiative must come from the Newfoundlanders themselves, and there are already a few encouraging signs of such an awakening. Or it may be that Newfoundland will enter the Canadian confederation and the local government experience of Canada will find its way into the oldest colony.

Comments on Mining in Nova Scotia

By G. VIBERT DOUGLAS

NOVA SCOTIA is a mineralogical museum. From beautiful zeolites to massive nickeliferous pyrrhotite there is a great range of minerals, diverse in form and composition. A museum how-

ever is not an emporium, and while Nova Scotia can boast of a great many species it cannot boast of large quantities of all of these minerals.

The province has large reserves of coal and gypsum. A sizeable deposit of barytes is being developed at the present time. There is one good deposit

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