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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE HOMESTEAD COMMISSION.

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1914.



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## ACTS AND PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO HOMESTEAD AND PLANNING MOVEMENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

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### 1909.

House 688 — Bill for the creation of a Homestead Commission.  
Chapter 143, Acts of 1909 — Resolve for the appointment of a Homestead Commission to investigate and report.

### 1910.

House 198 — Adverse report of the Homestead Commission.  
House 258 — Favorable report of minority of the Homestead Commission.  
House 1687 — Bill, reported favorably by committee on public health and unfavorably by the House ways and means committee, to create permanent Homestead Commission and prescribe methods of procedure. Lost.

### 1911.

Senate 28, House 214, House 1326, House 742, Senate 550 — Bills to enable the Commonwealth to assist laboring people in acquiring homes.  
Chapter 607 — The act creating the present Homestead Commission.  
Chapter 84, Resolves — Creating the Metropolitan Plan Commission to make investigations into the matter of a metropolitan plan.

### 1912.

Labor Bulletin No. 88 — Homesteads for Workingmen. Bureau of Statistics. (Out of print.)  
House 441 — Report of the Homestead Commission created by chapter 607, Acts of 1911.  
House 442 — Bill accompanying report.  
House 2339 — Adverse opinion of Supreme Court in regard to constitutionality of the proposition that the State aid laboring people in acquiring homes.  
House 2344 — A bill to continue the Homestead Commission and define its duties.  
Chapter 714 — House 2344 as finally passed.  
House 1615 — Report of the Metropolitan Plan Commission.

### 1913.

House 2000 — Report of the Homestead Commission.  
Chapter 494 — An Act to provide for the establishment of local planning boards.  
Chapter 595 — An Act further to enlarge and define the duties of the Homestead Commission.  
Bulletin No. 1 of the Homestead Commission — What City Planning means.

### 1914.

Bulletin No. 2 — Information and Suggestions for City and Town Planning Boards. First Annual Report of the Homestead Commission. 1913. (Public Document No. 103.) (Out of print.)  
Chapter 283 — An Act to authorize the establishment of planning boards by towns having a population of less than ten thousand.

### 1915.

Bulletin No. 3 — Teaching Agriculture to Families as a Relief for Unemployment and Congestion of Population.  
Second Annual Report of the Homestead Commission. 1914. (Public Document No. 103.)  
Chapter 129 — Relating to the membership of the Homestead Commission.  
Chapter 165 — Permitting town planning boards to be authorized to act as park commissioners.



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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BOSTON, May 1, 1915.

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.*

In compliance with the provisions of chapter 714 of the Acts of 1912, and chapters 494 and 595 of the Acts of 1913, the Homestead Commission, created by chapter 607 of the Acts of 1911, has the honor to submit the accompanying report and bills.

CHARLES F. GETTEMY, *Chairman.*

AUGUSTUS L. THORNDIKE.

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD.

GEORGE CHANDLER WHIPPLE.

EVA W. WHITE.

WARREN DUNHAM FOSTER.

HENRY STERLING, *Secretary.*

ARTHUR C. COMEY.

CORNELIUS A. PARKER.



# REPORT OF THE HOMESTEAD COMMISSION.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

The edition allowed by law for the first annual report of the Homestead Commission (Public Document No. 103, 1913) was entirely exhausted within a few weeks after publication. Since that time there have been numerous requests for the report from various parts of the State and the country, which had to be refused. The main part of the report gave an account of the activities of the Commission for the previous year, a discussion of the need for better homes, and the legislative recommendations of the Commission. An appendix of 250 pages contained a somewhat comprehensive review of the activities of such foreign governments as have made special efforts to increase the supply of wholesome homes for their laboring people. Brief descriptions of this work in twenty-seven leading countries were given.

Considering the demand for the report, and the fact that the information on which the review was based was secured through the State Department at Washington, the Homestead Commission deemed it proper to request Congress to issue a reprint of such parts of the report as might be deemed to be of general interest. The United States senators from Massachusetts took an interest in the request, and it was referred to the Senate committee on printing and publications. Since then the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor, has issued its Bulletin No. 158, which gives an account of the work of foreign governments in aid of home owning and housing of working people. This Commission does not feel warranted in recommending a reprint of its first report by the State of Massachusetts. We have, however, prepared a brief review of this information which is printed with this report as Appendix No. 3.

The outstanding fact shown in the reports from foreign lands is that the idea that private initiative and enterprise will furnish a sufficient supply of wholesome homes for the people has been abandoned in all leading progressive countries. Everywhere governments are doing something to stimulate or supplement the production of working people's homes. For some years this activity took the form of encouraging the construction of model tenements; but in later years the loans, credits, land favors, and special favors by taxation or exemption from taxation, which were intended to encourage the building of homes, have been allowed almost exclusively to enterprises which seek to promote the construction of "small houses and plots of ground in the suburbs of cities and towns."<sup>1</sup>

No country has solved the problems of congestion of population and unemployment, but in some countries considerable relief has come through these efforts. In some lands, as New Zealand and the Commonwealth of Australia, the work has taken the form of furnishing farms upon easy terms to settlers. In Great Britain, Ireland, Germany and other European countries, model tenements, suburban and rural homes and garden cities show the amount of work that is being done. In Austria, and to some slight extent in some other countries, public funds aid the laboring man to take care of the second mortgage on his home. The United States seems to be alone, among all the countries with an advanced form of civilization, in doing nothing directly to aid the laboring family desirous of acquiring its own home.

In 1911 by chapter 607 the Massachusetts Legislature created the Homestead Commission and instructed it to report to the Legislature of 1912 a bill embodying a plan "whereby, with the assistance of the Commonwealth, homesteads or small houses and plots of ground may be acquired by mechanics, factory employees, laborers and others in the suburbs of cities and towns." The Commission in 1912 recommended that part of the unclaimed savings banks deposits held in the State treasury be loaned to the Homestead Commission to construct homesteads in accordance with the provisions of the law creating the Com-

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 607, Acts of 1911.

mission. The Supreme Court, however, declared that the use of such funds or of any funds under public control, for the purpose of assisting people to acquire homesteads, is unconstitutional. Therefore the Legislature instructed the Commission (chapter 714, Acts of 1912) to “continue its investigation of the need of providing homesteads for the people of the commonwealth, and its study of plans already in operation or contemplated elsewhere for housing wage earners, . . . and may recommend such legislation as in its judgment will tend to increase the supply of wholesome homes for the people.”

The Legislature has since approved the submission to the voters of an amendment removing the constitutional objection to the State giving assistance to the acquiring of homesteads. The amendment, to be voted upon in November, is as follows: —

The general court shall have power to authorize the commonwealth to take land and to hold, improve, subdivide, build upon and sell the same for the purpose of relieving congestion of population and providing homes for citizens: *provided, however*, that this amendment shall not be deemed to authorize the sale of such land or buildings at less than the cost thereof.

### CITY AND TOWN PLANNING.

Since it was found that under judicial interpretation of the Constitution the Commonwealth could lend no direct aid to increase the supply of wholesome homes for the laboring people, or to the families seeking to acquire homes; and since the General Court deemed it wise to continue the work of the Homestead Commission, the Commission had no alternative but to recommend to the Legislature only such measures as would indirectly improve conditions in and about such homes. The first proposal of this character submitted by the Commission to the Legislature was that each city and town with a population of 10,000 should be directed to establish a local planning board, “whose duty it shall be to make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town, particularly with respect to conditions which may be injurious to the public health or otherwise injurious in and about rented dwellings, and to make plans for the development of the municipality

with special reference to the proper housing of its people," to the end that unhealthful, inconvenient, unsightly developments might be avoided in the future. This recommendation became law as chapter 494 of the Acts of 1913, subsequently amended by chapter 283 of the Acts of 1914 so as to allow towns with a population of less than 10,000 to come under its provisions. Chapter 595, Acts of 1913, authorizes the Homestead Commission to encourage the creation of local planning boards and to gather information relating to city and town planning for their use.

### Local Planning Boards and their Work.

In compliance with these acts 27 cities, 13 towns with a population of more than 10,000, and 5 towns with a population of less than 10,000 have established local planning boards, as follows:—

#### *Cities which have established Local Planning Boards.*

Attleboro.	Gloucester.	Northampton.
Beverly.	Holyoke.	Pittsfield.
Boston.	Lawrence.	Quincy.
Broekton.	Lowell.	Salem.
Cambridge.	Malden.	Somerville.
Chelsea.	Medford.	Springfield.
Chicopee.	Melrose.	Taunton.
Everett.	Newburyport.	Waltham.
Fitchburg.	Newton.	Woburn.

#### *Towns of 10,000 Population, with Local Planning Boards.*

Adams.	Gardner.	Westfield.
Arlington.	Methuen.	Weymouth.
Brookline.	Plymouth.	Winthrop.
Clinton.	Wakefield.	
Framingham.	Watertown.	

#### *Towns of Less than 10,000 Population, with Local Planning Boards.*

Amherst.	Walpole.	Winchester.
Hudson.	Wellesley.	

The following 8 cities and 6 towns which come under the law have as yet failed to comply with its provisions:—

*Cities which have failed to establish Local Planning Boards.*

Fall River.	Marlborough.	Revere.
Haverhill.	New Bedford.	Worcester.
Lynn.	North Adams.	

*Towns of 10,000 Population which have failed to establish Local Planning Boards.*

Greenfield.	Milford.	Southbridge.
Leominster.	Peabody.	Webster.

Some of these local planning boards have remained almost dormant, not realizing the importance to their community of the task committed to them. Others have met with discouraging financial or other conditions, and with apathy on the part of city or town officials. However, many have done good work in the way of investigation and recommendation. The movement here is new, and it is comparatively young yet in older countries, where, however, great benefits have already accrued from it.

In compliance with the law, most of the planning boards have filed with this Commission copies of their reports and recommendations to their local governments. In Appendix No. 1 of this report is a summary of their work. Its extent is gratifying, and is more than could be reasonably expected for the first year of such a movement.

A striking feature of their activities is the wide range of subjects to which these local planning boards have given attention, as shown by the following partial enumeration: —

Architecture: Temporary festival, monumental (monuments, arches, fountains, statuary), harmonious.

Archives.

Assets: Collection of information.

Awnings: Unsightly, removal.

Bathing houses and places.

Boulevards: Development.

Bridges: Construction, docks and waterways.

Building: Revision of laws, amendments to laws, stricter regulations, classification of buildings, restrictions, code, provision against unsanitary and dangerous, building lines, granting of licenses.

City forester's department: Appropriation.

Civic appearance: Cleanliness, cleaning of streets, throwing waste paper in streets, unsightly condition of waste dumps, care of rubbish, letter boxes.

Comfort stations.

Conferences: District.

Congestion.

Dilapidated structures: Removal.

Diseases: Contagious, causes.

Districting: Residential, manufacturing.

Encouragement to: Business plants, manufacturing plants.

Excess condemnation.

Expenditures: Various city departments.

Faneuil Hall: Renovation of interior, rehabilitation, removal of paint from exterior, painting of wooden trimmings white.

Federal building: Site.

Financial standing: City.

Fire department: Needs, motorization, fire escape ordinance, fire alarms.

Fireproofing: Floors, stairways, roofing.

Growth: Commercial, industrial.

Health: Board of health and scope of health work.

Hospitals: Tuberculosis, isolation of contagious diseases, city hospitals (establishment).

Hot weather conditions: Alleviation, utilization of islands in harbor.

Housing: Quadruple housing scheme plans, improved facilities, building up of communities of single family houses for workingmen's families, conditions, investigation of laws, building and loan associations, garden cities and suburbs, rise and control of three-decker tenements.

Islands of safety.

Kiosks.

Labor: Conditions.

Lighting: Streets.

Markets: Study of situation, public.

Nuisances: Billboards, advertising signs, smoke (prevention), trolley and telegraph poles, removal of overhead wires, disagreeable odors from tanneries.

Parks: Laying out, system, development.

Pavements: Construction, repaving between tracks.

Physical conditions.

Pipes and conduits: Laying, permanent improvements.

Plans: Collection, graphical charts, for development of city.

Platting.

Playgrounds: Provision for additional, system.

Poll population: Location.

Population: Density survey.



- Population figures: Enumeration, tabulation, foreign, native.
- Private property: Developments.
- Private ways: Laying out, acceptance.
- Public buildings: Grouping, location.
- Public grounds: Beautification, grading.
- Public improvements.
- Railroads: Electrification, improvement of stations, facilities.
- Reclamation: Draining low areas.
- Recreation: Improved facilities, use of harbor, school buildings as social centers, parks as amusement places, entertainments, band concerts, baths, swimming pools, public lectures.
- Schools: Increased accommodations, disposal of old houses, buying of land, vocational.
- Sewage: Disposal, system.
- Sidewalks: Building.
- Signs: Street, cautionary, uniform supports and posts.
- Streets: Acceptance, construction, development, extension, alteration, laying out, location, paving, straightening, widening, obscured corners, survey, classes, use by corporations and individuals.
- Subsurface: Water, sewers, conduits.
- Surveys of: Industrial development, possibilities, East Boston, development of property, range in assessed land values.
- Taxation: Assessment of property, assessment for betterments, tax valuation, single tax theory.
- Thoroughfares: Study of system, survey, cross-sections.
- Topographical surveys of: Business sections. entire city.
- Tracks: Construction, relaying with new and heavier rails.
- Traffic: Records, vehicular (recommendations for improved facilities).
- Transportation facilities: Topographical survey, sociological survey, industrial survey, rapid and cheap morning and evening transit, passenger, ownership by Commonwealth, continued study of general needs, area served by cars, development, steam and water, cross-town line of cars, relation of industrial plants.
- Trees: Census, location, planting, protection, replacing old trees, shade.
- Tunnels: Construction, connecting railroads.
- Unhealthful conditions: Disease breeding places, collection of data.
- Unused realty: Increased use, disposal.
- Vacant lots: Cleaning up, cultivation.
- Vital statistics: Births, deaths, death-rate, infant mortality.
- Walks: Granolithic, material.
- Water supply: Enlargement, high-pressure pumping station (location), hydrant, watering troughs.
- Wires: Underground.

The mere discussion in the various municipalities of such a multiplicity of large and small matters of public concern increases and intensifies the general interest in civic betterment. Such a result would be worth while, even though no other were attained. However, there is danger that the real, vital task of each local planning board may be partly lost sight of by dwelling too much upon numerous present needs and minor propositions. The needs may be real and the proposals valuable, but the task of the local boards is the formulation of broad and inclusive plans which will deal in its proper relation with every need of the community. Thus far the work of the local boards has consisted entirely of recommendations regarding minor matters. The real task of such a planning board — the creation of an inclusive, comprehensive plan or plans to govern the growth and development of the city or town — has not yet been approached by any of the boards.

It is not intended that the local planning board shall undertake or interfere with the work of any existing city departments or other official agencies. Its work is to produce a general plan that provides adequately for all municipal functions and for all sections of the city. It should look as far into the future as is practicable, and it should grasp the needs of the entire city as a unit more clearly than is possible for any official or department which has to consider only a particular section or function. Without interference with any existing official or department, the planning board can supplement and correlate their work so that their plans will not duplicate nor conflict, but will all work toward the realization of a single comprehensive scheme of government.

It is of vital importance that every growing city and town formulate for itself a comprehensive plan. It is impossible to deal wisely with isolated needs and proposals brought forward with no particular study of their relation to the general needs of the city. Such a plan should include at least the following: —

Streets, parks, playgrounds, transit, railroads, waterways, terminals, grouping of public buildings, public markets and regulations regarding the height, area and use of buildings.

Without a general plan, the local planning boards, if they continue to make a multiplicity of recommendations on this subject and on that, will have no more value than the present system (or lack of system) of development and improvement. Their work, like the work of the past, will be more or less haphazard and unrelated; sometimes of real, other times of doubtful, and many times of no value. The local board has to plan for a natural and orderly growth of the municipality. Its work is not to force improvements or developments upon the public notice; it should not be too much concerned even with immediate actual needs. Its thought is for the future, its work is to provide that as development occurs and as improvements are made, they shall be timely and properly related to all other improvements, development and activities of the municipality.

The first step toward an adequate plan should be a preliminary "survey," or study, of the area of the city or town, and the development of maps to show the topography and present physical and sociological conditions. No plans for future development can be worth while unless based upon knowledge of existing conditions. Chapter 494, Acts of 1913, prescribes this as the first duty of the local boards; that is, "to make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town." Without such study, or "survey," the work of a local board must be partly, if not wholly, futile. A board not thoroughly acquainted with present conditions cannot possibly be competent to make proper recommendations for systematic development. In this connection a careful re-reading of the section entitled "City and Town Planning," page 3, Homestead Commission's Bulletin No. 2, should be of material assistance. The Commission hopes shortly to publish a bulletin enumerating in detail all the subjects a planning board should study to gain a full knowledge of its own community. The collection and study of this information is a task of years, but a preliminary, comprehensive view of the first essentials is not a long or difficult task.

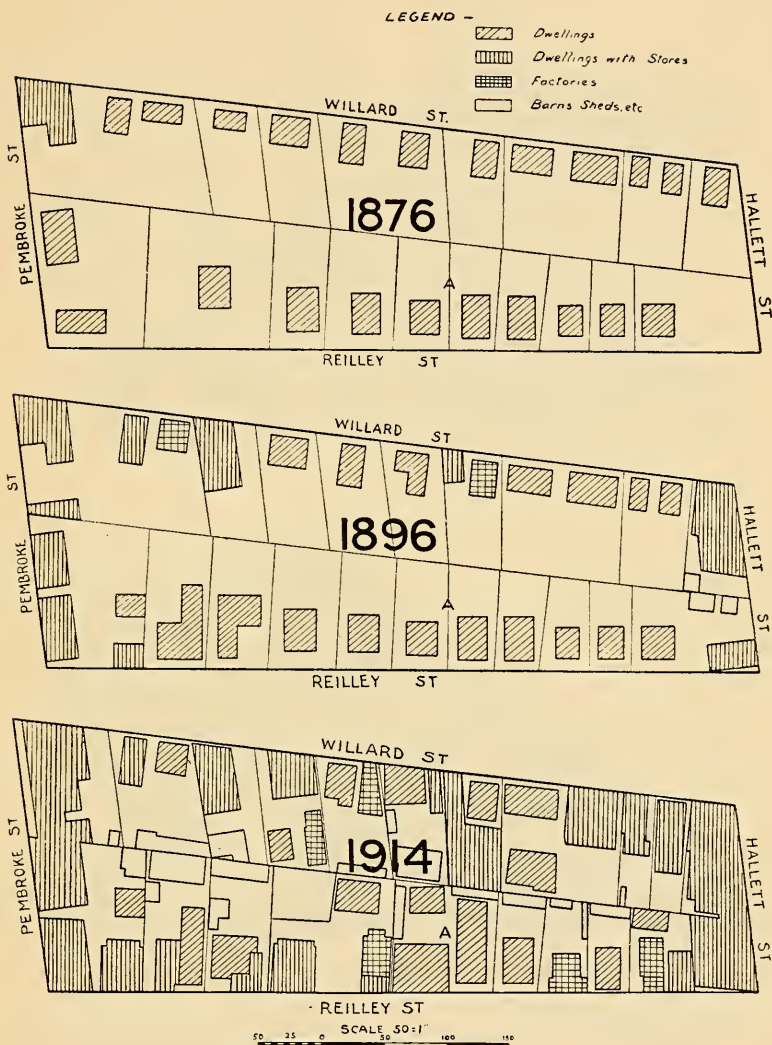
Every city and growing town should prepare and adopt town planning by-laws or ordinances to govern future developments. They should prescribe proper sanitary regulations for health.

light, air and sunshine; should guard against the creation of dangerous and unsightly places, and should secure the utmost possible convenience and facility for transit and transportation, so as to reduce the enormous economic waste of time lost in traveling or transferring freight by indirect routes. Such by-laws could provide for distances between buildings to be erected or reconstructed, width of proposed main streets, provision for narrower minor residential streets, limitation of the number of dwellings to each acre and the amount of each lot to be occupied by buildings, height of buildings, use of land for factories, dwellings, etc. No new subdivisions of land should be allowed unless the proposed streets bear proper relation to the general plan of the community and the planning by-laws or ordinances are complied with.

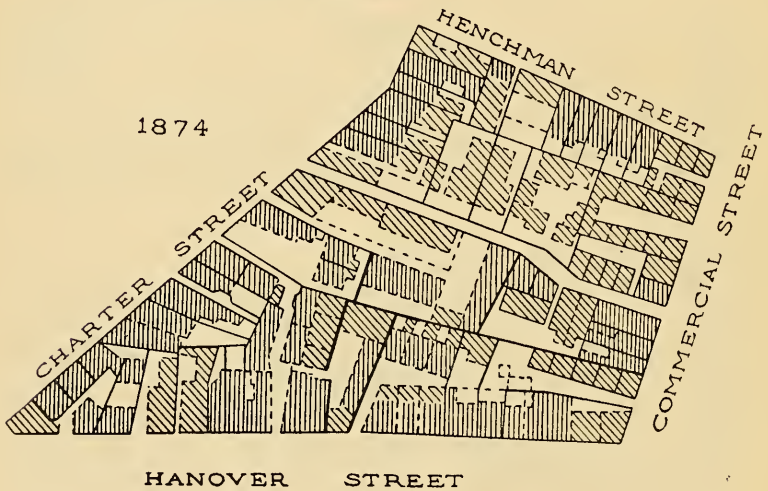
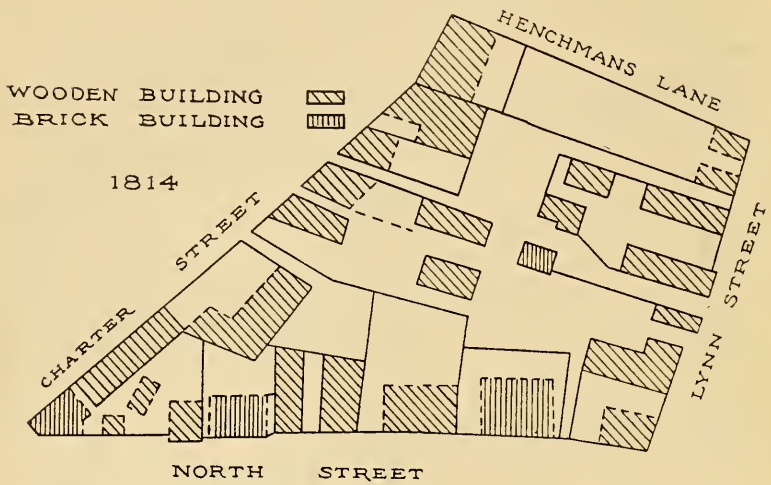
#### Illustrations of the Need for City Planning.

Striking examples of the need for city planning are shown by the following diagrams of the development of one city block in Bridgeport, Conn., and two in the North End of Boston.

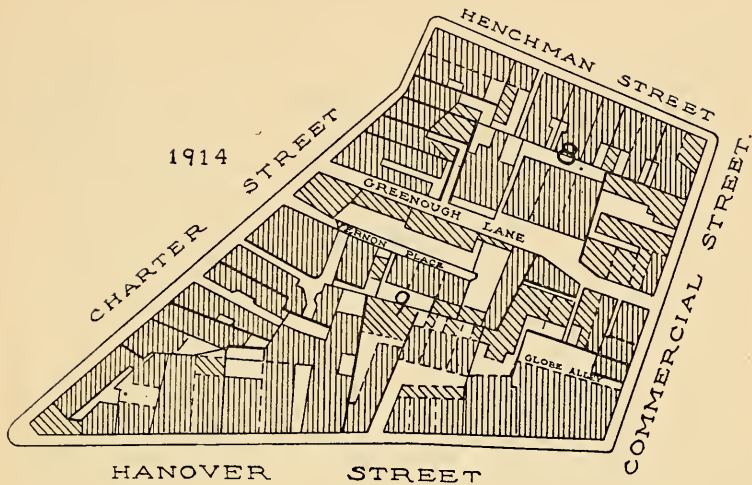
IN THE BRIDGEPORT DEVELOPMENT, the first diagram shows the condition of the block in 1876, the second its condition in 1896, and the third its condition in 1914. Only a trifle of forethought, planning and regulation would have been necessary to prevent the congestion shown in 1914. A half century ago this block was in the midst of an open field. A few years later streets began to be cut through, and about 1870 the first houses were erected. They were of single and two family types, and were placed 10 feet from the street line in the middle of lots 40 to 50 feet wide and 70 to 100 feet deep. With the exception of a line of tenement houses a few blocks away, the whole neighborhood was built up in this open manner. Later, Slavs huddled in indescribable density in the tenement section, which earned the sobriquet "hell's kitchen." Little by little they found their way into the dwelling houses. In the early 90s Italians found homes in the tenements of "hell's kitchen." Other foreigners followed, and each set of newcomers competed successively for the dwelling houses. They not only took over the houses, but built others, many of them on the interiors



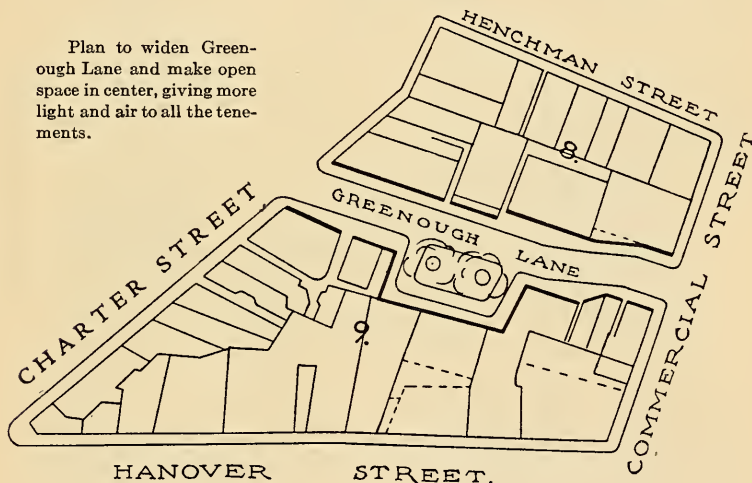
of lots. This practice has continued, until to-day we find the people herded like cattle, in blocks whose percentage of open area is decreasing each year. Here is a slum in the making. An examination of the accompanying diagram, comparing the blocks in 1876, 1896 and 1914, will show its gradual evolution. Great numbers of blocks in the cities and large towns of Massachusetts are tending toward the same conditions. It is the office of city planning to change that tendency.



A REAR LOT PROBLEM is shown by a study made by the local planning board of a block bounded by Hanover, Commercial, Charter and Henchman streets, in the North End of Boston. Here again a constantly increasing density of population is shown, from the open development of earlier years to the almost solidly filled blocks of 1914, ignoring the necessity of air, light and decent amenities. The area, officially known as blocks 8 and 9, contains, in block 8, 27,393 square feet, with a population of 569, or 905 to the acre, and 17 business places; block 9 contains 57,949 square feet, with a population of 1,095, or

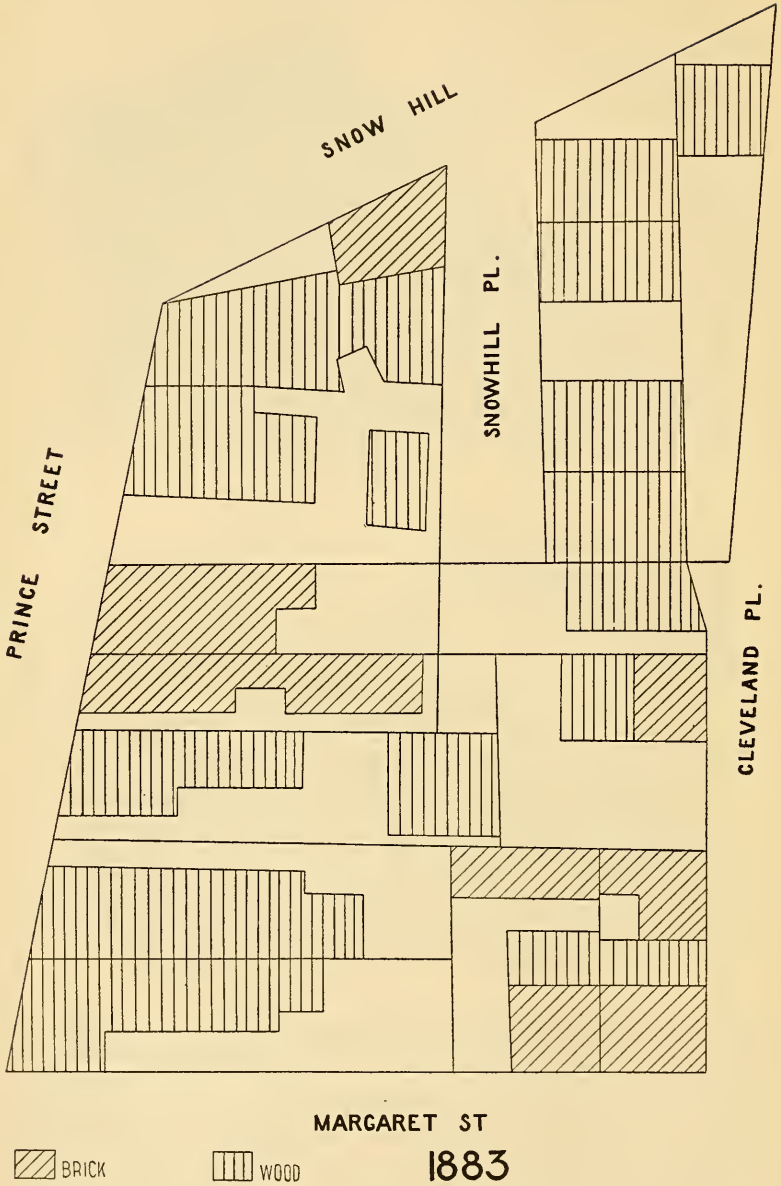


Plan to widen Greenough Lane and make open space in center, giving more light and air to all the tenements.



822 to the acre, and 32 business places. Three lots on the two most important business corners of block 9 are unoccupied.

Much relief from the congested and insanitary conditions would be afforded by widening Greenough Lane, a narrow thoroughfare dividing the two blocks, and ground could be made available for a small public square at about the center of the area. The Boston planning board has estimated that by levying reasonable betterment assessments on the property benefited the proposed improvements could be made at a net cost of \$7,500. No action has yet been taken by the city authorities.



A THIRD ILLUSTRATION of constantly increasing density of occupation and population is shown by the diagrams of block 16, bounded by Snow Hill, Prince and Margaret streets, and Cleveland Place, Ward 6, North End of Boston. The first



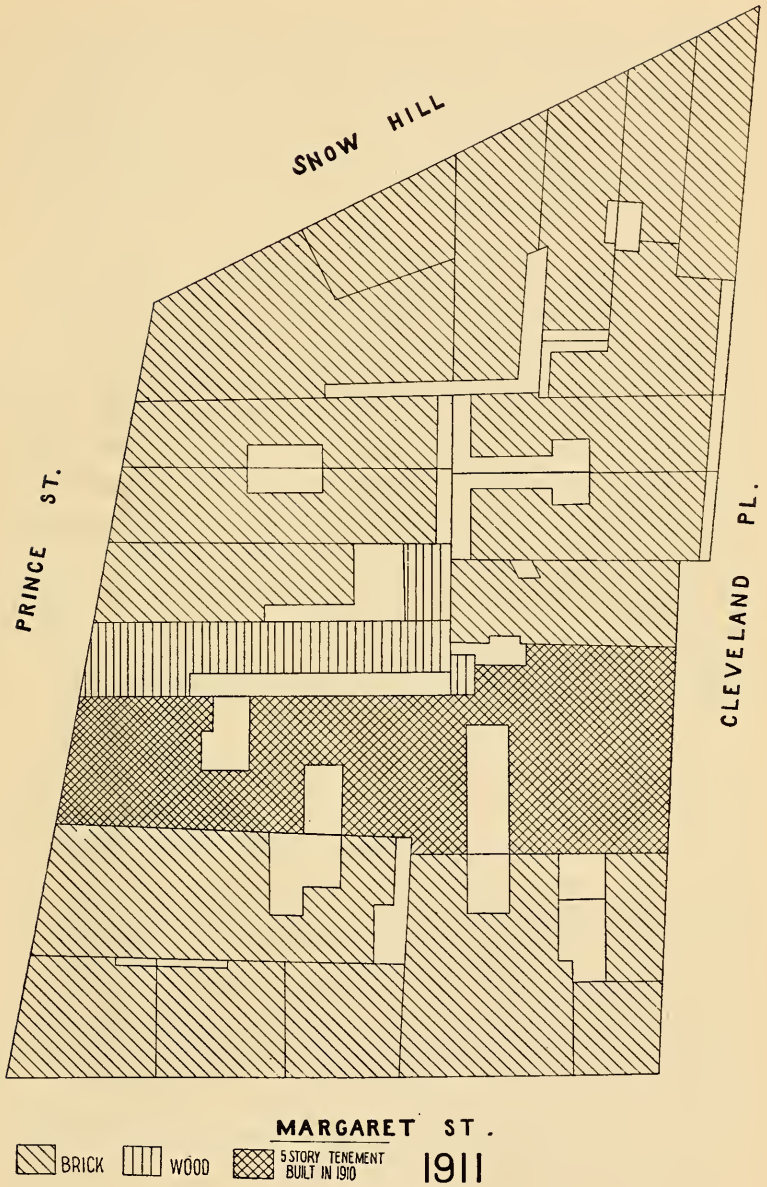


diagram shows its condition in 1883 and the second its condition in 1911. There are 28,539 square feet of land in the block, with a population in 1905 of 498, or 760 to the acre, and 21 business places.

The history and condition of these blocks of land in Bridgeport and Boston are not peculiar or exceptional, but are typical of hundreds of blocks throughout Massachusetts and New England. Thousands of blocks in New England show a tendency ultimately to reach the same condition. No adequate remedy to prevent such deterioration has yet been presented, excepting the proposition that the use of the property in cities and towns should be controlled by well-considered plans, with proper restrictions and regulation adopted in advance of development.

The making of such plans has been entrusted to the local planning boards established under Chapter 494, of the Acts of 1913. Future generations should not suffer through neglect by these planning boards of the duties imposed upon them by law. Lives are to be saved, disease diminished, home environment bettered, health and morality promoted, business and industry facilitated, economical use of the city's funds secured, and the public happiness and welfare increased, by the adoption of sensible city plans, and adherence to them. Besides great social benefits, the expenditure of the modest sums required for city planning will bring large financial returns.

#### **City Planning Conferences.**

Two city planning conferences have been called by the Governor of the Commonwealth at the suggestion of the Homestead Commission, one in 1913 and one December 16, 1914. While the latter conference was open to the public, only the members of the local planning boards and a few others known to be deeply interested in the subject personally were invited. It was intended that the meeting should be a conference between members of the local planning boards, and the attendance and interest shown were exceedingly gratifying. There were present over one hundred members of local planning boards, representing twenty-eight boards, as follows:—

Adams, Beverly, Brockton, Brookline, Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Clinton, Everett, Fitchburg, Framingham, Gloucester, Hudson, Lawrence, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Northampton, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, Westfield, Weymouth and Winthrop.

Others who attended by invitation were: —

Andrew Wright Crawford, chairman Art Jury, Philadelphia.

Charles H. Cheney, secretary California Conference on City Planning, San Francisco.

Frank O. Fogg, student of soil reinvigoration, Rumford Center, Me.

Lee K. Frankel, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York City.

John Ihlder, field secretary, National Housing Association, New York City.

The proceedings were opened by Chairman Charles F. Gettemy of the Homestead Commission, who introduced His Excellency Hon. David I. Walsh. The Governor delivered an address of welcome, expressing his full appreciation of the importance of the movement to promote city planning, and promising his sympathy, co-operation and support of the work. Arthur C. Comey spoke on "Making Civic Surveys Graphic." After reports from twenty-two local planning boards, Andrew Wright Crawford, secretary of the City Parks Association of Philadelphia, gave an address on "City Planning Achievements that apply to Massachusetts." Cornelius A. Parker of the Massachusetts Homestead Commission spoke on "Desirable Legislation." A fact emphasized by the reports from the local planning boards was the difficulty the boards are meeting in gaining an adequate grasp of their work, and in securing reasonable appropriations and recognition. A full report of the 1914 conference is given in Appendix II.

### **BETTERMENT ASSESSMENTS FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.**

The adoption and carrying out of a city plan which will permit of good housing conditions, plenty of public playgrounds and of adequate and convenient lines of travel, reducing congestion, and thus bettering the living conditions of the whole people, and reducing the cost of doing business, is recognized as desirable by all intelligent people. The great difficulties in carrying out such a plan are the uncertainty as to the cost of the necessary improvement when it is undertaken, and the lack of ability of cities and towns to finance the work. These problems have been foremost in the minds of the men who have been most active in city planning.

The Massachusetts laws regarding public improvements are somewhat confusing, and give to city officials much more restricted powers than are given to officials of most States and cities in the country. In view of this fact, on petitions of the Massachusetts Homestead Commission and of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Legislature of 1914 established a commission composed of the Tax Commissioner, the Attorney-General and the chairman of the Homestead Commission, to investigate and to report to the Legislature of 1915 a bill embodying as nearly as possible a uniform method of procedure in the taking of land for public purposes, and for the assessment of betterments. This report is contained in House Document 1851 of the year 1915. The report was referred to the next General Court, and the commission was continued in force to give publicity to the same, and to receive suggestions relative to any changes or amendments to the proposed law, with instructions to report again to the General Court of 1916.

Copies of this report have been sent to the various planning boards in the State and will be in the hands of the public officials who are most interested in each city and large town. It is desired that a careful study should be made of this report, in order that it may have the intelligent attention of the public prior to action thereon by the Legislature of 1916.

The features of the proposed law which enlarge the powers of boards who are authorized to take land for public uses, in behalf of cities or other public authorities, are as follows: —

*First.* — When such taking board deems it advisable, it may vote that all questions of damage and all questions of assessment of betterments be determined prior to the actual entry upon the land. This enables the city to determine quite definitely, in advance, the cost of an undertaking, and to decide whether or not it is wise to embark upon it; and, as has occurred in some places when a city has deemed it inadvisable to undertake the expense of some public improvement, property holders most interested have consented to larger contributions to the cost than the statutes would require, and the result has made possible public improvements which the city would otherwise have been obliged to go without. An example of where the

work was actually undertaken by the city in advance of the ascertaining of damages was the bridge in Boston which was constructed over the tracks of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad near the South Station, and which, after involving a great cost to the city, has recently been taken down, because of the tremendous amount of damages for which the city would have been liable.

*Second.* — In the past, cities and towns have had various limitations on the power of assessing betterments, as for instance, 50 per cent. of the cost in some cases, 50 per cent. of the special benefit in others, limitations of assessment to abutters in other cases, etc. The proposed act makes it possible for a taking board in its discretion to assess the full amount of the benefit up to the full amount of the cost, in cases where such course is deemed to be fair.

*Third.* — A change in procedure which makes it possible, excepting where a jury trial is claimed, for all cases arising out of the same taking to be heard before a commission appointed by the court.

While we do not attempt to discuss the provisions of the law in detail, it is believed by the Commission that these added powers will tend to make possible a large amount of planning for the future at an expense which will be light in comparison with the cost under the present system. The following table, taken from House Document 1851, 1915, shows a comparison of debt statistics in Massachusetts cities with the debts of some western cities where a more liberal assessment law exists. These statistics indicate that the western cities which have adopted a more liberal attitude on assessment of betterments have been able to keep down the city debt to a small figure, when compared with Massachusetts cities.

*Comparison of City Debt Statistics.*

	Population in 1910.	Total Gross Debt in 1910.	Net Debt.	Net Debt per Capita.
Boston, Mass., . . . . .	670,585	\$118,666,742	\$75,676,830	\$106 42
Worcester, . . . . .	145,986	11,617,552	8,539,904	42 08
Quincy, . . . . .	32,642	2,681,519	2,296,896	66 39
Pittsfield, . . . . .	32,121	2,323,178	2,141,991	62 20
Cambridge, . . . . .	104,839	11,676,853	7,662,379	71 12
New Bedford, . . . . .	96,652	9,459,297	7,009,280	68 06
Springfield, . . . . .	88,926	6,886,700	5,801,513	61 11
Newton, . . . . .	39,806	5,881,684	3,069,401	74 51
Chicago, Ill., . . . . .	2,185,283	95,344,355	65,667,843	28 62
Detroit, Mich., . . . . .	465,766	15,157,031	9,109,375	18 09
Buffalo, N. Y., . . . . .	423,715	30,910,904	25,329,747	57 61
St. Louis, Mo., . . . . .	686,029	27,054,475	24,012,838	33 72
Kansas City, Mo., . . . . .	248,381	11,077,592	8,411,469	31 62
Denver, Col., . . . . .	213,381	10,104,752	878,840	3 82

It is easily seen that not only is there a saving in taxes to the inhabitants of those cities and towns having a small debt in proportion to the population, but also that there is available a larger amount of money for improvements which many of our eastern cities have found impossible even to consider.

**BUILDING LINES.**

In the carrying out of a city plan many desirable improvements appear to be unobtainable on account of the excessive cost. There is one method, however, by which, at a minimum cost, the future of a particular street may be controlled. That is by the use of laws relative to building lines. More than seventy-five years ago the first Mayor Quincy of Boston recommended the widening of Washington Street. This recommendation was not favorably acted upon because it was deemed that the injury had already been done, and that it was too late to take action. The congestion of Washington Street is now one of the great problems of the city of Boston.

On the other hand, in Philadelphia, in 1870, Chestnut Street was 40 feet in width, and realizing the need of a wider street an act was passed by which building lines were established 5 feet back of the old building line, but provision was made that damages should be payable only when the building was torn

down or set back to the new building line. Gradually during the past forty-five years Chestnut Street has been in the process of transformation from a narrow to a wide street, and the cost, which covers only the land value and not damages to buildings, has been distributed over a long period of years, whereas if the street had been widened in 1870 the cost would have been too large for the city to undertake. Some similar provisions are included in the statutes relative to many cities throughout the country.

In the State of Massachusetts there are two statutes which may effectively be used. The first is Revised Laws, chapter 48, section 103, as amended by the Acts of 1913, chapter 572. Under this statute a city or town accepting the provisions of the section may establish a building line not more than 40 feet distant from the exterior line of a highway or town way, and thereafter no structure shall be erected or maintained between such building lines or such way excepting steps, windows, porticoes, etc., providing, however, that existing buildings may be permitted to remain and be maintained to such extent and under such conditions as may be prescribed in the vote establishing such building lines. The procedure and remedies are the same as in the case of the laying out of town ways. This statute makes it possible for a city or town to establish its building lines and to provide that existing buildings shall not be interfered with, in which case the damages will be only for the easement, and would not in any case exceed the value of the land included. This eliminates a large portion of the cost, but makes all damages payable in the immediate future. In that respect it is less advantageous than the Philadelphia statute, but under the Philadelphia law the land damages, while distributed over a longer period, would usually be much larger because of the constant increase in the land values in a city street. While this statute is valuable in controlling the future growth of business streets, it is also valuable in maintaining the character of residential streets with wide lawns, and may be used to affect future housing conditions materially.

Revised Laws, chapter 28, section 16, may be invoked in cities and towns accepting the section, in the case of parkways,

boulevards or public ways on which a park abuts. It provides for the establishment of building lines not more than 25 feet from the exterior line of such ways, and limits the height of buildings to 70 feet, exclusive of such steeples, towers, domes, etc., as may be approved by the board of park commissioners. The procedure and remedies are the same as in the case of the laying out of town ways.

### THE FINANCING OF HOMESTEAD WORK.

By one of the provisions of chapter 595, Acts of 1913, the Homestead Commission was authorized "to promote the formation of organizations intended to increase the supply of wholesome homes for the people." Acting under this provision, the Commission studied the co-operative methods by which private capital is employed in the construction of homes, both in this and in foreign countries. It desired to formulate safe and simple plans for co-operation in creating and acquiring homes. In its first annual report the Commission set forth four plans of organization of improved housing companies, embodying the conservative and successful features already tried at home and abroad.

Since publishing that report the Commission has investigated every opportunity which has come to its knowledge for establishing such companies. Of four more or less immediate prospects, conditions at Billerica were found to be unusually favorable for a successful undertaking. The establishment of the \$3,000,000 Boston & Maine repair shops, which opened in February, 1914, and which have 1,200 operatives and are expected ultimately to have 2,000 to 3,000, created a great demand for workingmen's homes in a formerly rural community. Other manufacturers are locating near by in order to utilize the supply of labor. This means an increase of possibly 10,000 or more in population. The establishment of a model community near the factory had the approval and backing of the officials of the shops, who desired, as much as the workmen, to secure good living conditions. Near-by land was yet cheap, though much had been exploited and was held at prices no longer attractive to the operatives.



Because the enterprise was co-operative in its nature, avoided private profits by limiting its dividends, and sought to increase the supply of workers' homes at a place where they seemed to be particularly needed, the Commission gave encouragement and advice in the organization of Billerica Garden Suburb, Inc., which was incorporated June 30, 1914, with Thomas Jennings, superintendent of the Boston & Maine repair shops at Billerica, as president; W. P. Sheppard, Esq., as clerk; Rev. Charles H. Williams of Billerica, treasurer and general manager. The company took over a 54-acre estate at North Billerica, 21 miles from Boston and within a five-cent carfare of Lowell, adjoining the station and the present village center, where schools and other public buildings make immediate development possible, and less than a mile from the shops, to which a free workingmen's train carries the men directly from the North Billerica station. The cost was below that demanded for property farther from the works and with less attractive surroundings.

This marked the first conclusive stage in bringing into existence in this country improved co-operative methods of housing for workingmen that have proved successful in England, for nowhere else in the United States, so far as is known, have the five essential elements — site planning, limited number of houses per acre, wholesale operations, limited dividend, and participation by the residents — been combined in an undertaking designed to meet the needs of the workman earning \$12 to \$20 per week.

Dividends are limited to 5 per cent., cumulative. Each resident must be a shareholder. A portion of the tract will be turned over to a co-partnership society for development by that method; in another section houses will be sold outright on installments; in a third section houses for rent will be built, and in the fourth section the company will construct special buildings as the demand arises for shops, lodgings, boarding houses, etc. Provision is made for community buildings, playgrounds and allotment gardens. Capital to the extent of \$50,000 was sought to initiate the undertaking. In August a prospectus was issued, and at that time nearly \$16,540 had been sub-

scribed. By October 1 the roads on thirty acres had been graded and the first three houses were begun. In December, nineteen families were living on the estate.

### IMPROVED HOUSING COMPANIES.

In July an inquiry was sent out to all the American companies known to be engaged in improved housing and not organized primarily for profit. Nine questions were asked, resulting in answers from which the accompanying tabulation was compiled. It is believed that many other such companies exist, but as there is no organized central clearing house of information there is no means of ascertaining their names or activities. In the accompanying list no industrial or other corporation carrying on housing as a side issue is included, though two or three of the companies listed are known to be backed to a large degree by such corporations. Most of the companies listed are of the strictly limited dividend type urged by the Homestead Commission in its first annual report, and it is a pleasure to note that one of these—the Billerica Garden Suburb, Inc.—is a direct result of their recommendations. The remaining companies which have been included have been closely scrutinized to make sure that they are neither paying dividends exceeding 5 or 6 per cent. nor organized with that expectation, but are, as are all the limited dividend companies, organized primarily to assist in relieving bad housing conditions. A summary of the table opposite this page indicates that over fifteen millions are invested in this type of property, and nearly 6,500 families are housed, nearly 1,200 of these being in one-family homes.

The Commission intends during the coming year to secure more complete details concerning the activities of these companies which provide one-family houses on a bit of land,—aggregating not over fifteen families per acre gross. These are virtually the American counterparts of the English garden suburbs. The Commission would be glad to receive particulars of any properties of this sort for inclusion in its tabulation.

Partial List of Improved Housing Companies.

Date of Information.	NAME OF COMPANY.	Location.	Date begun.	Dividend Limit (Per Cent.).	Capital.	Value of Property.	Area (Acres).	Number of Families per Acre.	HOUSES SOLD.		HOUSES RENTED.			TENEMENTS RENTED.			Total Number of Families.	Remarks.	
									Number of Families.	Range in Average Price per Family.	Number of Families in One-Family.	Number of Families in Two-Family.	Range in Average Rent per Family.	Number of Buildings.	Number of Families.	Range in Average Rent per Family.			
1914	Goodyear Heights Realty Company, . . .	Akron, O., . . .	1912	-	\$10,000	\$445,000	400.0	4	84	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	88	Sell at cost.	
1914	Albany Home Building Company, . . .	Albany, N. Y., . . .	1911	5	70,000	177,000	6.0	11	43	\$1,900-\$3,300	15	8	\$17-\$30	-	-	-	66		
1914	Billerica Garden Suburb, Inc., . . .	Billerica, Mass., . . .	1914	5	16,540	27,000	56.0	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Boston Co-operative Building Company, . . .	Boston, Mass., . . .	1871	7	292,000	375,200	25.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	332	Value is assessed valuation.	
1914	Boston Dwelling House Company, . . .	Boston, Mass., . . .	1912	-	522,000	512,716	29.5	10	6	4,850- 5,400	21	-	26- 35	6	74	\$26-\$38	100		
1914	Improved Dwelling Association, . . .	Boston, Mass., . . .	1885	-	100,000	100,775	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	4½	11	76	Two per cent. dividend paid.
1915	Westerly Gardens, . . .	Bound Brook, N. J., . . .	1911	-	-	98,419	5.1	10	-	-	1	48	12- 16	-	-	-	49		
1914	Improved Dwellings (Mr. A. T. White), . . .	Brooklyn, N. Y., . . .	1887	-	600,000	600,000	-	-	-	-	34	-	19	18	500	-	534	Not incorporated.	
1914	Cincinnati Model Homes Company, . . .	Cincinnati, O., . . .	1913	5	500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	66	-	66		
1914	J. P. Schmidlapp, . . .	Cincinnati, O., . . .	1912	5	-	140,000	-	-	-	-	-	96	7½- 17	-	-	-	96	Value is estimated.	
1915	Model Homes Building Company, . . .	Evansville, Ind., . . .	1915	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Sage Foundation Homes Company, . . .	Forest Hills, L. I., N. Y., . . .	1911	-	-	3,500,000	200.0	-	128	12,000	30	-	75	1	17	42½	172		
1914	Framingham Associates, . . .	Framingham, Mass., . . .	1907	-	55,000	-	-	-	15	3,000	5	14	15- 30	-	-	-	34		
-	Gary Land Company, . . .	Gary, Ind., . . .	1909	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Province of Nova Scotia Land Corporation, . . .	Halifax, N. S., . . .	1914	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Municipal Housing Company, . . .	Los Angeles, Cal., . . .	1914	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Improved Housing Association of New Haven, . . .	New Haven, Conn., . . .	1914	5	13,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	16	12- 17	-	-	-	16		
1914	City and Suburban Homes Company, . . .	New York City, . . .	1896	5	4,104,090	6,795,018	-	-	97	2,700- 6,800	153	-	18- 35	58	2,757	9-26	3,007		
1911	Octavia Hill Association, . . .	Philadelphia, Pa., . . .	1896	4	200,000	175,000	-	-	-	-	259	58	5- 11½	45	279	11½- 14	596		
-	Improved Tenement Corporation, . . .	Providence, R. I., . . .	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Quebec Sanitary Housing Company, Ltd., . . .	Quebec, Can., . . .	1914	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
1914	Toronto Housing Company, . . .	Toronto, Can., . . .	1912	6	1,000,000	290,000	210.0	-	-	-	6	32	12- 26½	-	-	-	38		
1914	Washington Sanitary Housing Company, . . .	Washington, D. C., . . .	1905	5	140,600	185,268	-	-	50	-	-	138	8- 12	-	-	-	188		
1914	Washington Sanitary Improvement Co., . . .	Washington, D. C., . . .	1897	5	500,000	944,059	-	-	-	-	-	578	7½- 18	-	-	-	578		
1914	Woodlawn Company, . . .	Wilmington, Del., . . .	1903	-	-	587,000	16.5	23½	-	-	150	240	10½- 14½	-	-	-	390	A few rent at \$6 and \$20.	
1914	Modern Homes Company, . . .	Youngstown, O., . . .	1910	5	155,000	200,000	8.0	-	-	-	87	-	10- 25	-	-	-	87		
	Total, 26 companies, . . .		-	-	\$8,284,230	\$15,177,455	959.1	-	423	-	761	1,232	-	221	4,098	-	6,504		

<sup>1</sup> Not for profit.

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**BULLETINS.**

The Homestead Commission has issued three bulletins.

BULLETIN No. 1 was a single page leaflet setting forth the meaning of city planning, as follows: City planning means conservation of human energy and preservation of life, particularly child life, not merely superficial beautification; economy, necessity, scientific reality, not extravagance, dreams, fads; conformity to definite plan of orderly development into which each improvement will fit as it is needed, not the immediate execution of the whole plan; saving in cost of public improvements by business methods for city business, not the surrender of the city to artists with vague schemes for civic adornment; correlation of the city's activities, not wholesale alterations at great expense, with no assured financial returns; encouragement of commerce and facilitation of business, not the interruption of commerce and business; preservation of historic buildings with their traditions, not the destruction of the old landmarks and city individuality; the development of an American city worthy of civic pride, not imitation of London, Vienna and Paris; the rule of common foresight and prudence, not the rule of chance, with ruinous expense and debt; happiness, convenience, health, for all citizens, not merely expensive boulevards and parks available only to the rich.

BULLETIN No. 2 was entitled "Information and Suggestions for City and Town Planning Boards." It stated that the task originally assigned to the Homestead Commission was to report to the Legislature a bill embodying a plan "whereby, with the assistance of the Commonwealth, homesteads or small houses and plots of ground may be acquired by mechanics, factory employees, laborers and others in the suburbs of cities and towns."

The Supreme Court rendered an opinion that the use of public funds to assist people to acquire homesteads is unconstitutional. Therefore the Legislature instructed the Commission to continue its investigation of the need of providing homesteads, and recommend such legislation as would tend to increase the supply of wholesome homes. Considering that

infantile mortality rates are a fair index of the character of the social and industrial environment of the people, the Commission studied these rates as the most effective means of determining the extent of the need of providing homesteads. The following table taken from Bulletin No. 2, and brought up to the close of 1913, shows the course of infant mortality rates for a period of years in the State and in cities and towns:—

*Infantile Mortality. Death Rate in Massachusetts Cities of Infants under One Year per 1,000 Births, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912 and 1913.*

CITIES.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.
<b>The State,</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>110.1</b>
Beverly,	86	94	88	111	50	79.0
Boston,	149	120	126	126	117	110.0
Brockton,	97	119	99	78	100	97.0
Cambridge,	118	102	119	114	97	98.0
Chelsea,	92	97	88	78	70	78.5
Chicopee,	170	170	165	151	177	137.5
Everett,	117	75	79	68	95	103.7
Fall River,	178	186	186	177	151	150.9
Fitchburg,	141	110	105	89	105	110.7
Gloucester,	150	130	99	111	109	96.5
Haverhill,	104	110	142	96	120	109.4
Holyoke,	182	231	213	183	163	199.8
Lawrence,	155	172	167	141	135	128.0
Lowell,	202	185	231	189	184	151.4
Lynn,	111	99	97	102	112	82.4
Malden,	100	96	90	76	84	58.6
Marlborough,	87	121	104	88	114	77.2
Medford,	62	75	59	61	100	59.0
Melrose,	65	82	121	60	40	58.6
New Bedford,	144	143	177	148	156	142.9
Newburyport,	91	72	119	105	46	58.5
Newton,	87	91	94	93	76	83.7
North Adams,	94	152	101	106	113	75.9
Northampton,	138	119	101	107	92	94.5
Pittsfield,	89	118	123	107	100	105.6
Quincy,	113	97	103	102	82	107.9
Salem,	174	126	123	129	121	133.5
Somerville,	98	84	101	93	78	86.5
Springfield,	96	114	124	102	102	104.0
Taunton,	152	168	212	157	171	148.2
Waltham,	81	92	83	99	87	56.7
Woburn,	111	102	136	84	114	117.1
Worcester,	114	121	137	111	133	105.3

The bulletin states that while better care, better feeding and better industrial and economic conditions will aid in reducing child mortality, the basic need is a wholesome home. Since direct financial aid to increasing the supply of wholesome homes is impossible under the Constitution, indirect measures to the same end had been recommended by the Commission, among them city and town planning. The bulletin states "that while in every other realm of human activity all undertakings are carried on in accordance with carefully considered plans made in advance, in the building of cities and towns, which are the homes of thousands or millions, there is little or no forethought, design or previous plan. The results are what might be expected, and are to be seen in the unhealthful, unsightly, inconvenient areas that abound in all cities and towns. The world is just awakening to the folly of such a course, and Massachusetts, by the appointment of its planning boards, has taken the lead on this continent in directing a wholesome development of its cities and towns."

Preliminary and suggestive information on that subject followed, and other subjects referred to were building and housing laws, assessment of betterments, teaching suburban agriculture to families, and the constitutional amendment permitting public funds to be used for the purpose of relieving congestion of population and providing homes for citizens, and foreign activities along these lines.

BULLETIN No. 3 was entitled "Teaching Agriculture to Families as a Relief for Unemployment and Congestion of Population." The amazing growth of cities and the stationary or decreasing population of many rural districts, the small percentage of workers in Massachusetts following agricultural pursuits, and the decrease in the number of dairy cows, were mentioned as emphasizing the vital necessity of giving the fullest possible opportunity to all who are willing to engage in any agricultural calling, whether as an occupation for spare time or the means of a livelihood. Attention was called to the large amounts of land and large numbers of workers that are idle, and the fact that many workers would be glad to take up some agricultural pursuits.

Two almost insurmountable obstacles confront the city dweller who would like a suburban or rural home, with partial or full employment: first, lack of the knowledge necessary to conduct any agricultural venture, small or large; secondly, lack of the capital to carry a family over to the time of production.

The first obstacle is largely an educational one. It is necessary to provide for city dwellers opportunity to learn agriculture. This is not at all difficult, provided that access to land is possible. But for persons in congested centers access to land is the last thing possible. It is essential, then, in order to impart such instruction to those persons, to provide for the temporary use of a plot of ground, together, in some instances, with a place for temporary abode.

As an educational process, teaching agriculture would become immediately effective in benefits to the individual, the family, the community and the Commonwealth. To the individual to whom is offered an opportunity to satisfy a sincere desire for rural or suburban life comes increase of knowledge, a broader outlook, a new environment, some freedom from drudgery, variety of work, activity in the open air, better health, greater contentment, security of employment, and the initiative and responsibility incident to being his own employer. To the family is given all of these, and in addition a new source of income, a more attractive and healthful home, contact with nature instead of with pavements, gutters and brick walls. The change from tenement to garden or field, giving larger opportunity and new environment, might be expected to transform the life of a child into usefulness and health. Instead of a possible menace to society the child becomes an asset. It is difficult to picture the extent of the benefits to flow from such a change in family environment. Education can perform no more beneficent service than to give to an entire family a new way of living and a new resource from which to gain a livelihood. The community and the Commonwealth would both gain by an elevated standard of citizenship and intelligence, an increasing instead of decreasing food supply, with a



lessening demand; and diminishing unemployment, congestion, disease, immorality, vice, crime and ignorance.

Of this project the Massachusetts Board of Education says (House 2164, 1914, pp. 7, 13): —

To secure adequate knowledge whereupon to base future practice it is desirable that the way be opened for carefully conducted experiments in offering agricultural instruction to families who are desirous of obtaining it. . . . The dwelling, the tillable land and the small buildings for live stock which might thus be rented to two families might be regarded during the life of the experiment as a sort of combined "dormitory" and "laboratory" device adapted to this special form of agricultural instruction. In all respects the arrangement should be looked upon as an educational experiment until its results shall have been demonstrated.

Such a school should be no financial burden. Persons or families using either ground or house for the purpose of giving greater effect to agricultural instruction would expect and would be expected to pay the fair market value for such privilege. The income from that source would go far to meet the cost of the school. It might possibly entirely cover it. For families resident upon the property, rental and carfare cost would be partly, if not entirely, offset by the value of their garden products.

The teaching of families has ample precedent in the advice, information, supervision and instruction by correspondence given by national and State governments on numberless subjects, while the provision of houses for temporary occupancy would be only a different form of the dormitory system, in vogue at almost all colleges. The proposition appears to be not only in accord with section 2, chapter V., Part II. of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, but is in furtherance of the objects stated in that section. The constitutional requirement referred to makes it the duty of the Legislature to encourage education and promote agriculture, both of which are contemplated in the proposal to establish schools at which families may be taught agriculture.

## RECOMMENDATIONS.

The following recommendations were submitted to the General Court in advance of the report (House 635, 1915):—

In compliance with the provisions of chapter 452 of the Acts of 1910, the following parts of the second annual report of this commission, covering the year ending December 31, 1914, which contain recommendations for legislative action, each accompanied by a draft of a bill embodying the legislation recommended, are submitted herewith.

The recommendations of the Homestead Commission are intended to be in line with and in pursuance of the purpose expressed by the General Court in the act creating the Commission (chapter 607, Acts of 1911), which is that "with the assistance of the commonwealth homesteads or small houses and plots of ground may be acquired by mechanics, laborers and others in the suburbs of cities and towns." When it was found to be unconstitutional for the Commonwealth to lend any direct assistance toward the acquirement of such homesteads (Opinion of the Justices, 211 Mass. 624), and when the General Court, under chapter 714, Acts of 1912, authorized the Homestead Commission to continue its investigations and make further reports, the Commission had no option but to recommend such measures as would indirectly tend to promote the same purpose; that is, measures which would tend to increase the supply and make it easier for laborers, mechanics and others to acquire wholesome homes. With this end in view the Commission has considered among others the following subjects:—

1. City and town planning.
2. Teaching suburban agriculture to families.
3. Equitable assessment of betterments.
4. Housing.
5. How private capital may be interested and safely invested in improved housing facilities.
6. Co-operative banks.
7. Restrictions in residential districts.

City and town planning is comparatively a new subject, particularly in America, but its fundamental importance is rapidly coming to be realized by all who have community welfare at heart. That the Commonwealth can without great expense teach agriculture to families now living in tenements is probably a new suggestion. None of the other subjects considered are new, but it appears evident that some of their operations could be extended so as to be of greater benefit than they now are.

The first recommendation made by the Commission related to town and city planning. It was enacted into law in chapter 494 of the Acts of 1913. The principal provision of that act is that each city and town with more than 10,000 inhabitants shall "create a board to be known as the planning board, whose duty it shall be to make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town, particularly with respect to conditions which may be injurious to the public health or otherwise injurious in and about rented dwellings, and to make plans for the development of the municipality with special reference to the proper housing of its people." Compliance with the law has been quite general though not complete.

In 1914 the General Court passed an act (chapter 283) authorizing the establishment of planning boards by towns having a population of less than 10,000.

Many of the local planning boards have made recommendations of great value to their communities, some of which have been adopted and others are pending. No board has yet, however, definitely undertaken either of the two great tasks specially assigned to it, which are (1) "to make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town," and (2) to "make plans for the development of the municipality." These are large tasks, and work upon them should begin at as early a date as possible. Great and continuing benefits follow systematic, well-considered planning for the growth and development of cities and towns, in health, economy, convenience and beauty. The public health is improved, and mortality rates, particularly of infants, are lowered by the prevention and elimination of unsanitary areas, thus reducing the

dangers arising from the spread of disease. Large economies ensue when each improvement is treated as part of a general plan that embraces all the activities and functions of the municipal government. The future, like the past, will witness the expenditure of vast sums of money on both public and private improvements. Great savings can be made by pursuing a comprehensive and systematic plan. A carefully devised city or town plan, made in advance, showing when and how improvements ought to be made, fitting them in properly with other improvements made and to be made, would not only secure uniformity, but actually involve a smaller outlay. The convenience in transit and transportation resulting from well-planned streets, railways and waterways saves thousands yearly. There is no good reason why unsightly, unhealthful spots should disfigure our municipalities.

### 1. Larger Powers for Local Planning Boards.

Last year the Homestead Commission recommended the enactment of a measure giving larger powers to local planning boards. City officials and certain others objected to the bill, in that it was compulsory and interfered with the powers of certain city departments, and it failed of enactment. The Commission submits this year a bill with similar purpose, which becomes operative or not, at the option of city or town. The Commission believes that such powers as are incorporated in this bill would be valuable to any city or town which wishes to have the necessary powers for carrying out the city plan. (House 636, 1915.)

### 2. City Planning Conferences.

Two successful conferences on city and town planning have been held at the call of the Governor of the Commonwealth on the suggestion of the Homestead Commission, — November 17 and 18, 1913, and December 16, 1914. The purpose of these conferences was to provide opportunity for members of local planning boards to discuss together their difficulties and projects, and so promote and unify the work throughout the Common-

wealth. Stenographic notes were taken of the last conference, and it is the intention to supply the members of the boards with copies. It is believed that these conferences will be more successful, the attendance increased and their value greatly enhanced if they are made a fixture by being established by law. Their conclusions would probably have greater weight with the public, particularly in the communities from which the boards come. Local officials would give greater heed to recommendations backed by the opinion of all the boards of the State. Therefore we recommend the enactment of the accompanying bill, providing for such conferences at least once a year. (House 637, 1915.)

### 3. Representation from the Health Department.

The act creating the Homestead Commission (chapter 607, Acts of 1911) provided that the State Board of Health should be represented upon this Commission. Upon the creation of the Health Department as now constituted no provision was made for the continuance of such representation. The accompanying bill (House 638, 1915) rectifies that omission.

### 4. Teaching Agriculture to Families.

The constant flow of population from country to city, with no adequate outlet, emphasizes the vital necessity of giving the fullest possible opportunity to all who are willing to engage in any agricultural calling, whether an occupation for spare time or the means for a livelihood is sought. Investigation <sup>1</sup> shows that many of those living in crowded tenements and employed in workshops, factories, stores, etc., would be glad of an opportunity of escape to suburban or rural life. Two almost insurmountable obstacles confront those city dwellers who would like a suburban or rural home with partial or full employment:—

First, lack of the knowledge necessary to conduct any agricultural venture, small or large.

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<sup>1</sup> House 2164, 1914.

Secondly, lack of the capital necessary to carry a family over to the time of production.

Public funds are being freely used, directly or indirectly, in nearly all progressive countries to increase the supply of wholesome homes and make them more available to working people, but here such use of public money is held to be unconstitutional. However, much private capital could be secured if those who wish for such an opportunity were equipped to insure success; but few if any of them have the knowledge, experience or training to carry on any such a venture. Without knowledge, experience and training, nearly every attempt at any branch of agriculture, by the city family, or city man or boy, is doomed to failure. Logically, then, the first step toward the relief of congestion and unemployment is to equip those desirous of turning from city to country with the knowledge, experience and training necessary to enable them to maintain themselves there. The problem, therefore, becomes largely an educational one. It is necessary that we provide for city dwellers opportunity to learn agriculture. This is not at all difficult provided that access to land is possible; but for persons in congested centers, access to land is the last thing possible. It is essential, then, in order to impart such instruction to those persons, to provide for the temporary use of a plot of ground, together, in some instances, with a place for temporary abode. Such a school should be no great financial burden. Persons or families taking advantage of the instruction offered by the school and temporarily using either ground or house for the purpose of giving greater effect to such instruction would expect and would be expected to pay the fair market value of such privilege. The income from that source would go far to meet the cost of the school. For families resident upon the property rental and carfare would be partly, if not entirely, offset by the value of their garden products. (House 639, 1915.)

Yours respectfully,

CHARLES F. GETTEMY, *Chairman,*

HENRY STERLING, *Secretary,*

*For the Commission.*

Under chapter 607 of the Acts of 1911 the Homestead Commission was “authorized to report to the next General Court in 1912 a bill or bills embodying a plan or method of carrying it out, whereby homesteads may be acquired,” etc.; that by chapter 714 of the Acts of 1912 said Commission was “directed to continue its investigation and report in 1913, with recommendations for legislation,” and that by chapter 595 of the Acts of 1913 the Commission was “directed to make another annual report to the General Court.” The Supreme Court has decided that certain of the propositions heretofore made would be unconstitutional, and it appears to me that up to this time there is no direction or authorization for the Commission to suggest legislation. As the drafts of bills to be offered proposed to augment the scope of the Commission and have it enter on new propositions, it seems to me that the initiative for new legislation should come properly from the Legislature, or from people outside the Commission. I, for myself, would favor that the Commission recommend no new legislation of the character suggested, particularly as the Legislature has omitted to direct us to do so.

Very truly yours,

AUGUSTUS L. THORNDIKE.

### The Bills proposed.

HOUSE 636, 1915.

AN ACT TO PERMIT CERTAIN CITIES AND TOWNS TO DEFINE THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THEIR LOCAL PLANNING BOARDS.

*Be it enacted, etc., as follows:*

SECTION 1. In cities and towns having a local planning board, as provided in chapter four hundred and ninety-four of the acts of the year nineteen hundred and thirteen, and as provided in chapter two hundred and eighty-three of the acts of the year nineteen hundred and fourteen, the said planning boards shall, upon acceptance of this act as hereinafter provided, have the powers and duties hereinafter set forth in addition to the duties and powers imposed under the aforesaid statutes under which they were created.

SECTION 2. In cities and towns accepting the provisions of this act, where there is both a board of survey and a planning board, the members of said board of survey shall become ex-officio members of said planning board. The term of each member of said planning board,

including said members of the board of survey, shall be the same for which he was originally appointed and, as vacancies occur, appointments shall be made for such terms as will result in the expiration of approximately an equal number of the members of the board each year, and thereafter appointments shall be made for a fixed term of not less than three years each: *provided, however*, that no appointments need be made unless the membership, by reason of vacancies, should become less than five.

SECTION 3. The clerk of the city council or other board having the power of a city council in cities shall, upon introduction, furnish to the planning board for its consideration, a copy of all ordinances, orders and resolutions relating to the location of any public building of the city, and to the location, extension, widening, enlargement, ornamentation and parking of any street, boulevard, parkway, park, playground or other public grounds, and to the vacation of any street or other alteration of the city plan of streets and highways and to the location of any bridge, tunnel or subway, or of any surface, underground or elevated railway, and shall also furnish any other information requested by said planning board. The selectmen in towns shall furnish all such information relating to proposed by-laws or votes to town planning boards.

SECTION 4. The planning board shall cause to be made under its direction a map or maps of the city or town, showing thereon the location, width and grades of streets, parks, playgrounds, schools, civic centers and other public property, also of all railroads and electric railways, the development of private property and such other natural and artificial features as may be desirable. Said board shall further draught upon said map or maps the location, width and grades of such thoroughfares, parks, playgrounds, schools, civic centers and other public property and building lines and other easements and restrictions as the board shall be of opinion that the present or future interests of the public require or will require for a comprehensive city or town plan. Before recommending such plan the board shall give a public hearing or public hearings thereon, after giving notice of such hearing by publication at least twice in a newspaper published in the city or town, or if no newspaper is published in said city or town then, by one published in the county in which said city or town is situated, the first publication to be at least one month and the last not more than seven days before the hearing and keeping the plan open to public inspection for one month prior to said hearing. After said hearing and after the alterations deemed necessary by the board have been made in such plan, the same may be recommended by said planning board to the city or town, and a copy shall be filed in the office of the planning board and shall be deemed a public record. The city council or board having the powers of a city council in cities shall forthwith take action upon the adoption of said plan, and in towns the question



shall be voted upon by the voters not later than at the next annual town meeting, and upon its adoption a copy of the said plan and a certified record of the vote of adoption shall be filed in the registry of deeds for the county and district in which said city or town is situated and shall thereupon become the official plan of said city or town. Said planning board may, from time to time, recommend alterations in and additions to said plan, and the procedure upon adoption shall be as herein provided for the adoption of the original plan.

SECTION 5. Any person, corporation or public authority desiring to lay out, locate, relocate or construct any street or public way or private way in any town or city included under the provisions of this act shall, before taking such action, submit to said planning board, with a petition for its approval, suitable plan showing the location, width and grades of such street or way, to be prepared in accordance with such rules and regulations as the board may prescribe. Upon receipt of such plans and petition the board shall give a public hearing thereon, after giving notice thereof in the manner provided in section four of this act, and after such hearing the board shall, if said street or way does not conflict with the city or town plan as filed in accordance with section four of this act, or in portions of the city or town which have not been covered by the city or town plan does not, in their judgment, conflict with proper development of the city or town, approve the same, or if it does conflict it may alter such plans and may determine where such street or way shall be located and the width and grades thereof and shall so designate on said plans. The plans shall then be approved and signed by the board and filed in the aforesaid registry of deeds and shall thereupon become a part of the official plan of the city or town.

SECTION 6. If any person or corporation shall hereafter open for public travel any private way, the location, width and grades of which have not previously been approved by the city planning board in the manner provided for in this act, then neither the city or town or any other public authority shall place any public sewer, drain, water pipe or light in, or do any public work of any kind on such private way so opened to public travel contrary to the provisions of this act: *provided, however*, that these provisions shall not prevent the laying of a trunk sewer or water main if it be required by engineering necessities.

SECTION 7. Cities and towns accepting this act may, from time to time, appropriate sums of money to be expended by the planning board for carrying out the provisions of this act, and said board may employ experts and such clerical service as it deems necessary, but no expenditures shall be made in excess of such appropriations.

SECTION 8. Said planning board, its officers and agents may, so far as they deem necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act, enter upon any lands and there make such examinations and surveys

and place and maintain such monuments and marks as they may deem necessary, and any person whose property is injured by such entry or by such placing or maintaining who fails to agree with the town or city as to the amount of his damages may have them assessed and determined in the manner provided by law in the case of land taken for the laying out of highways in said city or town, on application at any time within one year after such entry or after such placing or maintaining.

SECTION 9. This act shall not be construed to authorize any taking or condemnation of land or to render a city or town liable for damages of any kind, except for making entries upon land and for placing and maintaining monuments and marks as authorized by section eight of this act, nor to authorize a town to lay out or to construct any way located on any of said plans until such way has been laid out under the provisions of the statutes in relation to streets and ways.

SECTION 10. This act shall take effect in any town upon its acceptance by vote of the town at an annual town meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose, and in a city upon its acceptance by a majority vote of the members of each branch of the city council or corresponding body of that city present and voting thereon and on the approval of the mayor; and for the purpose of being submitted to the voters as aforesaid this act shall take effect upon its passage.

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HOUSE 637, 1915.

AN ACT RELATING TO CONFERENCES OF CITY PLANNING BOARDS.

*Be it enacted, etc., as follows:*

SECTION 1. The homestead commission is hereby authorized and directed to call a planning conference at least once in each year, and it shall be the duty of the members of local planning boards to attend the same. The expense of the attendance of said members may be met out of the appropriation for expenses of the local planning boards.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

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HOUSE 638, 1915.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOMESTEAD COMMISSION.

*Be it enacted, etc., as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section one of chapter six hundred and seven of the acts of the year nineteen hundred and eleven is hereby amended by striking out the word "board", in the fifth line, and inserting in place thereof the word:—department,—and by striking out the word "board", in the sixth line of said section, and inserting in place thereof the word:

— department, — so that the aforesaid section will read as follows:—

*Section 1.* A commission is hereby established, to be known as the homestead commission, and to consist of the following persons:— the director of the bureau of statistics, the bank commissioner, the president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, one member of the state department of health, to be selected by the department, and three other persons to be appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of the council. The three members of the commission last named shall be appointed in the first place for terms of one, two and three years, respectively, and thereafter their successors shall be appointed for terms of three years. Of the persons so appointed by the governor, one shall be a woman, and one at least shall represent the laboring class. The commission shall report to the next general court, not later than the tenth day of January in the year nineteen hundred and twelve, a bill or bills embodying a plan and the method of carrying it out whereby, with the assistance of the commonwealth homesteads or small houses and plots of ground may be acquired by mechanics, factory employees, laborers and others in the suburbs of cities and towns. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be allowed such sums for their expenses as may be approved by the governor and council.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

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HOUSE 639, 1915.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF  
AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION FOR FAMILIES.

*Be it enacted, etc., as follows:*

SECTION 1. Any city or town which accepts the provisions of this act may establish and maintain schools for teaching to families and to individuals, in day, part time and evening classes, gardening, fruit growing, floriculture, poultry keeping, animal husbandry, and other branches of agriculture and horticulture, subject to approval by the state board of education. The location and organization of such schools shall also be subject to the approval of the board of education.

SECTION 2. After the acceptance of this act and before taking further action thereon the school committee shall cause to be circulated a general description of the purposes and scope of the schools herein provided for, with request for information regarding those desiring such instruction.

SECTION 3. The city council or other board of officers in cities in whom is vested the power to take land for school purposes, or the inhabitants of a town, may vote to take in fee any land not appropriated to public uses for the purpose of maintaining said schools, or may

lease or purchase in fee any land, either within or without the city or town limits for said purpose.

SECTION 4. The school committee of said city or town may erect suitable school buildings upon said land and may make provision, on terms that will not involve loss to the city or town, for houses and plots of ground for the temporary use of families attending the school and complying with its regulations, who have not access to other land suitable to give proper effect to the instruction of the school.

SECTION 5. This act shall be submitted to the voters of each of the cities and towns of the commonwealth at the next annual state election for their acceptance or rejection, and shall take effect in any city or town if a majority of the voters voting thereon shall vote in the affirmative. For the purpose of being submitted to the voters, as aforesaid, this act shall take effect upon its passage.

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APPENDICES.

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## APPENDIX I.

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### REPORTS FROM LOCAL PLANNING BOARDS.

#### Adams.

The planning committee had no funds at its disposal, but working with the board of selectmen made recommendations regarding the location of trees on Turn Verein Street; the widening of Melrose Street; granolithic walk around public library; grading and beautifying grounds around town hall; the protection of trees; the straightening of part of Columbia Street; public bathing places; revision of town laws.

#### Beverly.

The local planning board hopes to have a comprehensive plan made of the city. To the city government the board recommended a systematic collection of information regarding the assets of the city; a systematic plan of building sidewalks, that the practice of building a sidewalk here and there be discontinued, and that continuous artificial sidewalks be laid on both sides of Cabot Street from the bridge to Gloucester crossing. In the matter of a new bathhouse at Dane Street Beach, the board recommended the creation of a committee to investigate alleged pollution of the bathing water by sewage, that the present bathhouse be put in condition suitable for use and certain regulations be adopted in its management. The board appealed for the co-operation of the city government and the citizens in making Beverly, if possible, a better and pleasanter place in which to live.

#### Boston.

In order to facilitate its work the board was organized into committees on comprehensive plan, social and economic survey, education and publicity, housing, streets and transportation. The board recommended a topographical survey of the business sections of the city. Under the board of survey act a large part of the suburban districts have been surveyed, but such survey has never been extended to the city proper. In the opinion of the planning board this work should be extended to cover the entire city as a prelim-

inary to wise planning of the thoroughfares, which planning might be carried into execution from time to time as old buildings are demolished, either by fire or for rebuilding purposes. Preliminary work has been done on the alleviation of hot weather conditions. The board feels that the greatest possible use should be made of the Charles River Basin, whether by an island in the middle of the stream or by a temporary floating structure several acres in extent, thus affording a pleasure resort within the reach of the residents of the North and West Ends. All the islands in Boston Harbor which are owned by the city should be used to their full capacity during the summer months to relieve conditions in tenement-house districts.

At the request of the mayor a personal inspection has been made of existing playgrounds in the Brighton-Allston district. A comprehensive report and recommendations have been made.

An appeal for the widening and straightening of the main thoroughfares of the city, particularly in the suburban districts, before they are so thoroughly built up on the present lines as to make the cost prohibitive, has been addressed to the mayor and city council. At that time there were pending before the city council two orders appropriating \$400,000 each for "Highways, Making of." Dividing the streets of Boston into three classes, — main thoroughfares, minor thoroughfares and residential streets, — the planning board argued that such residential streets as were private should be taken by the city as rapidly as possible, solely on account of the improvement in the appearance of the city which would result; that the only change in the condition of private streets when they are accepted is that the city assumes the responsibility for their repair and the liability for accidents thereon; and that this extra burden which the city assumes when it accepts a private street is a sufficient return for the benefit which the city as a whole receives; and that all other cost of laying out the streets should be borne by the abutters, since the benefit is almost entirely theirs. The report contended that if the sum of \$400,000 should be appropriated under conditions which would insure its return from the abutters within a year, it could at the expiration of the year be used again for a similar purpose, and so on indefinitely. In other words, it would create a fund for the immediate payment of cost of constructing newly accepted streets which would be used again as fast as it was replenished by receipts from the abutters, and would continue to be available until all private streets have been accepted.



In the meantime, the main thoroughfares of the city are in need of immediate attention, many of them being deplorably narrow and crooked. Some of these thoroughfares, which could and should have been widened a generation ago, are now so fully built up as to make the present cost of widening prohibitive. A map was prepared showing the streets that now are and probably always will be the most important arteries of traffic from Boston to the adjacent cities and towns, and between different parts of the city itself. In making this map careful study was given to similar reports by the Metropolitan Improvements Commission and the United Improvement Association; also, a study by the city planning committee of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, in the course of which a conference was held with representatives of the Expressmen's League, the Boston Society of Landscape Architects, the Real Estate Exchange and Auction Board, the Massachusetts Real Estate Exchange, the Street Laying-out Department, and the Massachusetts Highway Commission. As a result of these considerations the planning board recommended:—

1. That future appropriations for the acceptance of private streets be made with the proviso that the fee of land shall be conveyed to the city without cost, and that the abutters shall pay the whole cost of the construction of the street; also, that when this money is returned by the abutters, it shall be available for further use to the same end.

2. That as large an appropriation as the city's financial condition will permit be made each year for the widening of main thoroughfares substantially in accordance with the plan submitted.

For years it has been the policy of the city not to accept any private residential street unless the abutters agreed in advance to contribute the land. The planning board suggests extending this method to include an advance agreement to pay the cost of constructing the street. To carry out this purpose it would be sufficient to get such an agreement as to their proportion of the cost from a majority of the property owners, as the acceptance of such a plan by them would be evidence of a benefit to the property which would warrant the board of street commissioners in assessing betterments at the same rate on all other property on the street. Several adjoining cities have been acting under such a policy for years.

The planning board has not been unmindful of the specific duty imposed upon it by legislative act, — that of making plans for the development of the community with special reference to the housing of its people. It is one of the most difficult tasks the planning

board is likely to face, and one of the most important and necessary to the city of Boston. Better homes must be provided and the people shown how to live better without increasing the burden of expense, which is already in many cases more than can be borne.

In order that comparisons may be made of the growth of population and the density of congestion in certain sections of the city, an appeal was made to the city council, as provided in the census act of 1914, to petition the director of the Bureau of Statistics to make an enumeration and tabulation of the population figures of the decennial census by assessment blocks. In this appeal the planning board was joined by the Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Municipal League and the South End House. The 1905 census having been taken by assessment blocks, and the tabulation filed in the city clerk's office, the city council having acted favorably upon the present appeal, a basis of comparison is assured which would have been possible in no other way.

The planning board has also had prepared plans for a quadruple housing scheme, designed to rent for \$20 a month, and has in mind plans for low-cost single houses, well-built apartment houses, etc. The historic North End, perhaps, presents the most urgent need of alleviation in housing conditions, and while certain preliminary plans for street widenings, extensions, constructions, etc., have already assumed partial shape, it is the intention of the board to have made an exhaustive study of this particular section of the city, with a view to placing within the reach of the people a safe, sane and sanitary method of living.

The board is at the present time engaged in a similar survey of East Boston, but an even more extensive one, since it includes a study of its transportation facilities and its commercial and industrial development and possibilities.

The rehabilitation of Faneuil Hall was a suggestion made personally by the chairman to his honor the mayor, and endorsed by the planning board. The suggestion included the fireproofing of the floors over the markets, stairways, etc.; the removal of unsightly awnings, to be replaced with awnings of iron or glass where necessary, the renovation of the interior of the hall, the removal of the paint from the exterior bricks, and the painting of the wooden trimmings white. His honor the mayor approved the scheme and accepted the suggestion made that a committee from the Boston Society of Architects be appointed to make plans for the carrying out of the recommendation.

The board objected to taking any part of the Common or Public Garden for the widening of Boylston Street in order to permit a change in the Boylston Street subway, but a strip sufficiently wide to give Boylston Street a width of 100 feet was taken.

The planning board has had referred to it by his honor the mayor an inquiry of the city council as to the advisability and cost of establishing and maintaining suitable public markets at central locations in the various sections of the city. Feeling that this was too large a question to admit of piecemeal recommendations, and that the only report which would be of value would be one which would involve the whole question of whether the aim should be to bring the producer directly in contact with the consumer by cutting out all middlemen; whether the creation of new city markets on a large scale is demanded or would greatly help the situation; the method by which food supplies are brought into the city and how they are ultimately delivered to the consumers, which means a proper study of the proper scope and limitation of itinerant vending; how far the development of co-operation would help; and whether or how far it can be stimulated by public action, etc., — the board has called together a committee made up of representatives from the Boston Chamber of Commerce, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the United Improvement Association and the Women's Municipal League, with the idea of undertaking an adequate study and reporting to the city council, with recommendations, as early as practicable.

An effort has also been made to secure data for a tree census of the city, unsuccessful as yet, but efforts will be continued until the material necessary is compiled, if it is obtainable.

A small exhibit was arranged by the planning board in connection with the city exhibit at the Pure Food Exposition in Mechanics Building in October, 1914, which emphasized the possibilities of a city planning exhibition. A permanent exhibition is not outside the range of possibilities and its value would be unquestioned.

A location for the high-pressure pumping station was considered by the board, and a recommendation sent to his honor the mayor, suggesting that the pumping station be built out into the stream, or on a little island in the Charles River Basin.

An appeal was made to the planning board for assistance in securing the widening of Washington Street, West Roxbury, and at a hearing given by his honor the mayor the chairman of the subcommittee on streets and transportation suggested the laying down

of restriction lines under the authority of an act of the 1913 Legislature (chapter 572). The suggestion met with the approval of the mayor, and his promise to refer the matter to the board of street commissioners for a report on the advisability and cost of laying down building restriction lines as suggested.

A recommendation was submitted for the widening of Beacon Street, from Tremont to Bowdoin Street, as suggested to the planning board by Mr. Leslie G. Wead. Mr. Wead suggested that the northerly sidewalk on Beacon Street, between Tremont and Somerset streets, be thrown into the roadway, and that the city take a right of way within the present building of the Houghton & Dutton Company for use as a sidewalk, the upper floors of the building being supported on columns. The planning board further recommended that improved facilities for vehicular traffic on Somerset Street should also be given serious consideration, which would include the laying down of a building restriction line through the present City Club property, the widening to be made whenever the present building is demolished. The matter was referred to the board of street commissioners for their consideration.

Perhaps the most important recommendations made by the planning board are in its report to the Massachusetts Public Service Commission on the "Larger Aspects of Passenger Transportation in Metropolitan Boston," presented at a public hearing October 20, 1914. The report stated that the great weakness of our present facilities was the failure to deliver passengers reasonably near to their destinations in the business districts. The remedy suggested is that all transportation facilities, stations, rights of way, and so much of the rolling stock as is used exclusively within the metropolitan district, should be in a single ownership and should be operated under a single management.

The planning board believes that the Commonwealth itself should take over all railroad and railway properties within certain specified limits. The improvements recommended, including electrification, should be made by the State, after taking over the properties, and the cost of such improvements would be the only new outlay involved. Whether these utilities, if owned by the State, should be operated by a single private company, as are the Boston subways, or by the State, as are the metropolitan water works, is in the opinion of the planning board a question which should be determined by referendum vote.

The specific recommendations of the city planning board are:—

1. That ownership of all transportation facilities within the approximate limits of the metropolitan district be taken over by the Commonwealth.
2. That these facilities be operated as a unit by either of two methods, as the voters may determine:—
  - (a) By the Commonwealth through a general manager appointed by the Public Service Commission.
  - (b) By a private company which should lease the facilities from the Commonwealth.
3. That the proposed Boston Avenue and Wead Tunnel be constructed substantially as already stated, and that the railroads on opposite sides of city be connected by tunnel under Boston Avenue, with the object of carrying all suburban passengers to stations within easy walking distances of their destinations.
4. That the railroads be electrified, and that the Boston & Albany Railroad tracks be covered over for a teaming boulevard from the Cove Street bridge to Commonwealth Avenue.

Among the activities of the board planned for 1915 are:—

1. The completion of the East Boston survey.
2. The continued study of the general transportation needs of the whole city.
3. A specific study of the North End with reference to improved housing facilities and the provision of additional playgrounds and breathing spaces.
4. A study of the West End along similar lines.
5. A study of the South End along similar lines.
6. A study of outlying land with reference to the building up of communities of single family houses for workingmen's families.
7. A continued study of the market situation.
8. A study of improved recreation facilities, use of harbor, etc.
9. A study of the increased use or disposal of unused realty owned by the city of Boston.

### **Brockton.**

The board conferred with the health department on several matters, and the different members of the board devoted considerable time to the gathering of data which will be of value at some later time.

The board as a whole, and the members as individuals, have made investigations in various sections of the city and have found many undesirable and dangerous conditions, some from a standpoint of health and others from a standpoint of danger of loss of life by fire. Many of the conditions found were of a nature which the average citizen, who had not made similar investigations, might believe did

not exist. A remedy for some of the evils found may exist in our present laws and ordinances, but in many cases our building and health departments are powerless.

As a result of our limited personal investigations the board was of the unanimous opinion that a much more complete and thorough investigation should be made before it attempted to report in detail on these conditions, with recommendations, for it is obvious that the extent to which these undesirable conditions prevail should determine very greatly the remedies to be applied.

In view of this fact, on September 8, 1914, the board made a unanimous report to the city council asking for an appropriation of \$200 that an investigation could be made which would be complete and extensive enough to enable the board to make a detailed and valuable report at the close of its first year. This board has not yet officially heard from its request in any way, merely noting that the local press stated the finance committee reported "inexpedient."

It is obvious that the city could not expect the members of an unpaid board to devote sufficient time from their businesses to make the necessary investigations, or to contribute financially beyond the point of paying expenses of postage, stationery, carfares and clerical work, which the members of the board have done.

### **Brookline.**

The activities of the Brookline planning board have so far been confined largely to securing information and data that will enable it to make studies and recommendations as called for by the statute. Various plans and graphical charts have been made showing the location of the poll population, districting the town into various subdivisions, showing classifications of the buildings contained therein. The board has also had under consideration an amendment to the building law providing stricter regulations for the construction of buildings in the Corey Hill district; has also submitted a proposed alteration and widening of one of the streets of the town, and made its recommendations to the board of selectmen with reference to other streets that have been under consideration for laying out by the selectmen.

The fact that the planning board is free from the duty of dealing with the host of immediately pressing details that confront every executive officer should enable it to assist the latter by taking the initiative in studying matters which are less immediately press-

ing, but that are of grave importance for the future of the town, and which the regular executive officers find it difficult to investigate sufficiently while doing their full duty by the more immediate problems. Furthermore, there are some matters for which the responsibility does not rest with certainty upon any of the executive officers, and the planning board can be of some service in taking up such loose ends in consultation with the officers to whose work they are most nearly related.

This first year has been mainly occupied in a general examination of conditions in the town, and in feeling the way to a proper organization for more detailed and effective work. The duties of the board fall naturally into two groups: one concerns public improvements; the other concerns developments on private property as affecting the public welfare, and especially concerns the present and retrospective conditions in and around rented dwellings. The second group comes largely within the province of the board of health, and the planning board has arranged to conduct its investigations in that field so far as practicable through the office of the tenement house inspector and the sanitary inspector of the health department. The first group comes partly within the province of the selectmen and partly within that of the park commissioners, the water board, the school committee and other executive officers, all of whom use the office of the town engineer; and the planning board has arranged to conduct its work in this field as far as practicable through the town engineer. There will be need from time to time of special investigations which, for lack of available assistants, neither of these officers can undertake. As the beginning of a broad study of conditions and tendencies in the town, the board has had prepared a tabulation and graphical charts analyzing the town expenditures for permanent improvements and for other purposes during the last seventeen years, in comparison with the changes in population and in assessed valuation. Some study has been given to the general street plan of the town, especially to the probable ultimate need of a more complete system of main thoroughfares and of a more systematic subdivision of some of the large blocks, where a well-utilized margin surrounds a comparatively inaccessible interior.

The board gave some study to the problem of dangerously obscured street corners, which is rendered serious by the relatively high speed of present-day traffic. Certain corners were improved by the park commission on this board's suggestion by changes in

shrub plantations. Further study is being given to the establishment of building lines on corners likely to become dangerous by the erection of buildings.

On the petition of certain property owners and residents of the Corey Hill district the board conducted a hearing and investigations as to the advisability of proposing certain changes in the building law applicable to that district. At the close of the year this matter and the question of certain more general changes in the building laws were still under consideration.

The board has been consulted officially by the selectmen as to plans for street improvements and by the school committee as to plans for increased school accommodations, and unofficially by the water board in regard to the plans for the enlargement of the water supply. In connection with the proposed improvement of Washington Street a special investigation was made into the subject of pavement and track construction as affecting noise. Plans and estimates for one street improvement and one drainage improvement were prepared by the town engineer on the initiative of the board and under its direction, and were submitted to the selectmen with a favorable recommendation.

### Cambridge.

The Cambridge planning board deals with the studies of the board in six municipal fields, namely, assessments, engineering, social welfare, parks and recreation, traffic and transit, and public buildings.

Prof. James Sturgis Pray, chairman of the school of landscape architecture of Harvard University, was appointed by President Lowell to assist the planning board in its work. He recommended that a card index should at once be begun, in which data should be kept of everything which has to do with the city plan of Cambridge, and that the board put itself in touch with such organizations as the Cambridge Housing Association, Harvard Square Business Association, Massachusetts Homestead Commission, the Cambridge Y. M. C. A., the Cambridge Municipal Art Society and other organizations, and with the metropolitan commissions and metropolitan public service corporations whose services affect the Cambridge plan. As Cambridge is not an isolated community, but merely a small, integral part of a metropolitan community, any purely local planning board will be concerned with its local plan by co-operation with some metropolitan planning board (which must come), aiding



in the more perfect organization of those parts of the city which are dominantly metropolitan in their function and service; and developing itself, to meet purely local needs, those parts of its area which are, and are likely to be, local in their function and service.

The planning board contributed data and maps to assist in assessment investigations. The first map showed the range of land values as assessed in 1914, which was reproduced in colors for distribution. A second map showed the development of all property in the city. Throughout the city values are highest where the streets have been reasonably well planned and laid out with regard to through connections. A similar map made after two or three years would show the "boom" and "blighted" districts. The second map presents the concentration of industries, the distribution of commercial property, the region where tenement houses prevail and the residential districts as yet unspoiled. This map furnishes a basis for the study of the possibility of fixing by law zones or districts for definite types of development. The board states that the playground system should be developed until no child lives more than half a mile from a playground of some sort. Specific suggestions for increasing the amount of room for administrative offices are promised.

### Chelsea.

In order to plan for the future the board devoted a great deal of study to existing conditions. Inspections were made of different parts of the city, examining streets, water fronts, houses, yard conditions, basement dwellings and new and old parts of the city. Much was found which should be improved to make the city more healthful and attractive.

There are some desirable improvements which, from their nature, extent and cost, it is not practical to recommend. For instance, bringing the lower levels up to the proper city grade; and again, the abolition of railroad grade crossings. There are other improvements which will involve expense, but which ought to appeal to all as necessary.

The board of aldermen voted a sum of \$200, and our expenses have been well within that limit.

The subject of housing has been given much consideration. A special committee of the planning board held a conference with a committee from the board of aldermen for the revisal of the building ordinance, but the recommendations of this joint conference have not yet been acted upon. They included the extension of the fire

limits; first-class construction for three-family houses; a 5-foot setback from lot lines unless the side wall be brick or concrete, without openings, and carried 12 inches above the roof; abolition of the temporary buildings erected immediately after the great fire.

The planning board recommended that vacant buildings be put and kept in proper repair and condition; that the board of health seal up the plumbing in basement dwellings to enforce the ordinance against their occupancy; that obstruction of fire escapes be stopped; that nuisances from stables be abated; that lockers for receptacles for ashes and garbage be required; that district school nurses be engaged, and that they co-operate with physicians in instructing mothers in proper care and food for infants, thereby aiding materially in reducing infant mortality; that vacant cellars remaining from the fire be cleaned out or filled in; that children and householders be interested in a cleaning-up campaign; that school instruction be given in the value of horticulture and intensive farming; that Broadway be a one-way street from Bellingham Square to Williams Street; that the city plant a certain number of shade trees each year, and that abutters co-operate with the city authorities in their care and protection; that there be a public boat landing on Marginal Street; that improvements be made at Island End Dyke.

### Chicopee.

We realize fully that all our efforts should be directed to the study of a comprehensive plan taking in the whole of the city; guiding and directing the growth and expansion of the city on well-ordered lines rather than the haphazard manner of the past.

A few of the subjects which this commission has been working on are: housing and labor conditions in the city of Chicopee; building code; fire department needs; underground wires; street lighting; shade trees; laying out new streets; laying out parks; widening Broadway.

Chicopee being a manufacturing city the housing problem is a serious question. Many three-deckers, sometimes of flimsy and unsanitary construction, are built on narrow streets. The board of health has ordered a number of these dwellings to be vacated and reconstructed and made sanitary. The board recommends a municipal labor bureau, underground wiring, a systematic study of street lights, better care of trees, control of the layout of new streets.

### Everett.

At the request of the local board, Mr. John Nolen, landscape architect, gave an illustrated talk on city planning in Everett on December 8, 1914. Besides seeking general public interest the board has endeavored to awaken the interest of the school children in city planning; has secured data relative to unhealthful conditions in the habitable areas, open spaces and unsightly places, and suggests that the planting of street trees, care of rubbish and disease-brooding places, playgrounds and unsightly billboards have received attention. The Boston & Maine Railroad officials have been asked to improve the railroad station on Broadway.

### Fitchburg.

The local planning board is organized under a special act and is known as the municipal development commission. Numerous recommendations have been made to the city council upon measures affecting public streets and ways. Most of these measures have been of minor importance, others of great importance. Among original recommendations from the planning board was one advocating changes in the lines of North Street to relieve its crookedness, which in part was adopted.

A recommendation for radical regulation of street railway traffic in Depot Square encountered opposition from the street railway company and merchants whose stores had the benefit of concentration and crowding. Public hearings and an investigation by the council followed, but nothing effective has yet been done. A recommendation to widen Prichard Street, before it should be made more expensive by the erection of permanent dwellings, was rejected by the city council. A special committee consisting of the city engineer, the city solicitor, chief engineer of the sewage disposal commission and a member of the local planning board is studying how present conditions in the laying out of streets and the acceptance of private ways could be improved by changes in the ordinances. Assessment of property for taxation has also received consideration. Special study is being made of certain features of a city plan, but definite conclusions have not yet been reached. The commission states:—

While our own work has not yet accomplished much, our city is doing much along the line of city planning, if we use those words in the proper sense of making timely provision for the present and future needs of our

people. Our sewage disposal commission is building a modern system of sewage disposal at an estimated cost of \$1,000,000. Our water commissioners are about to expend \$300,000 for an enlargement of the water supply. Our park commissioners have developed a creditable system of parks and playgrounds. The hospital trustees have recently built and opened a tuberculosis hospital, and are asking the city to provide an isolation hospital for contagious diseases. A viaduct across the Nashua River has recently been completed, at a cost of about \$125,000. Through the influence of the officers of our Board of Trade and Merchants' Association, the city has been able to obtain terms under which it is laying out the most important section of Broad Street through land of the Putnam Machine Company; and when other sections of this street are added, it will furnish a new line of travel through the central part of our city. Our high school has outgrown its present quarters, and the city must soon provide, at a large expense, either a new building, or at least an additional building, for its use.

### Gardner.

Two new buildings have been erected in West Gardner Square, which is the central business square of the town. It seemed advisable, if possible, that these buildings should be set back from the line of the old buildings in order that the street might be widened. The planning board had plans drawn showing the square with increased width of street, and consulted with the owners of the property in question in conjunction with the board of selectmen. The owners of the buildings agreed to put the buildings back to some extent, so that the street was materially improved.

### Holyoke.

The local board has been active in making plans of a general nature for the development of the city. It has had under consideration the question of park development, boulevard development, street layouts and the whole subject of housing.

### Lawrence.

On January 18, 1915, the city council authorized the local planning board to expend \$750 in city planning studies. On January 20 Arthur C. Comey — consultant on city planning — was engaged to prepare a scheme of procedure and make three studies, viz., thoroughfare system, general park system and the improvement of the Spicket River, — a small stream running close to the heart of the city.

As a basis for these plans surveys were made, showing the development of property, density of population, range in assessed land

values, existing thoroughfares, typical cross sections of streets, and the areas served by car lines.

The plans show the proposed thoroughfare system, cross-sections for streets, future electric railway service, general park system and large scale plans and sketch of the Spicket River.

### Malden.

The board held twelve meetings during the year. Through the assistance of City Engineer Estey an adequate street map of the city was secured. The board endeavored to co-operate with the city council. It favored the placing of proper cautionary signs on streets in furtherance of the "safety first" idea, and a change in the fire-escape ordinance. The railroad facilities and the development of steam and water transportation have been considered. The Boston Port Directors have ruled that Malden River is a part of the port of Boston, which should ultimately result in greatly improved water shipping facilities. A communication from the Public Service Commission regarding transportation problems in Malden was referred by the mayor to the local planning board. After consideration, this board held a public hearing at city hall on the evening of October 26, 1914, sent the following communication to the Public Service Commission, and was represented by its chairman at the hearings held by that commission on the subject:—

This board is of the opinion that some equitable plan can be devised whereby the tracks of the Saugus branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad could be used by the Boston Elevated for its passenger service, and that said line could be used for the necessary freight traffic during the night. This plan would do away with the necessary construction of a portion of the new line of the Elevated, as called for by recent legislative enactment, and would economically make use of the existing roadbed and form a connecting link in through service between all Elevated stations in Boston, Malden, and other stations on said Saugus branch line, and would provide added and needed transportation facilities without interfering with or obstructing streets as much as would otherwise be necessary. Such course would enable the use of car lines now entering Malden from the north, east and west as feeders to the trains to be run on the Saugus branch.

This board is of the opinion that transportation facilities in Malden could be greatly improved by the electrification of steam lines, and the people better served by the use of four tracks instead of two tracks, as at present on steam lines, and thus provide adequate express train service, such electrification to cover a radius 20 miles from Boston.

This board is of the opinion that transportation facilities would be much improved and congestion relieved if the Highland Avenue

line were continued along Highland Avenue to cross the Medford branch tracks and connect with the Fellsway line near Wellington bridge. A communication regarding this matter was forwarded by this board to Mayor Taylor of Medford, requesting information as to what had been done by that city, but the reply as received does not show that Medford is very active in the matter. We believe that this subject should be further agitated with the next city government of Medford.

The chairman of this board appeared before the legislative committee at the hearing on the House Bill 122, relative to the establishment of residential and manufacturing districts in cities, and also attended other important hearings, as well as having important conferences with the Boston Elevated Railway Company on matters of interest to Malden.

This board is of the opinion that the improvement of transportation must be secured by changed and better conditions on present steam and electric lines. An elevated structure is not to the advantage of the city, and if same were built it is probable that in the near future it would be extended beyond the Malden terminal and thus destroy the beauty and utility of the lower and upper squares.

The near future will undoubtedly see important changes in the transportation facilities which will directly concern Malden, and in order that the best interests of the city may be protected there is need of right action.

This board makes the following recommendations, which it is believed, if properly acted upon, will result in future benefit to the city:—

1. That a liberal appropriation be made annually for the proper carrying on of the important work of the city forester's department, and to provide for the annual planting of shade trees in a systematic way on the residential streets, and to enable the replacing of old trees by new ones.

2. That such action be taken as will enable the city to compel owners of vacant land, which is to be subdivided, to lay out all streets and sidewalks thereon in such manner and of such width as shall be ordered by the street and water commission. This will provide uniformity in width and proper continuity of streets, and will be a future benefit and ultimately increase valuation.

3. In the last annual report of the city engineer it was recommended that building lines be established on all main thoroughfares. This is a matter which deserves and no doubt will receive serious study and proper action by the street and water commission. The establishment of building lines does not mean the widening of the street immediately or in the near future, but does anticipate future needs and enables ultimate betterments

to be made at much less expense. This board recommends that the establishment of building lines be considered on Florence Street from Washington Street to the Western Division railroad station, and on the south side of Eastern Avenue from Ferry Street to Main Street.

4. The immediate placing of a proper fence between the tracks of the Boston & Maine Railroad at the Western Division station, and a suitable subway under said tracks in front of the present station, or the building of a proper overhead passageway, to safeguard life at this point.

5. That an effort be made to secure such amendment to the Malden Federal building bill in Congress as will permit the use of a part of the appropriation for the purchase of a suitable site for the proposed Federal building in Malden.

6. That all street name signs throughout the city be placed on supports or posts of uniform size and height.

### **Medford.**

Among the matters considered by the local planning board are the getting rid of old and dilapidated structures which constitute a fire menace; the disposal of old schoolhouses no longer available for use; the means of controlling the development of new territory throughout the city; the use of fireproof roofing; the establishment of the city hospital; the cleaning up of vacant lots of land.

### **Newton.**

The local planning board during the year held about forty meetings. Attention has been given to planning for the future of the city but no comprehensive plan has yet been prepared. Two reports dealing with congestion at Nonantum Square were submitted to the public works committee of the city council. The board realizes that it will be desirable in the future to make more rigid provision against the possibility of unsanitary and dangerous buildings, but deems it wise to make no recommendations until after the results of the work of the special State commission on housing and building laws are known. The widening of Walnut and parts of Washington, Center and Jefferson streets was recommended. On the suggestion of the board street signs were placed with a view of diverting some of the traffic around Nonantum Square instead of through it. This appears to have furnished some measure of relief. Suggestions for similar signs for Watertown Street, Lowell and Commonwealth avenues were carried out. Among other matters to which considerable study has already been given are a plan for a civic center by a process of gradual development, including provision for a new city hall, — possibly grouped with other public buildings;

the draining of Cold Spring Swamp and other low areas, in order to reclaim many acres of useless land, adding greatly to its value and making it available for improvement, and for public use if required; the proper development of the Oak Hill district in Wards 5 and 6, now sparsely settled, but, in natural beauty, one of the most attractive sections of the city; the necessity of widening Commonwealth Avenue, — just as it reaches the river at Norumbega Park, and the construction of a new and wider bridge over the Charles at that point, to be built in co-operation with the town of Weston; the extension of Crescent Street in Ward 1, north, across Allison Park to the Charles River, and the construction of a bridge across the river at this point leading to West Watertown station, thus placing a large part of Nonantum, which now has poor railroad facilities, within convenient distance of a railroad station; provision for a street or parkway in Ward 7 which will afford access to the Charles River Basin; some plan to reduce the billboard nuisance; some systematic plan for financing such public improvements as come within the scope of city planning. It has been suggested that there should be established a definite policy as to the amount to be so expended each year in order that the work can be properly planned long in advance.

Considering the problem from the standpoint of a comprehensive city plan, the board finds itself unable to get much help from the work that has been done by the earlier established planning boards in different parts of the country. Newton is essentially a residence city. It does not present problems connected with mercantile business, with manufacturing centers and housing for large numbers of workers. Newton appears likely to be a city of homes, and plans should provide for its very best development along that line.

Accompanying the annual report are the detailed and comprehensive plans made by the local planning board in relation to congestion in Nonantum Square. Assessment of betterments and excess condemnation are also carefully considered in connection with the improvements suggested.

### **Northampton.**

It was felt that the work of the board for the first year should proceed along lines of inquiry and investigation rather than that any far-reaching measures be undertaken. Consequently, by means of committees of the board, the following investigations have been undertaken: —



1. *The Physical Condition of the City.*—It was found that there existed no single adequate and complete map of the city, showing the boundaries of the streets and highways (many of which were not properly marked), the location of the sewers, conduits and so forth. The planning board therefore recommended that a survey be made and such a map be prepared, and that a specific portion be completed this year. This recommendation was referred to the finance committee, from which no report has been received.

2. *The Archives of the City.*—An investigation of the material in the shape of reports, recommendations by previous planning boards, mayors, maps and so forth was undertaken. Although the board found that there was considerable valuable material in existence, it was difficult of access and would require considerable clerical labor to put it into useful form. Some of this material has been used by the board, but the lack of any appropriation for clerical labor made it impossible to collate the greater part of it.

3. For the information of the board a table was prepared showing the relative expenditures of the various city departments.

4. A committee made an extended investigation of the question of housing laws, and recommended that when the building code had been put into operation, the building inspector appointed, and when the commission of the State Legislature, which was appointed to codify building and housing laws, has reported, the board seriously apply itself to the task of studying the local housing conditions, with the end in view of enacting a thorough and comprehensive housing law.

Unofficially the board has been consulted with regard to the granting of building licenses and the fixing of building lines.

While the board is not able to show much which has actually been accomplished, and has been hampered by lack of funds, it feels that it has gathered useful information and laid the foundation for the work of future boards.

### Pittsfield.

The local planning board states that it asked the council in 1914 for a reasonable sum to warrant such study of the city's advantages and needs and the preparation of a tentative plan, and was allotted only a small portion of what would be necessary for the first year of such an undertaking. The board believed that the sum could not be used with advantage to the city and so no expenses were contracted, except what individual members of the board themselves paid. The lack of a suitable appropriation interfered with progress in the work. One matter was referred to the board for investigation, — that of the advisability of the city buying, at a certain price, a lot of land near Newell Street for school purposes. The planning board examined the conditions of the approaches, both

public and private, and the elevation of the lot offered, considered the amount of excavating that would be needed to reduce the lot to a reasonable grade, the amount of cutting of the grade of approaching streets, and the amount of land damages that would need to be paid to those who owned property in the neighborhood and had built homes according to the old grade. The board added this estimate to the amount asked for the lot and concluded that the total was nearly double what should be expended for land if a school were to be erected in that neighborhood. At the city hall the board found that the lot of land had been assessed for about one-quarter the figure asked for it, and that the assessors had lately doubled the assessment, which brought the assessed value up to less than half the figure at which it was now offered, and that the owners had appeared before the board of assessors and had declared that the assessed valuation was in excess of the actual value of the land. Inquiry into the school population of the neighborhood and the amount of congestion in school buildings thereabouts showed that more pressing needs existed in other parts of the city. Therefore the local planning board recommended that no provision be made for purchasing the lot of land offered, which recommendation was adopted by the finance committee of the city council.

An order referring the tenement house act for cities (chapter 786, Acts of 1913) to the local planning board for investigation as to whether the act was adapted in any measure to the needs of Pittsfield was pending in the city council at the end of 1914. The local planning board was collecting data regarding existing housing conditions.

### Salem.

A building ordinance drafted by the local planning board, representing an immense amount of research, many long meetings of the board and numerous conferences with the city council, the rebuilding commission and the board of health, was finally adopted by both the city council and the rebuilding commission, with but slight modifications.

In addition to the work of preparing the housing ordinance, the board has given a good deal of attention to the widening of important streets. Due to the planning board's initiative, the cooperation of the county commissioners and the city council was secured in obtaining the legislation necessary to lay out a portion of a thoroughfare through a congested part of the city which will be adequate for the accommodation of through travel. This will be accomplished by taking the land between two narrow streets ex-

tending between Bertram Park and Essex Street. The total cost to the city and county will be about \$150,000.

The board has also made recommendations to the city council that street lines be established on certain important streets and that the widening be accomplished gradually, as opportunity is afforded by changes in buildings.

The rebuilding commission appointed by the Governor has adopted practically all of the recommendations presented in the first report of the planning board relative to changes in streets within the burned district.

### Somerville.

The local planning board after investigation recommended the complete motorization of the fire department, and that the department be made up of permanent men as soon as the finances of the city will permit. The board found many old dilapidated buildings scattered throughout the city, which are not only a fire menace but at times are the abodes of tramps and like characters. The board believed that under existing statutes such buildings could be removed with little expense to the city, and recommended that immediate steps be taken to demolish such buildings. A more liberal planting of trees along the highways was recommended, and that adequate playgrounds be purchased and equipped, at least one in each ward of the city. The board recommended, however, that the use of Central Hill Park as a playground be discontinued, and a connecting link between the Fells and the Fens section of the metropolitan park system be constructed through Somerville and Cambridge. A cross-town line of cars to facilitate communication between various parts of the city is urged by the board. "Clean-up weeks" for both spring and fall are recommended. The board believes that better results, both from an educational and economic standpoint, can be obtained by the use of large commodious school buildings, of twenty rooms or more, and recommends that a large vocational school for boys and girls be erected for children who desire special fitting for after life.

Such investigations as the board has been able to make into housing conditions disclosed that:—

1. Many of the tenement houses, so called, are provided with but one toilet, and in many cases no bathroom, for the use of three, four or six families. This condition is absolutely against good health and good morals, and the board recommends that the building ordinance be so amended that in future construction all houses shall have at least one toilet room for each family.

2. Very few tenement houses are provided with piazzas, and the board believes that if builders could be induced to provide piazzas for each tenement in a house, where the families could pass their leisure hours, many of the so-called "corner gangs," which are so mischievous and destructive of property, would be eliminated. As at present constructed these families have almost no place in which to enjoy the open air, and the result is the congregation of people, especially young men and children, in the streets and on the vacant lots, which is not for the best interest of our public health and morals.

3. In some sections men, women and children are hived together, sometimes as many as eight or ten in two or three rooms, and the board recommends such changes as will make such overcrowding impossible.

4. The construction of cheap tenement houses for more than two families is against the best interests of the city. The board strongly recommends that the building ordinances be so amended that no building for more than two families shall be constructed in the city except it be constructed of fireproof materials, and equipped with such means of escape in case of fire as shall be satisfactory to the building commissioner.

The board recommends that business enterprises and manufacturing plants be encouraged to locate in the city. An immense tract along the Mystic River, at present undeveloped, might well be covered with manufacturing industries, to the mutual benefit of those industries and the city; and there are many smaller areas that might well be utilized for such purposes.

The board hopes that the aldermen will provide sufficient funds to permit the local planning board to show the real benefit and advantage which an energetic planning board can be to Somerville.

### Springfield.

The city planning commission of Springfield has been one of the most active of the boards established under chapter 494 of the Acts of 1913. It divides the subjects to be studied into five groups:—

1. A general plan for future development.
2. Housing and health.
3. Recreation.
4. Civic appearance.
5. Miscellaneous.

The board then subdivides each of these groups as follows:—

#### 1. A GENERAL PLAN FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

##### *Part First — Preliminary Work.*

(a) Legal survey, including assessments for betterments, building lines, excess condemnation, platting, creation of districts, and other laws or regulations prescribed by statute or ordinance.

(b) Statistical survey, showing by wards the population by periods, foreign and native population by periods, births, deaths and death rates, cases of contagious diseases, infantile mortality and other matters, also tax valuations, the city's financial standing, traffic records, commercial and industrial growth, etc.

(c) Maps and plans, showing streets by classes, industrial plants and relation to transportation, parks and all other city property, transportation facilities, topography, subsurface, including water, sewers and conduits, street pavings by classes, old maps for comparisons.

(d) A tabulation of existing proposals and suggestions.

#### *Part Second — Actual Work.*

(a) A work program covering the development of streets and boulevards; parks, terraces, squares and playgrounds; bridges, docks and waterways; transportation facilities; location and grouping of public buildings; water system; sewer system; industrial and commercial development.

(b) A financial program embodying a careful study of financial expediency as applied to the execution of a well-defined work program extending over a period of years.

### 2. HOUSING AND HEALTH.

(a) A survey of housing conditions.

(b) Statutes and ordinances bearing upon both housing and health.

(c) The board of health and its scope.

(d) Rapid and cheap morning and evening suburban transit and its relation to the problem.

(e) The single tax theory and its relation to the problem.

(f) Garden cities and suburbs.

(g) Relation of building and loan associations to the housing problem.

### 3. RECREATION.

(a) School buildings as social centers.

(b) Parks as amusement places.

(c) Playgrounds.

(d) Entertainments, band concerts, etc.

(e) Baths and swimming pools.

### 4. CIVIC APPEARANCE.

(a) Billboards and advertising signs, their use and abuse.

(b) Prevention of smoke.

(c) Street fittings and architecture, including street names, street lights, trolley or telegraph poles and removal of overhead wires, kiosks and comfort stations, islands of safety, fire-alarm and letter boxes, hydrants, watering troughs, street name signs, street planting, — trees and protection, temporary festival architecture, window flower boxes, etc.

(d) Monumental architecture, including monuments, arches, fountains, statuary.

(e) Harmonious architecture for buildings.

(f) Cleanliness.

## 5. MISCELLANEOUS.

- (a) Use of streets by corporations or individuals.
- (b) Commission may report on any matters affecting city's interests.
- (c) Commission must report in December of each year and may report at such other times as it sees fit.

In pursuance of this analysis of the work of the commission, the various laws and decisions relating to city planning work have been compiled, a statistical survey has been completed, many maps and plans have been acquired, and public improvements, contemplated or suggested, have been tabulated.

In addition to the above the Springfield city planning commission considered and acted upon various special subjects:—

1. *Assessment of Betterments.*—The planning commission submitted to the city council a list, beginning with the year 1902, of public improvements, involving estimated land damages of \$306,149.31 and construction cost of \$564,824.00, ordered by the city council upon reports submitted by the board of public works. In all of these reports were recommendations that betterments be assessed, but in no instance were the necessary steps taken to make and collect such assessments. The planning commission recommended that the board of public works be requested to submit reports giving lists of assessments, which should be made in relation to improvements already reported and recommended but not yet ordered, and when submitting reports in the future to submit lists of such assessments as in their opinion should be made. Orders and an ordinance in accordance with these recommendations were adopted. The financial importance of the assessment of betterments was well illustrated in the matter of the Hillman Street extension, which when passed by the board of aldermen without a dissenting vote might have resulted in committing the city to the payment of the entire cost. Its rejection by the common council resulted in a voluntary "self-assessment" of betterments by private interests amounting to the sum of \$35,276.10, a most substantial saving to the city. The total estimated cost of the improvement was \$63,250.

2. *Recreation Facilities.*—The planning board recommended that a recreation commission be created to have full charge of all recreation activities in the city of Springfield. This plan failed of adoption, due largely to the claim that it was a matter within the natural province of the park commission. The park commission, however, has pursued the matter along the lines recommended regarding the appointment of a director of recreation. It would seem that a start has been made toward the handling of this important subject along practical lines, and that much has been accomplished in its thorough discussion in acquainting the public with the breadth and importance of the work.

3. *Platting or Laying Out of Unimproved Land.*—Various real estate

owners have been platting land without regard to the importance of considering the relation of the land to other tracts and to the city as a whole. The results are often bad, and as long as individual tracts are developed without regard to their relation to other properties the city must face a certainty of many expensive future changes. A city ordinance provides that no street or way on private lines shall be laid out, established or accepted as a public street unless the location, direction and grades shall have been determined by the board of public works previous to construction. However, many tracts are subdivided and lots sold and built upon before a petition is made for the acceptance of the streets, resulting in pressure upon the city from innocent purchasers to accept and maintain the street even though not properly laid out or of suitable width or grade. Sooner or later the city is called upon to remedy the mistakes at its own expense. In the few cases that have arisen since this legislation was adopted or has been recognized, the planning board believes that the importance of the matter will warrant further investigation looking toward better regulation.

4. *Building Lines.*—During the year, building lines have been established upon three streets and all but two or three of the abutters signed agreements waiving damages. While advising caution, the planning board believes that the possibilities of great improvements by establishing building lines should not be overlooked.

5. *Fire Districts.*—In view of the construction of a large number of wooden three-family houses in certain parts of the city, believed by the planning commission to be a bad fire hazard and likely to become a disfigurement to the southerly city approach, the planning commission recommended to the city council that the fire district be extended, and that a careful study of the entire matter of fire district be made. An ordinance to comply with the recommendation of the planning commission was introduced but failed of passage. The planning board believes that the building ordinance should make better provision for safety against fire.

6. *Various Public Improvements.*—On joint recommendation by the city planning commission and the park commission, plans have been completed for the proper development of the approaches to Springfield, from the west and north through West Street, and from the south through Peconsic Boulevard; for Court Square and its extension, and Stearns Park. Other public improvements in which the local planning board assisted by advice, reports or recommendations are the Plainfield Street bridge, Carew Street widening, developments in East Springfield, paving of alleyways and the removal of trolley poles from part of Main Street.

7. *Billboards.*—A thorough study of billboard advertising in Springfield was made by the local planning board and a striking special report on the subject was issued in pamphlet form.

A report on housing conditions in Springfield, prepared for its housing committee, has been issued by the Union Relief Association.

The city planning commission concludes its report by the statement that only by comprehensive study in conjunction with expert advice can the most practical and economic results be achieved.

The savings possible through carefully planned development are so great that the expenditure of a reasonable amount in advance is not an extravagance but a pronounced economy.

### Taunton.

The planning board states that the general public seems to regard the board as a bureau of complaints, and people who want to see any sort of a reform made in any department of city life present their opinions and their wishes to the members of the board.

The most noticeable improvement the board has brought about is a better and more extensive cleaning of the streets around the center of the city, especially for Sunday. The street department has been very ready to follow suggestions, and has done excellent work. The public and the police are not so much impressed as yet with the desirability of observing the ordinances against throwing waste paper, etc., into the street, although the chief of police has given orders that these ordinances be enforced.

The board corresponded with the State Highway Commission with reference to tree planting within the city boundaries, and tried, without success, to secure the widening of a street under State construction.

The board hopes to secure an ordinance prohibiting the objectionable type of building known as the three-decker, and to provide plans for a better type of house for the man who wants to build at low cost.

Preliminary steps toward the development of the Mill River course into a park system, with an automobile road to connect the Old Bay Road from Boston with the River Road to Fall River are being planned. In the present condition of the land that would come into this system, the proposition looks eminently feasible.

The board has secured from the municipal council a suitable appropriation for incidental expenses, and the authority to get from any of the municipal departments such information as may be needed for any work that may be undertaken. A miniature poster has been published by the board which gives a list of the municipal departments.

It is proposed to hold occasional district conferences and public lectures for the education of public opinion on city planning and civic improvement generally.



### Waltham.

The board is undertaking three lines of investigation as follows:—

1. A study of the possibility of showing congested areas and the death rate in connection therewith in the 1915 census taking.
2. The three-decker tenement, its rise and control in Waltham as well as in the State.
3. The possibility of a law for better control over the subdivision of lands by requiring all subdivision plans to be approved by a proper official or body before they are allowed to be filed at the registry of deeds.

### Watertown.

The first annual report of the town planning board shows careful and intelligent study of the town, its resources and needs. The report treats of Watertown's advantages, streets and street treatment, civic centers, density of population, housing, contagious diseases, playgrounds, game fields and parks.

After an interesting summary of the town's advantages, under the general topic of streets and street treatment, the Board brings to public notice an important but as yet little discussed phase of town planning, that is, the establishment of building lines. The report states that "there are several streets in town that should be widened, but to do so at the present time would involve a larger expenditure than the present state of town finances would allow. However, the planning board is of the opinion that a beginning may be made on some of the more important streets by establishing building lines while the opportunity offers, without encroaching, except in the case of one street, upon land occupied by buildings. This procedure will not cause any great immediate expenditure and will be the means of marking the future lines of streets. On nearly all the streets recommended for widening there are large unoccupied areas that render the establishment of building lines particularly favorable, and it is apparent to the planning board that it would be wise to do so at the present time."

Careful studies on six important streets are given, and the recommendations are accompanied by plans showing the suggested changes and widenings. Attention is also called to several short streets that are not continuous, extending only to private lines, the result of private development without regard to public convenience. The board recommends that in all cases where it is possible these parts of streets be connected with the street system, and

that before further acceptance of streets undeveloped areas should be considered as a whole with reference to a complete street system. A topographical survey should be made and principal streets laid out on a plan connecting with the existing system, and such streets marked by stone bounds for future development. This procedure is within the powers of the board of survey, and should be applied to all large undeveloped areas in town, in the same manner as has been already applied to the undeveloped area lying between Main and Waltham streets. Attention is called to some residential streets 40 feet wide, and the board believes that in some instances a 20-foot roadway would be adequate for teaming traffic, leaving room for 5-foot walks and 5-foot tree planting spaces on each side. Where it is necessary to have a roadway of 24 feet on a 40-foot street the walks and planting spaces may be 5 feet and 3 feet, respectively, but special care should be given to tree cultivation to produce a good effect.

Studies regarding housing and the density of population appear in the report, and the board says that while Watertown is without slums in the strict sense of the word, yet there are a few phases of living that should be corrected.

Studies have also been made of the extent of contagious disease and rates of mortality at all ages. Recommendations are made regarding playgrounds, athletic fields and parks.

The planning board received complaints about the unsightly condition of waste dumps in town, some ten or twelve in number.

An investigating committee was appointed who submitted a report which was forwarded to the selectmen. Immediate action was taken, with the result that the appearance of the dumps is greatly improved.

The naming of streets and the widening of Nichols Avenue and Arsenal Street were referred by the town to the planning board and the board of selectmen, jointly, and reports and estimates have been made in connection therewith.

The board recommends that in making permanent street improvements provision be made for the laying of pipes and conduits which are likely to be necessary within the next few years. It asks for an appropriation of \$300.

### Woburn.

The planning board joined with the board of public works in making a study of the travel conditions on the principal street, which resulted not only in the complete rebuilding of the street,

but in inducing the street railway company to relay its tracks with new and heavier rails, and to repave between their tracks in a manner more satisfactory than the former paving. The board persuaded the Boston & Maine Railroad to extend and improve its facilities at Woburn Highlands.

It also conferred with the local board of health with reference to the disagreeable odors from some of the tanneries.

## APPENDIX 2.

REPORT OF A CONFERENCE CALLED BY HIS EXCEL-  
 LENCY DAVID I. WALSH, GOVERNOR OF MASSA-  
 CHUSETTS, BETWEEN MASSACHUSETTS HOMESTEAD  
 COMMISSION AND LOCAL PLANNING BOARDS,  
 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1914, STATE HOUSE,  
 BOSTON.

## Programme.

1. The Significance of City Planning. From the Point of View of the State,  
 His Excellency DAVID I. WALSH, Governor of Massachusetts
2. Reports from Local Planning Boards.
3. Making Civic Surveys Graphic,                      ARTHUR COLEMAN COMEY

## Discussion.

1. City Planning Achievements that Apply to Massachusetts,  
 ANDREW WRIGHT CRAWFORD, Philadelphia

## Discussion.

2. Desirable Legislation. Discussion led by CORNELIUS A. PARKER,  
 Chairman, Committee on Legislation, Massachusetts Homestead  
 Commission.

Mr. GETTEMY. It is very gratifying to the Homestead Commission, which has been created by the Legislature as a sort of central clearing house organization, primarily to promote the establishment and laying out of healthful homes for the working people, and secondarily to promote the general cause of intelligent city planning, — these two questions really running into each other, so they must be considered as one problem, — to note the presence here this morning of such a large number of active city planners of the Commonwealth.

Many of you attended a year ago the public conference which we then had, and at which a more or less elaborate program of addresses was arranged for and carried through very successfully. We thought this year that, instead of arranging for a two-day conference on such a basis as we had a year ago, it would perhaps be more desirable to confine the gathering (while in no degree closing the doors to any who might wish to attend) in its official aspect to

the members of city and town planning boards which have been created in various municipalities of the Commonwealth under the legislation passed to promote that purpose. We hope to gather much information ourselves from this conference, and wish to have it regarded as your conference rather than ours.

We have with us this morning His Excellency the Governor, who has very kindly consented to take a few moments from his very crowded time to come and greet those who are gathered here; and in order not to make any greater encroachment upon his time, I will present him without further remarks, and then later on we will take up the work of the meeting. It gives me great pleasure at this time to present a man who needs no introduction, who is inspired by lofty ideals in behalf of these movements which make for the welfare of the people and the upbuilding of the Commonwealth, — His Excellency Governor Walsh.

Hon. DAVID I. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Homestead Commission, Ladies and Gentlemen: I want first of all to express my thanks as the Governor of the Commonwealth to the members of the Homestead Commission for their foresight and good judgment in calling this conference, and to compliment them in the name of the Commonwealth for the excellent work they have been doing in the interest of the people of the Commonwealth. But I am not more touched by the activity of this splendid Commission than by the presence here of so many women and men who represent planning boards in various parts of the Commonwealth, and who are giving their time, their energy, their strength and their ability, without any material compensation, for the welfare of Massachusetts.

I think it is a splendid tribute to our citizenship that we can find always in our cities and towns busy and active men and women to give to the public service the essential and important work that the members of the planning boards in our various cities and towns are doing. I want to thank you all, and I want to thank you for those millions of people in our cities and towns who cannot come here to speak for themselves, but into whose lives your work is throwing rays of sunshine and rays of happiness. Because the work of the planning board, above that perhaps of almost any other board in the State, tends to add to the sum of happiness and to the sum of comfort of the millions.

What is the work of a planning board? What is its purpose? My friends, every single function of government, every single de-

partment of the city or town or State government, every single act of the Legislature, every single deed and act of the Chief Executive of the Commonwealth, radiate and center around the purposes for which a government, city, town and State exist. We must not forget, as public officials (because we are all public officials), the great purpose of government, whether it is a government in the town of 100 people or a city of 400,000 people, or a State of 3,500,000 people. The purposes of government are not purposes that I have discovered, or any other individual of our day or time has discovered or noted; the purposes of this government were defined clearly and distinctly in the great Constitution which our ancestors wrote and which points out to us our duties as public officials: "The purpose of this government is to advance and promote the happiness, the welfare and the prosperity of the people."

So, the purpose of the planning board, as the purpose of every other board, is to promote the happiness and the welfare and the prosperity of the people, and that is the underlying duty and obligation which you owe to your community, to do those things which will best promote the happiness and the welfare of the people in your city or town. By putting that test to yourself in every problem that comes before you, there cannot be any mistake in judgment, and there cannot be any failure in the work you are asked to do.

Does this add to the sum of human happiness? Does this contribute to the welfare of the people of this community? Can it be done within the limitations of the finances of the city or town? With these questions answered in the affirmative, there can be but one obligation and duty on the part of the public servant who is inspired with the desire of performing his full duty. That is, to go forward, at any sacrifice almost, to accomplish the work that you are convinced will add to the happiness and welfare of the people in your respective localities.

Now, my friends, in all this century, in the nearly one hundred and forty years this government has existed, in all that time we have been wondering what problems in government contributed most to the happiness, welfare and the prosperity of our people. And we are the first, I believe, to appreciate that the highest function of government, that which contributes most of all to the happiness of the people, is the health of the people. In our day and our time all over this country we are more active than ever in concerning ourselves about public health, in studying the causes of disease, in

seeking the way and means for preventing the spread of disease, in doing everything in our power to lengthen human lives and to make the race of men and women who are to be the citizens of the future strong and vigorous and healthy.

If I am correct about this, — that the State's first business is to promote the public health, even before it seeks the education of its citizens, because without health and strength and vigor education is of perhaps small value, — essentially above all things else for the perpetuation of a safe and secure government, is a vigorous and strong manhood and womanhood.

Hence, the first duty, as I see it, of the planning board is to remove from the city and town every influence detrimental to public health; every condition which is likely to cause disease or the spread of a disease; every nuisance which makes or tends to make or cause disease; every unwholesome influence in the community which tends to diminish human strength and vigor and lessen the physical and moral welfare of the individual citizens of the community. And I want you to bear that in mind, because, before you begin to beautify, you must begin to eliminate all of those things in a locality which are objectionable to public health; which are objectionable to the eye; which are objectionable to the senses; and which seek or tend to make the people of the community less appreciative of what is beautiful. You must seek to raise their hearts and their thoughts and their minds to higher and more beautiful things.

And I think, my friends, a very common impression abroad is that the chief duty of a planning board is to beautify this town or city; to build a beautiful square in the very heart and center of the city; to have a civic center; to have a group of fine municipal buildings, but I believe, my friends, as I view your work, that the problem and the greatest service of all you can do at the outset is the removal of unwholesome conditions, nuisances, unsightly tenement districts, the unwholesome atmosphere surrounding the factory and the mill gates, the stench that comes from polluted water streams, and the thousand and one things you know of that tend to lower and lessen the appreciation of the beautiful upon the part of the people who daily and hourly have to tolerate these conditions.

And what a great work, what a great service to mankind this is, of removing from the atmosphere and the public sight all those things which tend to blind the public vision to those other things which promote human happiness and the welfare of the race.

This is the thought I have this morning that I desire to leave with you. Other things that follow from this first great duty I know you will discuss here. I would be glad to discuss them with you, some of the other problems you have to keep before you, and perhaps none is more important than the thought of economy. You know we have wasted a tremendous sum of money. — State, city and town governments, — because we haven't planned in advance; because we have had no conception of the future; because we have never stopped to think what would be the condition here, what will be the problem in five, ten or twenty-five years from now. And what we have been doing mostly, these one hundred years, is spending money with no thought of the future. We haven't had vision. We haven't been looking forward. We haven't realized that work is not for this hour or this day. Our work is for the generations that are to follow us, and I am sure that this board can be of great service to any community by a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the future, a survey of those conditions which exist in the community, and which, from time to time, will have to be improved and changed.

If, my friends, I have already talked longer than I intended to, the reason is my desire to indicate to you my great interest in your problem. I want to say this to you, — the State government is the parent government of every city and town. Our commissions exist not to make legislation for us but to administer the laws that are made. In my opinion they have even a greater function, and that is to study the great problems which come within their duties and responsibilities. The State government must or ought to be the last word on every subject, and I want this Homestead Commission to receive from you suggestions; to know of your problems and of your conditions. I want you to help the Commission, and you can help it. You can bring to them suggestions and ideas, and suggest the duties, new duties, which ought to be entrusted to them by the Legislature, if that is necessary and important. I want them to be of service to you; I want them to help you; I want them to co-operate with you, and I am sure they want to co-operate with you, because they have called you together for that purpose, and I want the State organization or organizations, working hand in hand, to give life and strength and energy to this movement throughout our Commonwealth, to lead to great accomplishments in perfecting the plans of the various planning boards in this State. And I am very much pleased indeed, as the Governor, to find this evidence of co-operation, to find this desire to come together and discuss this



great and important problem. I wish you success. And I want to wish success to your great work because I realize how much it means for the future welfare of our State and for the future happiness of the people of our State. You are contributing to the happiness of millions of men, women and children, into whose life only a small measure of happiness comes, because there are people in our Commonwealth (as in every other Commonwealth) who know no other word but toil, toil, toil. You are helping them to know other words, — happiness, pleasure, enjoyment. That is your work and your compensation. So, thanking you for coming here and interesting yourself in this great work for the people of our State, I want to wish this meeting every success, and to assure you that the people of the Commonwealth will be grateful to you for whatever you may do to promote and advance the work of perfecting and planning in the cities and towns of our Commonwealth. Thank you.

Mr. GETTEMY. You will note by the printed program that the second item is "Reports from Local Planning Boards," and that was to be followed by a talk "Making Civic Surveys Graphic," by Arthur C. Comey, a member of the Homestead Commission and the practical city planner member of our Commission. We have thought, however, that it might possibly help to make things go a little more systematically if we had Mr. Comey's talk first and then called upon the different planning boards to give their reports, after they have had the opportunity to listen to a presentation of some of the fundamental aspects of the problem from the standpoint of the professional city planner. It is not impossible that Mr. Comey, in the course of his remarks, may furnish some suggestions which will be helpful to those of you who have come here looking for suggestions, and helpful in presenting your own problems when you come to make your own reports. It is for that reason primarily that we take the liberty of indulging in this little rearrangement of our program.

I will now call on Mr. Comey of the Homestead Commission to speak to us on "Making Civic Surveys Graphic."

Mr. ARTHUR COLEMAN COMEY. Mr. Chairman: Bulletin No. 2 of course has given you all considerable information as to what can be done along the line of collecting information; this discussion will amplify that. I shall be very brief in these opening remarks and hope to find out more particularly the points of immediate interest by questions.

The civic survey, to define it, is the collection and compilation

of all information concerning the city or town which bears upon its physical, social, economic or financial conditions. Of course that is a pretty large order, but such a survey is justified as furnishing the only reliable basis for planning its development and improvement. Although that hasn't always been the basis for planning, I think it will be more and more realized as absolutely essential for refined planning, — that is, planning that meets the conditions to a nicety. These surveys will assure this.

Furthermore, their value is cumulative, and by getting them all at once the saving is very great. The local planning board in collecting such information will really constitute a bureau of research. There are bureaus of research outside the State; there have been temporary bureaus inside the State, but I don't think there are any now in the cities and towns in Massachusetts. Elsewhere such bureaus are recognized as filling a very large need. All other departments and all citizens of the town, in fact, should come to the bureau in this capacity for their information; and the bureaus should gradually assume an important place in city halls and town halls with their records and files. If the planning board can't keep a clerk in the office all the time, the records should be available during office hours, by an arrangement with a clerk of another department. These files should fit into the machinery of local government and prove their value in any number of ways.

No two cities or towns are alike, and the information contained in a discussion of this sort will have to be all-inclusive, covering the problems of both large and small cities and towns. Probably all problems covering the small towns are common to the large ones, but the reverse is not always true. It is obvious, however, that many of the conditions are similar in most of the fifty-three cities and towns under the mandatory law, and a number of others which have come in under the optional provision. There is a greater number of places over ten thousand in Massachusetts than in any other State in the Union except Pennsylvania, where also progressive cities are taking up city planning. Thus the common needs and the opportunity for common action by all these Massachusetts planning boards is unusually large.

In considering the vast amount of material that might be gathered, it is obviously impossible to acquire in a short period all the desirable data; in fact most of the data can only be gathered as opportunity offers. Such opportunities should be availed of constantly, however, and the information filed and indexed. The

index is going to be one of the most important aspects of filing material. The material is varied in form, including maps, atlases, reports of various commissions, books, reports of city departments and of civic organizations, photographs, prints and clippings. It is quite a matter of business detail to make the material available so that it can be quickly referred to, and therefore the classified index is of very great importance. This index should include not only the material on file with the board, but material which is known to exist elsewhere. For instance, in Cambridge we found even more material than we already knew had been gathered by Harvard University in the Social Ethics Department, covering also many other cities and towns of the metropolitan district, including Boston in particular. So almost every city or town has had some outside information prepared, much of which could be placed in files of the board, but some of which will have to be kept on file elsewhere, but will be referred to in the classified index.

Statistics are apt to be rather dry; they don't convey much impression to the casual reader. The duty of the bureau is not simply to inform itself; it is to inform the citizens, not against their will, but to make it easy for them to grasp the main facts discovered in the course of studies of local conditions. Graphic methods, making diagrams and plans which by a glance show the general features contained in the statistical matter, are of very great value. I don't think their value can be overestimated. Practically every single fact that is ever gathered can be shown graphically. In fact, there has just come out a book by a New York engineer, several hundred pages long, entitled "Graphic Methods," which shows what a science the presentation of facts has come to be. Diagrams will show density, increases, proportionate amounts in expenditures, and any number of things like that.

The region covered should include not only the city but the territory near it as well. This is especially true of Boston, where many cities and towns come far within its sphere of direct influence; but cities like Springfield or Worcester or Lowell, and particularly like Lawrence, with its small area, should be careful to include a considerable area of the towns outside, although these towns may also gather their own information. The statistics of the city proper should however be kept distinct, so that they can be compared with the other political units in the State.

Much of the information is already covered by the United States census reports for population and other subjects. All cities over

30,000 are included in the annual financial report, which is very valuable, supplying readily and in short order the figures needed for comparing cities with others of the same size or class.

The methods of presentation of the maps, and the symbols to be used, have not all been thoroughly worked out as yet. It is hoped as each city and town takes up some problem a standard can be evolved which within reasonable limits can be used by others, so that when we come to study several cities and towns we shall find their maps have been made on the same basis. The Homestead Commission will suggest from time to time, as rapidly as surveys are made, standard symbols and standard methods of shadings, so that the maps will be readily comparable. Certain maps should be compiled annually, but as many cannot be, five and ten year periods for many of the facts will be often enough to gather data. Historic facts, also, going back into the past, are of very great value. By studying maps showing conditions of ten, fifty or one hundred years past we can get a better forecast of what may happen in the next fifty years.

As a basis for maps of physical conditions and distribution, a topographic map is so clearly essential that we may assume for most cities where the country is at all rough that it is absolutely essential. The United States Geological Survey map, which covers the entire State, made about 1887 in conjunction with the Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission, gives the topography in a general way at a scale of 1 mile to an inch. It may be enlarged photographically to 1,000 feet to an inch scale; then the inaccuracies begin to appear and it cannot be used for closer work. Furthermore, the topographic map will be used by so many departments that every city or town should take up the problem of whether it can supply itself with one at some standard scale which will be usable by all departments. A map at 200 feet to an inch will not be prohibitive in cost. In cities with large areas of undeveloped land, such as Haverhill, which runs north to the State line, the map need not cover areas not likely to be built on in twenty-five years. In Baltimore, where such a map was made, they found that preliminary street and sewer profiles could be taken directly from the map. The use of the map by assessors alone will justify it, though they need a larger map for block assessments. At the present time in Cambridge they want a map which shows the topographic conditions over considerable sections, — and a map at 100 or 200 foot scale to the inch would show that. These scales are

suggested as standard in order to make possible the use of maps of adjoining towns and cities, — 100 feet, 200 feet, 500 feet, 1,000 feet. One inch to the mile we have in the government map; special maps for details should be 50 and 20 feet to an inch.

For the purpose of planning boards there is no particular need for many maps of great size, except a few wall maps. For general purposes a map that can be spread on a drafting table is desirable. The method of filing maps is perhaps a detail, but I think it is quite important to do it right. If maps are rolled up, as many city engineers have to do on account of lack of room, they are hard to utilize for brief intervals, which is how maps are usually utilized. They should be laid flat in horizontal drawers, which is rather expensive, or in a vertical file, which may be obtained as large as 36 by 48 inches. A plan longer than that but not more than 48 inches wide can be folded in one direction without serious detriment.

I will not go into the details of the topographic survey. This State, I think, is the only State in which the latitude and longitude of the bounds of every city and town is determined to about one-tenth of a foot. The geodetic survey, which is incorporated with the boundary survey, can thus be used as a basis for all local surveys, without any triangulation, thereby saving a great deal of expense in the control over large areas. Topography may be filled in on a system of plane co-ordinates as opportunity offers, and tied up with the bounds, church steeples and other high points located in the State survey. Town boundary atlases of every city and town are on file with the city or town clerk, and can be purchased for \$2.50 a volume.

A map about 1,000 feet to the inch in scale is probably the best for showing the conditions over the entire city, and where more accurate maps are not available, the enlargement of the United States topographic sheets will serve fairly well for preliminary studies.

Bulletin No. 2 outlined eight maps, I believe, which it was suggested might be readily gathered in many cities and towns as a start. I have brought together here a number of graphic surveys; they are at rather small scales; many cannot be seen well across the room, but they will be hanging here throughout the session, so that you can study them more closely, and possibly I can point out on some of them the main conditions.

*Development of Property.* — This map shows the zones of de-

velopment of private property in Houston, Texas. The unoccupied area is left blank. The area dotted is occupied by residences, each dot representing 25 people; some dots are black, representing sections occupied by colored people. The shaded properties are railroad and industrial property, and the dark center commercial quarters. Such a map can be made in short order from existing atlases, coupled with a certain amount of field investigation. Much of this work could be done by volunteers under the direction of the board or board's technical adviser, so that the expense of getting surveys of this sort together is for the most part relatively small. A good thorough beginning for a city of 50,000 can be made for \$500.

Another map I have here of Houston, Texas, on the same scale indicates range in land values. That map can be compiled very rapidly. The scheme of the map is: the darker the shading the more valuable the land. Such a map has not often been prepared in American cities. On a larger scale it would be rather dramatic. Notice the way the values run on the main streets. Little streams coming in here on this inexpensive property afford opportunities for parks. The assessors will find such maps of great value. Notice also this, the only main thoroughfare without a railroad crossing. In this section on the north not only are there frequent crossings, but this area was plotted so that traffic cannot get out into the adjoining districts. This map also showed that the city was systematically taxing railroads much more than other property. They thought the railroads wouldn't kick.

*Population.* — By distribution of the population, we mean where the people stay at night. On this map of Bridgeport, Connecticut, the dots indicate 25 people, the scale being somewhat smaller than on the other map. This shaded area is factory property; this is water here. There is no opportunity for people spreading in that direction.

School population bears a relation to the density of population, though of course the number of children does not vary exactly according to total population. The voters' lists we checked up in Boston, and found range from one-third to one-seventh as many voters as people, — too great a range to be useful. The increase in population can be shown in two ways, — it may be shown on a map like this by dots; also, for the purpose of showing the ultimate size of the city, it may be shown by taking cross-section paper and plotting the population for successive periods and drawing a

line through these points. The planner uses more or less imagination in order to show the probable population that must be taken care of in fifty years. You will notice this diagram doesn't look like most population diagrams; this is because it is plotted on paper with a logarithmic scale in one direction. Most population diagrams have been plotted on cross-section paper, — curves can't be compared so readily that way, as the important factor is rate of increase. The best way to show rate of increase and gross population is in this way. Every time the population doubles, it goes up an inch, and any straight line represents a uniform rate of increase.

*Dwellings.* — I have not the sort of map that I think should be obtained. I could not get one at short notice. That map of Cambridgeport, over there, indicates by colored squares the character of each piece of improved property. Red is business; purple is industrial; residential areas, for the purpose for which that plan was made, were divided according to the rent paid by people living in the houses, which accounts for those other more or less solid blocks of color, — yellow, brown and blue. A more important distinction would be number of stories. This little plan shows simply two blocks, — the darker the shading the higher the buildings. Such a map should be carried over the whole city. It needn't be gathered house by house; it can be the prevailing height in blocks. Whether the building is wood or brick should be shown, so that the fire hazard can be readily seen; also whether the houses are detached or semidetached, and the density of houses per acre. That doesn't always follow exactly the density of population.

Distribution of workers I have no map of. If you had a density of working population you could compare it with the map of sleeping population and you would have a pretty good idea of the flow of people from their houses to their work. The number of employees in each factory should be plotted through each district.

*Health Conditions.* — We have heard a good deal about health maps for they are being made by health boards. It brings up this point: these maps have been made; they don't have to be duplicated, but should be correlated and reference made to such material on file with other boards.

*Location of Deaths and Death Rates.* — Maps of tuberculosis cases through a period of one year or ten years, unless you compare them with the density of population, wouldn't show the relation of tuberculosis to bad light and air. It is the rate that counts. If you made a map showing cases per thousand and compared it with

the density of population, you would get the relation. Usually the greater the density of population the greater is the death rate from tuberculosis, partly owing to the lack of light and air.

The effective radius of schools and parks is an important consideration. On this little map here the circles drawn around the school centers show the areas served. There were no children at this point, and practically none in the center. Children would walk a half mile to playgrounds, if adjoining schools, though they wouldn't walk that far for separate playgrounds.

*Thoroughfares.* — On the large map of Boston, blue lines show existing conditions and certain improvements that are expected to perfect the general thoroughfare plan. Boston's problem is more complicated than any other in the State, owing to the distance out from the center that the heavy traffic goes. Traffic for a city of 50,000 needn't be studied more than five or six miles out, and for the most part only the conditions within the city proper.

Another traffic scheme, for Detroit, is shown here in a little diagram showing in a little less detail the theory on which this is being studied.

Most cities have pavement maps. One of these should be on file, or a record kept of it if on file elsewhere.

Other physical work, sewers, water supply, etc., should all be referenced in a single index.

The flow of traffic is shown in a number of ways. We have here the destination of the traffic coming out at a single freight yard in Bridgeport, Connecticut. It is shown here that a fairly large amount of traffic is destined across here and the only bridge is far up. Here is a larger scale map, showing all the traffic going across the bridge. The immediate value of this diagram is to prove the need of relocating this bridge, so as to connect up with this thoroughfare, and it is proved by figures that the bridge in this location would serve better than in the present oblique direction.

I haven't any transmit maps here. The diagrammatic method is useful here also.

*Nationalities.* — Composition of nationalities in different districts is interesting. These little maps here are unfortunately on too small a scale to be seen across the room. If you examine closely this map you will note the conditions in the North End are homogeneous; in the South End several nationalities are mixed in.

The character of buildings shown here are on a small scale, too. They show the tenement and lodging houses and also the character



of work people are doing. Any number of maps of that sort could be made. These are simply examples of a few of them.

*Financial Diagrams.* — I haven't any examples here. They of course border on the field of other departments, but a brief comparison with other cities will help in showing why things are possible in one city and not in another. Occasionally this is quite an important factor.

I will not go into this in detail. I have run over this quickly; if any of you ask questions or make observations on any phase of the work, we have all the morning to hear this and the local reports; it was intended to start discussion by this brief outline.

Mr. WARREN DUNHAM FOSTER, presiding. The committee on conference of the Homestead Commission will consider this meeting a failure unless we talk together. We haven't asked you to come together to be talked at. The committee hopes you will ask questions of Mr. Comey and discuss what he has said, and that you will take full charge of the meeting. Let me ask, when you speak, that you give your name and the city and town that you represent.

Mr. GALLUP of Boston. I would like to ask Mr. Comey if in this process of compiling a reference catalogue it wouldn't be possible to duplicate many of those cards by the Homestead Commission on a standard size, so that they might be sent out to individuals who are not necessarily connected with planning boards, and newspaper offices throughout the Commonwealth, perhaps by subscription. I know I would be glad to subscribe for such a service and I think almost all interested in city planning would equip themselves with a filing case such as the Boston Chamber of Commerce sent out last year, so that information of this kind, coming from an authoritative source, can be given. Then it seems planning boards in towns could help their publicity by sending out interesting things about that city. I would like to know if Mr. Comey thinks it would be practical?

Mr. COMEY. I think it is excellent, very encouraging to any board to show the interest taken. Of course the information on the card may be of two sorts. Primarily, it is an index of material, giving very little information, but showing what the material really is.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Comey did not speak at length concerning the plottings of financial information. Most of the boards have probably found to their sorrow that the financial situation in which they are involved is as serious as that which has to do with topography.

I am wondering if any member of the conference has any suggestions as to the way the necessary financial statements could be graphically portrayed, either for use of the local boards or use of the public. Has Mr. Frankel any suggestion in this direction? I should think that would fall within your field, Mr. Frankel.

MR. FRANKEL. I haven't given any consideration whatever to this particular phase of it, Mr. Foster. I should be glad later on to discuss the financial side of the housing situation, but I have nothing on this particular point.

MR. NOLEN of Cambridge. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me a very good beginning to have selected for this session of the conference the topic of "Making Civic Surveys Graphic." In a good deal of the town and city planning work heretofore we have been compelled to go directly at the city planning problems without a preliminary survey. Communities have been so unfamiliar with the necessity of a more reliable basis for planning that those who have been doing the planning, landscape architects and others, have not been able to persuade the towns and cities to do the work in a thorough way. I think there is now a change in this respect. First, we have discovered from the planning that has been done that there is a necessity for a more reliable and scientific basis for the plans and recommendations. Second, the civic survey gives opportunity for the graphic presentation of facts. This graphic presentation is justified because it enables one to make clear certain needs, and to carry conviction to people that the recommendations are not merely an opinion but are based upon a very careful analysis of facts,—stubborn facts, which cannot with safety be ignored. The survey also tends to popularize the movement. The charts and diagrams enable one to make the movement democratic, and carry to the people of a city the principal ideas that city planning is working to carry out, and also to convince them that it is very closely related to things that directly concern them and their welfare.

If I may be permitted to refer to the bridge problem at Bridgeport, I should like to add that an official planning commission was at work there on general city problems. Furthermore, an official bridge commission had been appointed to decide about the building of a bridge across the Pequonnock River, the construction of which had been approved and an expenditure of \$400,000 authorized. There was a general somewhat hazy notion that the new bridge should be put where the old bridge was. No one had any very different idea. But just as soon as the traffic count was made, the



not give a lucid reason for getting. What is he going to do with it? is the question to be asked. There are so many phases of it that nothing will be accomplished unless we put our attention on some definite phase. I think the Governor showed remarkable foresight when he emphasized the housing question, and if you will attempt to make illustrations in relation to housing in your communities, you will do more towards furthering the town planning movement.

I also want to make one other point. You know very well the town planning movement has a great desire to make something beautiful. That has been the tenor of the town planning movement in this country. I think the most important part in town planning is the economic side. Unless we are assured our town planning will make money for the community, there is something wrong. We have all wanted to feel we could do something for the community, — something beautiful, bringing more health and happiness, — but unless we put it on an economic basis it cannot be realized. In the fifty or more towns in this country, how few projects have been realized, — until the people have realized that they were economic. Unless you can show a profit to the community by the plan recommended, there is something wrong with it.

Mr. FOSTER. That word of warning is very much in order.

If there is no further discussion from the floor, we will take up the second number on the program, "Reports from Local Planning Boards." We want to hear freely and frankly and fully what you have done, what you have not done, what you wanted to do, and all about it. Let me call first upon the planning board of the largest city of the State, — on Boston.

Mr. CRAM. Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: Any report that the planning board of the city of Boston can make at this time is a report not of accomplishment but of feeling the way and of beginnings. That, of course, is undoubtedly true of reports that would be made by any one of the fifty-three planning boards that have been authorized, and most of which have come into existence.

The problem is so big here in Boston, it is so complicated, it is so involved in innumerable outside considerations and allied considerations, that manifestly it is a case where only several years can indicate exactly what can be done, perhaps even in many directions the lines on which our ideals can be worked out.

The Boston city planning board has been in active service hardly more than nine months. All the earlier part of that time was

given to an attempt to find out where we were, what we were expected to do, what we wanted to do, and finally what we could do. Naturally the first question that came to us was the question that is emphasized in the legislation which brings the city planning boards into existence, and that is the question of housing. The question of housing in Boston is, as you all know, one of the most complicated and difficult that could arise in any city of the United States. As soon as we began going into this question at all, we realized how closely the whole subject of transportation and distribution was tied up with the question of planning for residential districts, either so far as redeeming existing quarters in the city is concerned, or the developing of new areas for resident purposes. At first a great deal of our time was given to the study of this question of terminals and of the distributing of people in the city proper, and the board has already printed its first report on this question, which is now available for public distribution.

Another matter has recently been taken up with as much vigor as is possible under the circumstances, and by that I mean in view of the very limited amount of money that is placed at the disposal of the board. This is so small a sum that it is practically impossible for us to do anything more than to begin an investigation, but we have by economy saved enough money from the pittance allowed us to employ an expert to take up specifically the question of East Boston, — its possibilities in the way of development, the industrial conditions that exist there, what can or cannot be done in the way of developing residential areas and areas of manufacture, the question of transportation by railway, electric road and highway. This careful consideration of the whole East Boston problem we hope to make the subject of our second report.

Another thing that appeals to us very strongly, and which we have just begun to consider in a preliminary way, is the North End, one of the most interesting situations in Boston, and one of the most stimulating to any city planning board that is convinced of its responsibility, as His Excellency has said, for the elimination of those elements which work against the health and happiness of the working people, and therefore against citizenship.

Now this North End problem is one that does require an immense amount of consideration. You will see its nature from some of the diagrams shown here to-day, — diagrams that argue very strongly as to the unwisdom that has controlled the development (if you may call it development; some would call it degeneration)

of certain sections of the North End. Take that showing certain conditions in 1883, and below, the conditions as they are to-day. You will see how, as Mr. Comey pointed out in speaking of another place, conditions that were not bad in 1883, as far as light and air were concerned, have become what I do not hesitate to declare a scandal to any self-respecting locality. Conditions such as these exist throughout other blocks in the North End and West End and sections of the South End, and they appeal to the city planning board most strongly. We hope to take up the problem of the North End, then the West End and finally the South End.

There are two aspects of this question of the rearrangement of the North End and South End, towards improving the tenement conditions of those who live there now and will continue to live there.

*First.* — What can be done toward improving the tenement house conditions in the congested portions of the city through the condemnation of unsatisfactory dwellings, the opening up of new streets and the widening of old streets, together with the rebuilding along these thoroughfares of wholesome, attractive and low-priced tenements, and also the providing of more numerous playgrounds and breathing spaces and the clearing out of the back buildings in the middle of congested blocks in the North End? This latter point is of great importance. An examination of city maps for the space of the last seventy-five years shows how the back yards and gardens formerly existing in the North End have been utilized for tenements having no proper access to the surrounding streets, and cutting off all possibility of light and air, not only to themselves, but for the surrounding buildings.

*Second.* — What can be done toward reducing the population in given tenements and blocks, and inducing the surplus population to go out and take up residence in suburban districts, where they can obtain better accommodations for equal or less rent, and perhaps be nearer their sphere of work? It is a fact that many of the people who are employed in Arlington and in Belmont live where? Arlington and Belmont? No, in the North End. That is a most extraordinary reversal of the natural arrangement of things. You might expect to find people living in Arlington and Belmont coming to Boston for business, but when they live in the North End and go out to Arlington and Belmont it is an anomalous condition, but one to be reckoned with.

There are these two aspects, — the development of sanitary and

attractive tenements in the crowded sections of the city, and the development of good and attractive residential areas within a five-cent fare radius of the center of Boston.

This question of the type of house interests us very much, but that requires a great deal of labor on the part of architects and draughtsmen, and at present we can't command this. We can, however, assemble a good deal of information that has already been acquired by architects who have endeavored to solve the same problem in other cities, and that we are doing.

There are other things that we are very much interested in, as, for instance, the development of the harbor islands and the Charles River Basin, so that they may be made more valuable and more attractive for the summer population during the heated months. The board has made a careful investigation of all the islands in the harbor, and there are certain islands marvelously adapted for summer recreation on the part of people compelled to live here all the time in the North End, South End and West End, and who cannot get to the mountains or seashore, as the rest of the population can. The question of further development of these islands and Charles River Basin is a matter we have considered a good deal, and are still considering.

There are also certain matters that have been directly referred to us by his honor the mayor, such as that of local markets, which we are taking up with what activity we can.

On the question of a playground in Allston-Brighton district, we held a conference at the city planning board's office Monday, and representatives from the Allston district placed their case before us, and when Mr. Comey was speaking of conditions in playgrounds and parks in Houston, I couldn't avoid drawing a contrast between the conditions there and those existing in Brighton and Allston, where there are practically only three available parks, all on the outskirts; and in the middle, where there is a large and an increasing population, no playground, except certain unimproved land, at present being used by the courtesy of the trustees of that property. The difference is very great. We treated the map in the same way Houston did, drawing our circles around the parks and showing that the areas served by these parks are a small proportion of the whole residence area of Brighton and Allston.

Other minor points we have taken up are questions of improving the transit facilities of Beacon Street as it turns down the hill to Tremont and of Somerset Street at Pemberton Square, — even in

Boston an intolerable condition of things. I speak from the heart because my office is on this corner. We have suggested the possibility of arcading the Houghton & Dutton building, and opening up the neck between the old City Club property, the Houghton & Dutton property and the Court House.

We have also suggested to his honor the necessity of improving the conditions at Faneuil Hall, looking on this building as we do as one of the most reverend monuments in Boston. The building has been already improved, but is in need of completion of the work in the direction of protection against fire, improved sanitary conditions, etc.

These, Mr. Chairman, are certain of the matters that have been taken up by the city planning board. I can honestly repeat, in apologizing for the inadequate nature of this list, the fact that we have been at work only a few months. The problems are enormously complicated, perhaps more than in any other city, and we are working under adverse conditions of finance.

In closing these entirely random remarks, I should like to say for one, and speaking, I am quite sure, for all the representatives of the planning boards here, how deeply impressed I am by what His Excellency said this morning with regard to the important lines, the fundamental lines which must control city planning. He called attention, among other things, as you know, to the fatal error that would be made if we held artistic considerations to be the primary matter before city planning boards. These will follow from a reform of topographical and social and economic conditions. The latter are, of course, primary. He emphasized, it seemed to me, the important points that must come before the city planning boards, and these are, in particular, housing and the giving to the working people of any community an opportunity to live, not only under sanitary conditions, but under attractive conditions as well. Unless they can have both of these elements, what we are doing is simply making bad citizens.

One of the points of great importance is that all city and town planning boards should work together as much as possible. Each should let the neighboring boards know what it is trying to do, and what assistance it can expect from these neighboring boards. The Boston planning board is so impressed with this that we have already held a conference with neighboring town boards, which was satisfactory to the Boston city planning board at least. Co-operation and the recognition of the fundamental points His Excellency



spoke of this morning will guarantee carrying through to a logical, successful and I may say historical conclusion, the work now undertaken by the city planning boards of Massachusetts.

Mr. FOSTER. It is appropriate that we hear from the representative of the large city of the western part of the State, Mr. Parsons.

Mr. PARSONS of Springfield. It is pretty hard to make a verbal report on the accomplishments of the city planning commission of Springfield when we have so few specific things which we can point to, when the whole nature of our work, up to the present time, has been preliminary, — what we have dignified by the term “foundation work.”

Our commission was appointed about a year ago, but the ordinance under which we were appointed is very broad in recommendatory powers but very narrow in any other power, which fact is very well recognized in the city of Springfield. We are all laymen, none of us city planners, nor have we had sufficient appropriation, nor wish to ask for sufficient appropriation during the first year of our existence, to allow for the use of expert advice. The result has been that we have attacked the problem as laymen. We have tried to get the work on to some sort of business-like basis by finding out first what we were expected to study, and leaving the question of the development of the work to a future time. We have attacked some specific problems. We feel perhaps, at the close of our first year, that we have gained the confidence of the public of Springfield to some extent, that our work has not been wasted.

We have just completed our first annual report, which goes into this matter in detail, and which we will be glad, when it comes from the printer's hands, to furnish to the other city planning boards, and we shall be interested to get theirs in return.

Mr. FOSTER. I have before me a list of the planning boards which have responded. I am going to begin alphabetically with Adams and go through to Woburn. If I omit any planning board, I hope it will be called to my attention.

Mr. ADAMS of Adams. What interests the country towns most is not so much what we are going to do to A or B street, but what practical means we are going to take to make the planning commission a success, what we are going to do and how we are going to do it. That is what we are all vitally interested in. It seems to me in a small town such as ours there are many things we have to look out for first. For instance, the game of politics comes in

indirectly, because you or I may differ in regard to politics, but I think that one thing each and every man on the planning board can do is this: no matter who is elected to office they can extend the right hand and give him all the help they can to make the town a success. The towns don't do that. I am not speaking particularly of my own town but other towns I know of. One faction wants this and another wants something else. It is remarkable that the people in the towns don't put forward their best efforts to work for the towns and not for private factions.

I think in our city and town planning what we should use is horse sense. Each and every town has individual problems to solve. The problems for the city of Boston are different from those of the little country town I represent. There are expenditures of money to come up, and as the gentleman from Springfield said, they have great powers in some respects and are limited in others. We find ourselves in that same position. What we have done, to make my remarks short, in the town of Adams is simply to work with the selectmen as far as we could. Fortunately there the selectmen are in perfect harmony with us, and the work we have done is mostly foundation work, — trying to find out where we are at and making such suggestions, through the selectmen, as we thought proper and were glad to carry out as far as they were able in regard to finances.

Another point: the planning board members interest so far as possible the heavy taxpayers. I say this because they are vitally interested; they have to put their hands down in their jeans and pay; they are the ones that are touched first. It is essential that you get these men interested. I know in our own town I had a short talk with one of our heaviest taxpayers the other day. It was hard to get a great deal of enthusiasm from him. He said, "You do this and that and come in and increase our taxes." I think, as the gentleman has brought up here, we have to show economic returns. It need not necessarily be in money. You must show there are returns to be made to the town in one way or another.

Mr. LORING of Beverly. We organized in the last part of the summer, and were hampered by not having any appropriation, the mayor allowing us only a small sum for stationery and refusing anything else. We took a vote to take up matters of immediate interest, things that would gain the confidence of the people. I had been around a great deal before our first meeting and found that the question in the small town is, "Are you going to accom-

plish anything? What powers have you?" The average citizen said to me after I had explained, "Why, you have no powers," and I think in some ways it is true, in a small town where they know everything that is going on and know what they need immediately. I think in the small towns the planning board should look further into the future; the small towns look about two inches before their noses and don't look any farther; that is about as far as they go. After the two inches are passed, they have to tear out the work done and do it over, at a great expense, and by the time they get to that point they lose the chance of doing it at all.

It seems to me the planning board should have some kind of teeth, I don't know what kind, — some powers to impress the average citizens. The average citizen in my town — I spoke to over 100 people and about 10 thought we had a purpose and the other 90 thought we had no purpose — didn't see any use to spend any money on us. They said it would be better to take the \$500 or \$1,000 we asked for investigation and put it into a playground or something immediate. They don't see the immediate use of a planning into the future. I think it would be a great help to the planning boards of the small cities if some way could be devised by which they could gain the confidence of the average citizen. As it is now, the average citizen goes to his alderman and says, "I don't see any use of this board. Why trouble about it? Why follow its recommendations?" It seems to me if that can be overcome a great step in advance could be made.

As to survey, I feel that the average person doesn't see the economic use of the survey. But a big corporation or big business concern considers it worth while to have an inventory taken of what it has. Why should not the city, which is, in a sense of the word, a social corporation, take an inventory? I don't believe 75 per cent. of the citizens know what they have in cities. I think if that point of view could be brought out in a survey in the public press it would be a great deal easier for your planning board to accomplish something of real value in the future.

Mr. JACKSON of Brockton. Out in Brockton we are suffering from the same complaint of other boards, we have no money. The previous speaker spoke about having an appropriation for stationery. We haven't had that much; we haven't been assigned any place to meet. But through our chairman, Mr. Andrews, one of the leading men of the Chamber of Commerce, we have had the use of their rooms for meeting. First meeting was held in April, and we started

out to make an inventory of the city, to find out what we had to work with. In that way we had some conditions brought forth that tended to show that some of the housing conditions were not what they should be. We looked into that to what extent we could and asked the city authorities to have some one make a survey of the conditions, but that order was tabled by the finance committee as being inexpedient. So at the present time we are getting out a report making recommendations, and asking for an appropriation of \$500, and we think we may be able to get that appropriation by doing some political work among the aldermen and councilmen.

Mrs. MCKENZIE of Cambridge. We organized about a year ago and were handicapped on account of not being given an appropriation, but we persevered and secured \$500. We have secured recently the services of Mr. Comey, and hope to make some progress. Material of all sorts is being gathered, and we hope within another year to have an office at which to hold our meetings; at present we use the assessor's office. We hope later on to be able to make a better report.

Mr. HAMILTON of Clinton. We in Clinton have had no appropriation, but we do have a fine new municipal building and there is a mayor's office in it, and we have been told we may have that; but at present we are using the office of one of our members.

There is one thing we have in Clinton, — we have had the cooperation of all the other boards. We have tried to have municipal meetings, and have had two meetings this fall of the representatives of all the town boards, together with the planning board, and made to them what few suggestions we had to make. We have some things under way but nothing particular to report other than that we are meeting with our other town boards and getting their assistance and getting through a great many small matters. We have just abolished our grade crossings; the two railroads crossed. It left a scar in that part of the town and we tried to correct that to give people coming to Clinton a better impression of Clinton, and help to make money for Clinton by advertising Clinton in a better way to the traveling public.

Mr. WOODRUFF of Everett. We were fortunate in having among our members the city engineer, Mr. Harrison. In that way we have had many maps and surveys of the city, and we have looked over plans where streets might be widened and corners cut off, so that the danger from automobiles might be obviated. We have had a conference with citizens in a general way; also had a small appro-

priation of \$100. The chairman is not present to-day, as he was called out of the city; he could give a much more elaborate report than I can. There is one thing we have become interested in. It is a duplication of names of streets. We have a population of 35,000; it has grown greatly in ten years. In one section we have large manufacturing interests; large and important manufactures are located there. Of course we are going into the housing problems. This matter of streets, — Elm Street is on the east side of the city; Elm Road is on the west side of the city; East Elm Road is in another section. These things could be obviated. If there is a street to be named Waverly Street there shouldn't be a Waverly Avenue. If there is a square, street and avenue, all should be off the street, so that people can find them easily.

Tree grafting we have given attention. It is astonishing how, out of three or four streets going in the same direction, on one street the grass plots will be taken care of; on another, where houses are rented, three or four tenants will take care of the grass plots and keep them green; others will not.

We have monthly meetings. We have also looked into health conditions. We had Mr. Nolen down there December 8; the Board of Trade loaned us their rooms. He gave us one of his interesting discourses, which many of you have heard. There was a good attendance of the business men of the city.

Mr. NOLEN. I would suggest this one point, which it seems to me is profitable subject for discussion, namely, should we try to collect in Massachusetts towns and cities, as has been suggested, only the data and information which bear upon some particular problem which we think should be solved, or is there other town and city planning fundamental data which bear more or less upon the problems, and which should be collected at first for its own sake, afterwards trying to find out what it signifies? It seems to me that it will make a difference of procedure in regard to surveys, whether we adopt one of these views or the other. I am sure it would be of great value to this conference if we could hear on these points from the representatives of towns and cities that have yet to present their reports.

Mr. LEVY of Fitchburg. We have in Fitchburg what is called a municipal development commission. We were organized a short time before the institution of planning boards. The planning board act was passed in the same year as our special act was, just a little later. We were to all essential purposes an ordinary planning board,

but by our special act there are some things which give us work along other lines besides those emphasized in the planning board act. We are also given a certain amount of advantage financially, inasmuch as our act provides that we can spend \$100 a year, which we haven't done yet; and it also provides that all measures affecting streets and parks or exterior parts of a public building, or sites for new public buildings, shall be referred to us for our recommendation on the matter. It gives us a great deal of routine work to contend with and makes it necessary for us to hold many special meetings at times to consider them. In some respects it is an advantage, because it enables us to keep in touch with the development of the city or town. In another respect it is a disadvantage, because it requires a great deal of time, sometimes for matters of minor importance. It is possible our time could be given to better advantage if concentrated on other things.

I was asked by the Homestead Commission a short time ago to send in a communication, stating what we have been doing during the time we are organized. Possibly the communication which I sent in wasn't very much of a report of accomplishment; I thought the showing we were making wasn't especially a good showing. However, after listening to the experience of some other places I feel that we were not alone in what we considered our despondency. We found the average citizen and average member of the city government doesn't take our commission so very seriously. The name of our commission has been twisted by some of the members of our city government so as to call us the municipal "devilment" commission. I suppose they think we would turn the city upside down in some of our ideas. However, we have tried not to be especially visionary.

To get at the pith of the matter, the situation in Fitchburg as much as anything is the financial situation. It would be a mistake to say Fitchburg cares nothing for city planning and is doing nothing for city planning if we speak of the needs of the future. Fitchburg at the present time, at the compulsion of the Commonwealth, is paying \$1,000,000 to take its sewage out of the river and dispose of it according to modern ideas. It is causing its tax rate to go up with leaps and bounds. It is pleasant to have the new sewage system, but very unpleasant to have the increased taxation. Therefore anything which isn't a matter of immediate interest which calls for any expenditure at the present time gets quite promptly rejected.

The city of Fitchburg also is confronted with a prospective shortage of its water supply, so a beginning is being made of an initial outlay of \$300,000, and a final outlay of \$1,000,000, all told, to make the water supply adequate. Then the city is confronted with the high school problem, which is calling for a large amount of money. The city of Fitchburg is in a condition where it doesn't feel like carrying out many plans suggested by our commission that call for the expenditure of any money.

It would be a good thing if we could have some surveys made, and we have thought some of it, but we haven't seen our way clear as yet, because our appropriation has been somewhat limited by getting started, and also by the experience of the committee of city council, which called in an expert a year ago to make an investigation, at an expense of \$500; it proved so unpopular to the citizens that everybody who had anything to do with it has been scored by it. However, we hope in the near future that public sentiment may sustain us in making some outlay of that kind.

The condition in a city like Fitchburg, which is an industrial city and depends for its life and prosperity upon industrial conditions, requires that city planning be controlled largely by the needs of an industrial city, so as to provide for the business needs of the city and also the homes of its workers. In considering the matters that have been brought before us, we have tried to look forward into the future, and perhaps if we were to sum up to the present time, it is to try and create a sentiment to look forward into the future in dealing with these various problems, instead of dealing with them in an aimless way from hand to mouth. If we could create a public sentiment of that kind, it may be very helpful later on in doing larger things.

We took up the question of the traffic conditions in the principal square of our city, and recommended that a radical change should be made in the conditions, as preliminary to what might be done to solve the problem of that square. We met the opposition of the street railway company, which didn't want to make any changes that would burden it in any way, and also we met the opposition of the merchants, who had the benefit of the concentration and crowding in the square, and thought that some people might be diverted from their places of business and carried to some other place of business. None of these things recommended have been done, except that the police department has stationed a police officer in the square. Such experiences dampen the fresh enthusiasm of those entering upon this work.

It was brought to our attention that certain improvements were to be made on an important street in the center of the city. They were in prospect. Therefore, after conferring with our Merchants' Association, we recommended to the city council that a short widening be made, sufficient to take care of the present exigencies upon two streets in the heart of the city that were likely to receive a much heavier use in the near future. The recommendation was rejected by the city council for financial reasons as much as any. They don't care to incur what they deem an unnecessary expense, although we deemed it essential to the city's future growth.

A problem that has confronted us, and must confront every place, is to try and undo some mischief done in the past. What has impressed itself on me and on other members of the commission is that conditions are being created in the outskirts at the present time that in the future it will be necessary to correct. We are trying to correct them to-day, but are without power to control them.

The Homestead Commission had a bill at the last Legislature which would give the Commission power to control new growth (House 122, 1914). We gave our support to the bill, but it failed. One of the things needed for our locality and other localities is to have some legislation that would give control of the future street developments, so that private individuals can't lay them out as they please, and leave it to the city to accept the results of their haphazard work.

Mr. STERLING. One of the chief purposes of this gathering was to bring you together so that you would talk to each other, and we outsiders wouldn't talk too much. There were 53 cities and towns which under chapter 494, Acts of 1913, should have appointed planning boards. Altogether 38 cities and towns have now complied with the law. Of these, 33 have responded that they are to be represented here to-day. We have heard from about 4 or 5 of them. We think it is more profitable to you and to us if you will talk, but in order to hear from the whole number of 33, we shall have to ask that each one of you make your statements as briefly and succinctly as you possibly can. We have designed to carry the meeting through the luncheon, in the hope that at least a majority of the members of the board here present would find it convenient and profitable to attend that luncheon. We have provided for all of you that are willing to come. The Governor has consented to be with us, and we hope that each of you who hasn't



urgent business elsewhere will come with us. It would have been a conservation of time if we could have carried on these reports from cities and towns at the luncheon, but as a majority will not be there it might not be wise to do so. We thought Mr. Andrew Wright Crawford might speak there. If a majority are not to be there, it would be better for him to speak here. In any case, we want as many of you to join us as possibly can, because we want you to get acquainted with each other, to get acquainted with the job you are on, and to find that a lot of people are having the same trials and difficulties you are having. You are interested in one of the greatest movements that has been started in the country, and its benefits are going to extend for many years. It is necessarily slow and complicated in the beginning, and those who are trying to start are inclined to be discouraged. They will be more encouraged if you can meet together.

The suggestion is made that we have more of these meetings in the future. On the table here in front are a number of documents, seven or eight. Nearly all of those are of interest to very many of you here present. I hope you will come forward and take such of them as appeal to you as being interesting. If any of them seem desirable to circulate in your city or town, if you will notify the secretary by letter, after you have looked them over, and say you would like copies to circulate, we will try to get them free of cost.

On reassembling after adjournment for luncheon:—

Mr. SEAMANS. In view of the fact that it is late, one-half an hour after the time we were supposed to come back, would it be in order that reports be limited to three, or at the outside five, minutes? If so, I would like to make that motion.

Motion seconded.

Mr. FOSTER. It has been moved and seconded that reports be limited to three minutes, with a leeway of two minutes more if the circumstances warrant it.

Motion carried.

Mr. COLTON of Hudson. About a year ago, in our Hudson Board of Trade, the housing question was brought up and the board voted to recommend that a planning board be established. At the annual town meeting our board was created. We have not been able to accomplish much, but we hope to present to the town at the annual town meeting recommendations that we believe will be carried out. We haven't got to question of finances yet, but we don't have much fear but if we handle things with tact, we shall get the finances

to do what we wish to. Other than that, I only wish I had a report to make of more progress, but as this is a matter of education, and as it takes some time to accomplish things, we feel encouraged to go on and hope to accomplish good results.

Mr. ROBEY of Malden. The Malden board has secured an up-to-date street map. I believe that all these data so well explained by Mr. Comey are essential and necessary, provided that we get results that will improve the city, — better sanitation, better transportation facilities, and those improved conditions that will improve the city and increase its valuation so as to get an income adequate to meet expenditures. Without that, I feel that the work of the planning boards will not be a success.

Malden has favored shade trees; we believe the planting and renewals of shade trees form a part of the duties of any board.

Our chairman has appeared at the meetings of the Public Service Commission, appealing for better transportation facilities in Malden. I believe first of all, rather than some elaborate chart system and some elaborate system of filing, we should seek to find out the resources of the city and see what we can do to develop the resources. Find out what we can do to benefit the future, — the establishment of building lines on streets which in the future, say ten or twenty years, will be business thoroughfares, or thoroughfares for traffic passage and freight capacities; the construction of streets in such form as will provide for the laying of pipes, conduits and wires in some way, to have the work done while the street is being constructed and not be compelled to tear up good streets as we do, incurring tremendous expense. I believe it is the duty of the planning board to devise ways and means to make economy for the city, and instead of an increase to taxpayers, a decrease, and at the same time secure added improvements.

Mr. MCGOWAN of Medford. One recommendation we sent to the board of aldermen was adopted, and as a result a possible nuisance was averted in a section of the city. We have been trying to find out where we stand, as the other boards have told us to-day. There are several problems which in particular interest us. One is the development of vacant property. We are interested in finding some way in which the manner and method of developing can be controlled. Certain of the finest residential sections around Boston are being to-day spoiled for that purpose because of the desire of certain builders or contractors to put up a certain type of property. Other sections, which are good living sections, have

already been spoiled by the buildings which have been erected. That we cannot interfere with at the present time. We are studying the proposition of getting streets in newly developed property laid out so that they will not be held up because they don't fit into the general scheme of the community.

There is another matter that has interested us. We are wondering how we can get results in our city. Maybe other cities have the same trouble, — that is, old, antiquated buildings in a tumble-down condition. We have some old buildings that some people refuse to remove, not historical heirlooms, nothing we want, but disfigurements, and dangerous from liability to fire. One building in particular has been threshed out before the board of aldermen; they refused to do anything; they said the city was liable to suit and considerable amount of damage. If it is possible for some things to be done in that line we would like to do it. We would like to learn if anybody has a way by which anything can be accomplished, or legislation that will give power to remedy that.

Mrs. HUNT of Melrose. Our town is perhaps particularly fortunate in not having many problems at the outset, but two important things have come up which are already before committees for their consideration and report. One is the drainage and the proper engineering of two brook outlets of ponds which run through the town, and at certain seasons of the year are very objectionable, and which detract from the value of the adjoining land, quite a considerable area; the other is removal of an old schoolhouse which has been condemned and reported as a moral menace to the community. Neither have been reported upon, and no report has been made by our board to the board of aldermen.

I am sorry I cannot report more, but we hope to get a great deal of inspiration from this meeting.

Mr. SHANNON of Northampton. The first thing we felt we ought to do was to get a physical survey of the city, and not having the funds to employ skilled labor, we were unable to accomplish that.

We have done a few things. We made a recommendation to the city council that they adopt a building code and establish a fire zone, which have been done, and the building code goes into effect January 1, 1915.

By taking the matter of our duties up with the librarian of the Forbes Library, we felt our authority was somewhat vague, and we wanted to know more about what we were created for, and an arrangement has been made which might be adopted, I should

think, with profit in other places. Arrangement has been made with the Forbes Library so that the reference room has set aside a shelf in a corner with books and documents along the line of city planning and landscape gardening, for the use of anybody interested, and the librarian has promised to purchase and put on the shelves any books we recommend.

We haven't done any great or particular thing. We did recommend to the city council a map of the city, a correct map and relocation and marking of some of the older streets. Ours is an old town, and, like most old towns, the streets in most sections are inaccurately described in the city clerk's office. The boundaries have been removed, old fences and buttonwood trees,—those marks have passed away. In some places people are encroaching. The city council has not yet adopted that recommendation.

There is one suggestion I would like to offer; that is, that the Homestead Commission, as a result of this conference and others, and the written reports which have been sent in by the several boards, might get out a little manual for the use of boards throughout the State, which would define in a general way some of the things we are aiming to do and give references to books, charts and maps.

Mr. COMEY in his talk told of maps we might get from the Harbor and Land Commission. Perhaps there are United States survey maps, which if all gotten together in a little pocket manual might be of benefit to the Commission and planning boards throughout the State.

Mr. FOSTER. The Homestead Commission is grateful to Mr. Shannon for his thoughtful suggestion. I might state that the State Library stands willing to co-operate with city libraries. I am sure the Commission will do everything that it can.

Mr. SEAMANS of Salem. Salem, I think, enjoys the distinction of being the first place in New England that had a city planning commission, ours being established in the early part of 1910, and the three years' work which we did on that commission seemed at the time, when we were doing it, to have very little result. We were able to bring one or two matters up to almost a deciding point, only to be thwarted by various things. One thing we had rather set our hearts upon was passed by the city council, financed by the city and by the council, but was thwarted by a member of the Massachusetts Legislature here at a committee meeting. You will meet with these obstacles and disappointments. If you know

Salem, you will know street widenings in some places are rather essential. When you run up against the fact that one of the largest stores on the street objected to street widening for the reason that it is easier for customers to cross a narrow street instead of a wider one, you may know what you will meet when you get far into city planning.

Very little city planning can be done outside the burned district for the immediate future. Our work consequently is centered on the housing question, and I think the chairman and secretary will bear me out that it is an unpopular subject, and you don't render yourself eligible to the hall of fame by getting interested in the housing question. But there is no use in ducking it. It is coming.

We have succeeded in formulating a code which we are now prepared to present to the city government which is responsible for us and our acts. Three years ago, two or three organizations in Salem started to establish a housing code, and when it was ready to be submitted to the Legislature (an act for Salem only, it was not possible to do otherwise) we were advised by our counsel in Salem to withdraw from that idea and get to work with others in the Legislature on an enabling act, which was passed, and it now makes it possible for us to have an ordinance for our city.

Salem should have had that housing act directly after our conflagration, yet it may not be too late if we can get it through this winter. The Homestead Commission ought to make a draft for a housing code that will apply to every city in the Commonwealth, outside of Boston, because they are in a position to do it.

Mr. STERLING. A commission on construction, alteration and maintenance of buildings has been at work for more than a year. It will be ready with its report in February. You will be notified and probably receive a copy of that report.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Taunton. In the city of Taunton we had a survey of all housing conditions in the city. Our board has met monthly. I came with my colleagues more for information, and I hope we can get on a line of progress in a short time.

Mr. BREWER of Waltham. A difficulty in Waltham was that the planning board found there was already a board of survey in existence which had done a great deal of the work for which this planning board was constituted. We have been getting together, and it looks now as if we need a combination of forces. The board of survey has done some very effective planning work. It has been

coupled with the city engineer's office. About thirty miles of street widening had been established. A study of the thoroughfare problem has been made and a pretty good plan of the city is on record.

I would like to call attention to two things. It seems to me the heart of all planning work is getting the people to understand the situation, and getting them behind the efforts towards better city planning. For instance, we go to a man who is going to build a house, or wants to buy some land, or is thinking of developing some. We say, "This is a city matter; the city is vitally interested. We will spend a little money and see that the layout is as it ought to be. You will have a record grade established, so that the street layout will be such that the city can adopt it later on."

We have gone to dealers to persuade them that we could help them in such a way if they would lay out their lines so as not to destroy the best features of the property. We would spend some money to help them make a layout that would place the roads where they ought to go and be constructed with the least expense. The result is that in Waltham to-day, in a great many cases, people refuse to buy land on a new street unless they know the board of survey has approved it. Several developments have taken place within the two or three years, and the developers have made it a point that their plan has been approved by the city planning board.

Mr. LEARNED of Watertown. I don't know any better report to make than read what our clerk sent to the Homestead Commission on the same lines:—

Our board was elected at the annual town meeting on March 2, 1914. The board has conducted an investigation of the dumping of refuse and reported plans which have brought about marked improvement in the conditions. They have reported to the selectmen a plan for eliminating present and avoiding future confusion in street names in the town, and have also studied conditions regarding certain thoroughfares which were referred to them and the selectmen jointly. A committee of the board, chosen to make a preliminary survey of density of population and housing conditions, has collected considerable information, photographs, etc., which will appear in the annual report of the board. Much time has been devoted to a general study of thoroughfares, the establishment of building lines has been carefully considered, and the results with plans and recommendations will probably be embodied in the annual report.

Mr. PARKS of Westfield. A planning board was appointed in the spring and held regular monthly meetings, and made a general study of the town and formed some plans, and expect to make a report in the spring. Among other things a building code for the

town is advised. They have none at present. Certain vacant areas in the town ought to be acquired for park purposes and breathing spots and playgrounds. If possible, there should be some control over the development of outlying parcels of land, private land not cut up at present in any manner.

Mr. GARY of Weymouth. We are very well situated as to our official relations, as we have two members of the board of selectmen in the planning board. Our meetings are held in the town office, and we are told by the board that they will sanction any bills that are justifiable, so we are not short of funds. In the beginning we did consider ourselves as a board intended to spend money. We are simply an advisory board, as I understand it, under the act, to look into matters and decide what is best to suggest to the different departments of the town, and thus work in harmony. We have been in consultation with heads of departments, engineers, superintendent of water works, engineers of fire department, and know their wants and needs, and what they think is advisable in order to improve conditions in our town.

Our town is plotted almost entirely, I think 95 per cent.; we know where all the land is, its area and boundaries, etc. We are going to have building laws that will conform to street levels in the future, so we will not be put to continual expense on account of reprisals, etc., after the buildings are built. In the early stages of our work there were appointed committees on these various subjects, streets, water, telegraph, telephone, electric lines, taxation, administration, recreation, housing, transportation and publicity. Our town is made up of five wards, and there have been placed on these committees five members, one from each ward, to avoid any feeling of sectional preference and to have everything in harmony. The committees are getting busy, and we expect to show something practical and economical as a result of our work.

Mr. TOMLINSON of Winthrop. There is an area in our town of 70 acres of salt marsh, on which there was a three-tenement building. The first time the assessors came around they found in two of the flats 22 people, 14 children. It cost the town about \$35 a year to educate each child. It was impossible to tax that building to pay for the education of these children, not speaking about fire protection, etc. We have taken that marsh and made it over for park and playground purposes. We were one of the first towns to adopt the tenement house act, which makes restrictions on three-tenement houses so severe that it doesn't pay to erect them. We had 180 tenement houses at the time we adopted the act.

Mr. FOSTER. Any city not called?

Mr. McCARTHY of Lawrence. We were one of the first cities that adopted the planning board amendment, and were glad to do it. We see there is need of just the kind of work city planning boards should do. The only thing we regret is that this movement didn't start about fifty years ago. We started in immediately to try to get the good will of everybody in Lawrence, beginning with the man who lived in the tenement house and the man who lived in the slums. We tried to prove to the people that the planning board belonged to the people, and not somebody away up above them coming down with a great gift; it all depended on the people themselves what they made of their city or town. We found it wasn't hard work to secure the favorable opinion of the public and even of politicians, and I believe if the planning boards are to do any good at all they must cultivate a very close and friendly relationship with the politicians, so called.

We are not so unfortunate or poverty stricken as to have no appropriation; we were given \$400, without asking for it. We have that \$400 yet; we intend to spend it though, but we wanted to show the people up there they could trust us with a few hundred dollars and we won't throw it away.

We found Lawrence had practically no building laws. It meant that a man could buy a lot next to an ice house and put up a ten-story block and have sixteen or seventeen tenements. It paid to do that sort of thing. So you can see we were up against a lot of opposition in attempting to adopt up-to-date building laws. We recommended them to the city government, but they didn't seem to like to adopt them, but we recommended them so often, and made them so tired, they referred them back to us. We brought in a set of building laws similar to the up-to-date building laws of cities of this State that had any building laws worthy of the name, and by and by they adopted our suggestion, and Lawrence, the first of January, will have a set of laws recommended by the city planning board and adopted by the city council.

We also have gone over the situation regarding playgrounds and anything else that would make the city a better place to live in, particularly a more healthful place.

Mr. HUDDALL of Chelsea. In Chelsea there was only a four-foot limit between buildings. We recommended that it be increased and the board of aldermen held a public hearing. To our surprise quite a number opposed changing the law. We still insisted there ought



to be more space than four feet, and recommended ten, and were willing to compromise on eight. They referred it to their committee on city ordinances, to hold a joint meeting with the planning board, but the committee on city ordinances hasn't met on that particular question, although we have asked them many times to hold the meeting.

We found another bad situation there in Chelsea. The Christmas after the Chelsea fire there was a flood. If we only had it the day of the fire it would have been fortunate; it came a year afterwards. It was caused by a dyke. The Winnisimmett Land Company reclaimed the lower part of Chelsea by building a dyke across there something like sixty or seventy years ago; everybody had forgotten it was there. It washed away in that storm and caused considerable loss of property and several lives. A temporary dyke out of spruce piles was built. The life of the dyke is eight years. It has now been there four years. We felt it was necessary to do something immediately in order to prevent another flood. We got the city engineer to draw two plans of filling, so as to eliminate forever any danger to the people, and also bring that section up to grade. It is four feet below grade in that section. We submitted two plans, one costing \$35,000 and another costing \$6,000, but either of the plans could be adopted immediately. To our surprise, the board of aldermen referred it to the committee on city ordinances and it has died there.

We have a railroad problem there and we intend to get the public interested in the things that concern them, and between now and the first of January, or immediately after the first of January, we are going to hold a public hearing in one of the large halls in Chelsea, and tell the people what is the matter with Chelsea and what the remedies are, and if they don't put them into effect it is up to them and not up to us.

Mr. FOSTER, presiding, introduced Mr. Andrew Wright Crawford of Philadelphia, to speak upon "City Planning Achievements that apply to Massachusetts."

Mr. ANDREW WRIGHT CRAWFORD of Philadelphia. I have been much interested in the experience which you are evidently having here in Massachusetts, exactly similar to the experience of other new organizations, new departments of city government. I was for some years in the city counsel office, and while there I was more or less special assistant in charge of getting into operation the department of wharves, docks and ferries, a useful, definite de-

partment, beyond question. They had the difficulty you have. For a year or two they had difficulty in getting appropriations, until they became a regularly recognized department and councils had become used to appropriating money for them. Then the playgrounds committee became, by act of the Legislature, a portion of the city government. I was appointed definitely a special counsel for them. They had just the same difficulty. The first year or two it was hard to get any money for them, and now after four or five years I think they have three or four hundred thousand. I have become executive officer of the art commission in Philadelphia. For six months we went ahead, doing a lot of work without any money. This year our appropriation has gone through without the slightest question. This is the obvious result when a new body starts in. The board of aldermen is used to having a certain budget given to this and that other purpose; a new body has to fight its way. It is a temporary thing, which will shortly be gone and done forever.

I have observed a certain amount of hesitancy because you have only recommendatory powers. My observation is that you don't need anything more than the recommendatory power. A recommendatory plan does get itself carried out. I think Burnham of Chicago was right when he said, "Make no little plans. Make big plans. Remember that a plan once promulgated with authority gets itself carried out as the years roll by. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would scare us."

This is the whole spirit of city planning, — look to the future. If you prepare a plan to be carried out during ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, you will have an increased financial capacity. A city of 100,000 proposes to spend \$50,000, or a city of 10,000 undertakes a proposal to spend \$5,000; that increasing capacity of a city financially as you go along must be considered when you are preparing a plan to be carried out in the future.

People say to us, "You have been talking a lot about this city planning business; what have you done? You can show us plans; what physical things are done?" I am going to tell you one or two things that have been done. We very often think because a plan isn't called "city planning" it isn't. We very often therefore forget that you in Massachusetts have done some big things in city planning, and done them in the last fifteen to twenty years. I suppose if there was a big plan conceived that was called visionary it was the plan Eliot conceived of the Metropolitan Park Com-

mission. You have taken much more into the metropolitan park system around the thirty-eight municipalities than he proposed. Visionary beyond measure, — but the vision is the actuality of to-day. Denver and Minneapolis have through park systems, — I don't mean a spotted park here and there, but a park system.

Smaller communities can profit by the mistakes others have made. Philadelphia has a park of 3,400 acres; I can't help wondering if it wouldn't be vastly better for the community if either it was 100 parks of 34 acres, or 34 parks of 100 acres. You can profit by this experience.

In the last fifteen or twenty years we have done some things in which the European cities say we have led the world. The park system and playground system are two things which the American communities lead the world in. I am not talking about plans; I am talking about what actually exists in American cities. There again, in the playgrounds, you here in Boston were among the leaders. In civic centers we come to Massachusetts for the first city actually to present a civic center complete, and I speak of Springfield, Massachusetts. That is done; the Cleveland group system, based on the Chicago, is very largely done; two-thirds of the ground actually acquired, one building built, and two others half up, the ground for another secured; Denver, land recently secured of \$2,692,000 assessed on a limited area, which will complete its park system, to secure its civic center; Washington, New York, all these cities are working for civic centers. Akron, Ohio, a year ago carried a bond issue with which to construct the second building of its civic center, and Hamilton has carried a loan by which two of its buildings are to be secured. Some of these things occurred before a city planning idea was definitely announced; they had been called by various names before that. They are city planning things.

Up to April, 1914, I believe 54 city planning commissions had been appointed. The work done before these official commissions was work done by voluntary organizations, securing this, that or the other plan. Now, 54 city planning commissions have been actually appointed, and Massachusetts leads of the commissions appointed here to-day over any other State in the number of cities. I think my own State comes second with 10, appointed under a permissive act. Cities over 200,000 number 28, and 25 of these cities are called city planning cities; they have set plans more or less definitely prepared for them.

The function of a city planning board is to lay down lines of community growth, so that the workman may easily reach his home from his place of business at cheap rates, and so may have a choice of trains. That statement I quote more or less from the blue book — from parliament commission. City planning is thought to be a matter of streets, — so it is. The street system is the underlying structure; transportation either by streets or river, if there is one. What have you done in the way of reformation of the street system? You have been talking a whole lot; what have you done? In this particular respect I think in Philadelphia we have done more actually in the widening of old streets. Fairmount Park is a street that is being cut diagonally across the city; about 1,000 buildings will have to come down. We have let contracts to take down some six or seven hundred; only 186 have not been acquired, and a large portion of this diagonal street has been done. We are actually widening by a process which is desirable. In 1883 ordinances were passed by which Chestnut Street, a street in the central business area, is to be widened 5 feet when any building is rebuilt or altered. At the end of thirty-one years, Chestnut Street, which was 50 feet, has now become 60 feet, in the congested portion, because the altered buildings are found not adequate for business demands. Walnut Street is being widened 3 feet on each side, and we are widening Market Street. That is the method European cities usually proceed on; the cost is spread over a number of years; the owner isn't compelled to set back until he wants to. We are entering in Philadelphia into a contract by which an entire street system is directed to increase the amount of area which our government house will have.

Boston's Charles River Basin is the first improvement on the river front such as every large and small city has in Europe. Toronto, Canada, promises to very greatly surpass, I think, what Boston is doing, because in Toronto they have a proposition by which \$18,000,000 will be spent, over one-half of which is now under contract, and they are providing a scheme by which they will have combined in close proximity a great harbor, great mercantile and warehouse buildings, belt line and residence portion. It is the best combination I know of in housing.

We all know what has been done in the matter of city planning and housing with some of the so-called garden cities of England. It isn't strictly profit sharing, but on a co-operative basis. Under the lead of Mr. John Burns, the great labor leader, the housing

and town planning act of 1909 was passed. For the creation of garden suburbs, not the reconstruction of cities, but for the re-planning of suburbs under that act, Mr. Adams, who was expert of the local planning board, told me two or three weeks ago that there had been submitted 95 schemes. The average area of each scheme is 3,000 acres, which gives upwards of 300,000 acres which have been planned for the creation of city suburbs. When a scheme is approved by the local government, no limitation of the number of the houses to the acre may be changed except by act of Parliament. The scheme once approved becomes an act of Parliament. They have limited the number of houses to 12 per acre. That with 5 persons to the house gives only 60 persons to the acre permitted for this area. If you multiply it, you will see these 95 schemes provide for not less than 18,000,000, who are to be housed under these acts. That has been done since 1909 under the English town housing act. It seems to me, therefore, that when we are asked what has been done we have a very large list.

I am very glad indeed that here in Massachusetts the city planning commissions are making plans for the development of municipalities for the proper housing of people; that is of vast importance to the city planning of America. In California they have appointed a commission by the Governor, of which he is a member, to draft acts for the creation of a homestead commission such as you have here, and another act making mandatory city planning commissions, such as you have here in Massachusetts. Your example has therefore spread to the Pacific coast, and I take pleasure in wishing you all success.

Mr. STERLING presiding. The most important thing we have now is whether we desire any further legislation, and along that line I will ask Mr. Parker, the lawyer on our Commission, to state as briefly as he can one or two matters the Homestead Commission has under consideration.

Mr. CORNELIUS A. PARKER. Mr. Chairman and Members of the City Planning Boards: This is a dry subject; it requires some imagination to see the effect which a law may have on the physical values in your city. The other day I made some little comment on the State House to one of the architects interested. He said, "The reason you don't appreciate it is you haven't sufficient imagination to look forward and picture the results." Looking at plans on paper you can, however, imagine something of the finished structure. It takes a man of more imagination to take the dry

bones of this or that law which is on the statute books and see the results which it would have on the growth of a city or town.

There are certain matters of legislation which were brought before the Legislature of last year relating to city planning, some of which will be brought before the incoming Legislature. One of these involves the question referred to by our speaker, — what powers, if any, city planning boards shall have. Last year the committee refused to report a general bill giving teeth to the city planning boards, that is, giving them the power to plan improvements and making it necessary to have their approval before lots could be laid out and streets put through. This was defeated by the argument that such powers conflicted with the central authorities in the city government. There may be sufficient weight in such an objection to prevent the passage of such an act. It is believed there are many cities and towns, however, which would like to give their city planning boards some real powers. Every year there comes to the Legislature this city or that city asking for a board of survey act giving to some board or other powers which should be by right vested in the city planning board. Two or three special bills of this character were passed last year. Now we shall submit to the incoming Legislature a bill which makes it possible for cities and towns to adopt a law which will give powers to the city planning boards. That will be a bill which is no more drastic than your board of survey act to-day, only placing powers in your city planning board, and at the same time it will provide a uniform method of procedure throughout the cities and towns which adopt it. That is perhaps the principal measure we have to present which will concern you as planning boards.

One other measure to be presented proposes to make the city planning conference a permanent institution, the meetings to be called by the Homestead Commission, and giving the members of city planning boards the right to come and have the expense paid from the general appropriation for city planning boards. That would give some added dignity and weight to the gathering, and the presence of these members would seem to indicate that such a step would be desirable.

As far as any other legislation affecting your particular powers and duties as members of the city planning board, there is only one measure, — that is a measure that will be reported in some form by another commission. A special commission was provided last year to consider the laws relating to eminent domain, the taking

of land for all public purposes, and to report a uniform procedure for takings, and in addition to report some means by which there will be a just and equitable system of betterment assessment. I want to say a brief word on this. A questionnaire has been sent to planning boards relative to this subject. The questions may be technical, but there are many here who can help us by suggestion; you can answer them from the floor or the Commission will be glad to receive them later with your signatures, telling what cities you represent.

You have all referred to the difficulty of getting this or that improvement financed. The great difficulty has been that we have tried to finance everything out of the general tax levy or bond issues, and the result is that in the State of Massachusetts you have piled up in most of your cities a tremendous bonded indebtedness for certain improvements which, while they may be of some benefit to the whole municipality, have been of much more value to property owners in some local district. I would recommend all of you to read that book of Mr. Flavel Shurtleff's, written in collaboration with Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, "Carrying out the City Plan." One very strong case which emphasizes this point is that in New York City, when the New York subway was constructed, there was a well-defined district in Harlem within a certain radius of the terminus of the subway where the property values increased in two or three years \$80,000,000, owing to the opening of the subway. The total cost of the subway was only \$40,000,000; ultimately this will come out of the public, while the property owners took an \$80,000,000 profit without assessment.

I have a letter to-day from one of the members of the St. Louis Real Estate Exchange, saying that in the Fairground Park there was a fair increase of 50 per cent. in values, owing to the laying out of the park.

Kansas City has paid for its magnificent park system by a special assessment method, and that has been done at the request of the men who were to be assessed, and right here in our own Commonwealth we have up in the city of Springfield one place where a public improvement was refused by the council, and as a result owners of property to be benefited voluntarily agreed to contribute half of the cost of the improvement. We are limited here in some cases to 50 per cent. of the cost of improvements, in some cases 50 per cent. of the special benefit. In some cities they do not use the special assessment system in any case.

It is the hope of the Commission that somehow or other we may find a way to reduce the time in which these matters will be fully decided on, and in addition to that we may find a more satisfactory way of financing the cost. I am not prepared to say what the final drafts of the bill will be as there are certain facts and certain legal difficulties that the men throughout the Commonwealth must help us to solve, and you as members of the city planning boards must give us some help.

Mr. STERLING. If the three measures suggested commend themselves to you, we earnestly hope you will try to see that the members from your district get interested in them. In that way you will help not only yourself but the city planning boards throughout the Commonwealth. You can bring the matters to the front by appealing to your senators and representatives not only to vote for them but to study them, and understand what they are doing.

Besides Mr. Drake from Springfield, we have Mr. Ihlder, the secretary of the National Housing Conference, and Mr. Frankel, representing large insurance interests. I wish we might be able to hear from them all. Mr. Drake, Mr. Parsons said you had something to present.

Mr. DRAKE of Springfield. We have had our bumps up in Springfield the same as everybody else. I am particularly glad Mr. Crawford spoke the word of encouragement he has. In spite of the hard knocks, we feel on the whole very much encouraged. We feel the time will be comparatively short when the work of the planning boards will be approved, not only by the citizens but by the various city councils and boards of aldermen. This is an experience meeting, and I am not getting up here to deliver a speech but to speak in an informal way of the things we have done and the way we went at them. As soon as we were organized we made up our minds the first thing we should do was to get the confidence of the citizens and voters, not exactly the heavy taxpayer but the small taxpayers; they have the votes. We felt there was no better way to go about that than in some way to create an impression we were organized to save money instead of devising means to spend it. We have gone on that principle, so in our first appropriation we asked for \$1,500, which they gave us. We used a part of it. We made up our minds it wouldn't be advisable to hire a city planning expert and pay him several thousand dollars, the way some cities have done. We were trying to save money instead of spending it. Betterment assessments stirred up a hornet's nest. I never heard



anybody yet, except those financially interested in special projects, who objected to the principle of betterment assessments. In Springfield street widenings and extensions had been made at the expense of the city. The board of public works recommended that streets be laid out under the law of assessments, but the city council would buy a place and forget to make any assessment. We told them we thought that the provision requiring the board of public works to report betterment assessments should be repealed or enforced. Our report happened to come in at a time the councils were considering an extension petition. They refused the petition. To show you how successful our position was, the abutting petitioners agreed to pay half, and the report came back and went through. If we hadn't brought up the report at that time, there was no reason to suppose that the city would do other than pay the whole bill, as it always did. I give it as an illustration to show we have tried in some specific, definite way to show the taxpayers we could be of real service to the city.

We have felt it necessary to hold meetings once a week. Different members of the commission have made it a point to speak at meetings of various city clubs and church organizations whenever they would let us talk, to get the people interested and acquainted with the work. We found out, as a result of this work, that the people didn't have any complaints of the real work of the city planning board. We have reason to look forward to the future with much promise.

Mr. STERLING. There are two national bodies of which I think the ordinary man hears but little. Possibly some of the members of the city planning boards do not know that, for a number of years, each spring, members of the National Conference on City Planning gather together from all parts of the United States, some from Canada and occasionally a visitor from across the water. This meeting here is really an outgrowth of those conferences. In addition to that there is another national body called the National Housing Conference, and its meetings have been held in the fall in various cities. They have discussed the betterment of the living conditions of the common people. They have done effective work. Those of you who have known of the work of these two conferences can recognize here to-day some of the effects of their discussions. We have with us during this session Mr. John Ihlder, field secretary of the National Housing Conference. We had this morning Mr. Shurtleff, secretary of the National City Planning Conference.

I regret that he is not here now. I will ask Mr. Ihlder for his impression of what use we have been here to-day.

Mr. IHLDER. I can express my impressions very briefly, but perhaps it would be better if we heard from Mr. Frankel first, who has to make a train.

Mr. FRANKEL, Vice-President of the Metropolitan Insurance Company. Last year your chairman was kind enough to ask me to prepare a paper on how insurance companies can help in the housing problem of these communities. This is a problem which must concern all of you who are interested in this movement. At that time I described rather cursorily the financing of a scheme just decided upon at Akron, Ohio, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company being the body, building these houses for their working men. I think you may be interested in knowing the result of that year's work and the conclusions we have been able to draw, as appealing to you in your attempt to house the working men in your respective communities. We are convinced it is a very practical scheme, and 'through the co-operation of the employer' or particular industry in any community it is a feasible scheme. My recommendation would be, if I am prepared to make any recommendation, that in the attempt to bring about proper housing in your respective communities, you interest the employer of labor.

After all, the time is coming, — and I am strongly appealed to by what Mr. Crawford said, "In planning, plan big," — I think the time is coming when we shall have to have a partnership between the municipality and the private citizen. Signs of the times indicate it is coming along; we must have co-operation. There is an opportunity for you to attempt to interest private enterprises to make proper housing. I think you can show the average industrial employer the desirability of his taking it up as a scheme for better housing for his men. With co-operation of that kind, I think it is safe to say you can count on the use of these enormous funds in the hands of the United States in insurance companies, which ought to be (in my opinion) at the disposal of the working men for their savings; they ought to be turned back in order to let them live honestly and decently. I think you can count on the co-operation of insurance companies to enable the employers of laborers to build homes.

If that isn't possible, there is another scheme I would like to speak of. That is, the possibility of changes in our legislation which will enable the municipality or the town or city to become

actively interested in the housing of its workmen. That would be to place its credit at the disposal of employers to build homes for working people. It simply means a long-deferred credit. It means practically what in insurance parlance is called "underwriting." There is needed frequently in smaller communities, where the hazard is large, an additional collateral or security for capital that can come only from the community. It has been done in Toronto, by the city issuing bonds to finance homes for working men. I simply offer this as a suggestion. I don't think any city in the Union allows the municipality to enter into a guarantee at this time. We must look into the distance. It isn't a question of to-day or to-morrow, it is a question of twenty-five or one hundred years. We must look forward to the time when the municipality must back up movements of private enterprise to bring about the problem of correct housing conditions under which citizens shall live.

Mr. STERLING. In the annual report of the Homestead Commission may be found the names of twenty-five countries which have something similar to the suggestion made by Mr. Frankel, something in the way of increasing the supply of wholesome homes at reasonable cost.

Mr. IHLDER, Secretary National Housing Conference. What I have to say can be said very briefly indeed. I am a believer in planning, not only city planning but other planning. Only by planning ahead can we get the best results with the least waste.

What I have to say is based on what we have heard to-day, and chiefly on the reports from the town planning boards. I have been interested in the Massachusetts Homestead Commission since it started, because it is a new thing in this country. It is trying to arouse interest in a subject that is still new in America. The reports given you to-day have not only shown the progress that is being made, but have been exceedingly enlightening to us all as to how progress can best be made. I believe the proceedings of this conference will be a text-book of practical value. It will show us how the different town planning boards and their communities, many of whom had never heard of city planning two years ago, have reacted to the suggestions from the Homestead Commission. The reports to-day seem to show that most of the boards, while they are on the way, don't know just where they are going. These reports should prove very instructive to the Homestead Commission, and guide it, as well as the rest of us who are interested in

this work, in our efforts to aid newly formed local organizations while they are finding themselves. Some of the boards apparently have worked out a definite idea of their purpose; others, apparently, have not yet grasped the idea of what city planning or town planning is.

We have listened to reports describing efforts to secure the adoption of general principles that will influence future developments, and efforts to secure certain specific changes of plan or method which will make present work fit in better with work that the future is sure to bring. That is town planning. But we have also listened to reports which described the demolition of an unsightly structure, or the planting of some trees or vines, not as a part of a plan which had been carefully thought out and which was to be applied in the future, but as if they were the be-all and end-all of the boards' efforts. These are doubtless things that should be done, but they are not town planning. Rather they fall within the province of a town improvement society, which does those things it finds ready to its hand, without much thought as to sequence and with practically no thought of the long future. A town improvement society justifies its existence if it places waste-cans along the streets and persuades the people to use them instead of scattering paper and other litter broadcast. A town planning board has no concern with litter on the streets or any other such ephemeral matter. Its concern is with the character of the street. Is it broad enough not only for present but for future traffic? Are extensions to it so laid out as to serve the community most effectively and economically? A town improvement society may properly devote its energies to the removal of a ramshackle building that has become a public eyesore. A town planning board should be interested in a building only if it can be regarded as setting a precedent, or if it stands in the way of some needed public improvement, as the cutting through of a street, or otherwise affects town development. The board will be interested in it, not as an individual building, and not because of its ramshackle condition, but because it interferes with the proper development of the town. This development will go on long after that particular building would have disappeared in the course of nature, but it may be seriously changed for the worse if the building is permitted to stand during the few brief years the form of the town is hardening, the type of dwelling becoming fixed, the streets being paved and bordered with expensive structures. Then the mischief is done. It is the

function of town planning boards to prevent such mischief by looking ahead, so that they may wisely guide the present to meet the future. Such work as will have no determinative effect upon the future they should leave to other organizations.

Mr. Pope emphasized the importance of economy. It seemed to me he overemphasized it. City planning will be a failure if it doesn't pay in dollars and cents, but social and æsthetic advantages must also be considered. It seemed to me he gave an impression that each piece or fragment in a city plan should pay for itself. The civic center actually being created in Cleveland, Ohio, is costing considerably less than the individual buildings composing it would have cost had they been scattered about the downtown district, as at first proposed. This is because these important buildings must all face on important streets. By placing the buildings in a group it was possible to open a parkway extending from the most important street of the city through cheap back land, and place most of the buildings on the cheap land but facing the park, and readily accessible to the principal business street. So a better result was obtained with a smaller expenditure of money. But it is not always possible to secure this combination, and it may be the part of wisdom to spend more for some particular improvement, not because this particular improvement considered by itself will justify the expenditure, but because of its benefit to the whole town. Opening a new street which will provide a short cut for traffic may in some cases actually depress surrounding land values and yet prove an undoubted financial benefit to the town.

Mr. STERLING. We have suggested what the Homestead Commission has under consideration for legislation. I would like to know if any one here would like to comment on these. First, that these conferences be held under legal authority, with the hope of developing an idea of city planning as uniformly as we can throughout the State. The difficulty found in Salem is often the same difficulty that is found in Springfield and in Pittsfield, and in other parts of the State.

There is also the proposition that we shall put in a permissive act that will enable any city to clothe its planning board with power — to give the town planning board teeth.

The third proposition is to attempt, if possible, to relieve the city finances by assessing back on the property benefited such part of the cost of public improvements as seems to be equitable.

These are three distinct propositions in which each Board and

individual should be interested. I wonder if there is any discussion of these propositions desired to-night, or if you desire to take them home with you.

Mr. EWING of the Boston Planning Board. Mr. Chairman, I am surprised at your third proposition. I supposed it was general law. It is possible it may be special legislation for the city of Boston. We always assess betterments for street laying out, and since last year have the authority to assess it on any or all property that is benefited in excess of the general benefit. Prior to that it was restricted to within a certain distance of the improvements. That restriction was taken away last year. I thought it was general State law.

Mr. PARKER. The city of Boston now acts under the statute of 1906, as amended in 1913, which is a special act for the city of Boston. Perhaps I should have referred to that. The city of Boston is laying out Avery Street under a special act passed for that particular improvement prior to the amendment of 1913. Towns and cities outside of Boston are limited in most improvements to 50 per cent. of the benefit, however.

Mr. KELLOWAY. I am glad that Mr. Parker has brought up the subject of financing public improvements. The city planning committee of the Chamber of Commerce has been studying this proposition two or three years. We have endeavored to co-operate with the Commission to form the basis of a new law to put before the Legislature. It takes considerable time from the inception to the completion of a public improvement. If a law could be enacted whereby at the inception of a scheme the cost, the amount of damages and the betterment assessments could be settled at the same time, the municipality would be in better shape to do the work. You ought to study that thoroughly so as to get a law that will be as equitable to the city as it is to an individual.

Mr. STERLING. Do you want to discuss further any measures suggested?

Mr. ROBEY. I would like to ask Mr. Parker if he can inform us what sort of a bill will be presented to the next General Court; what powers will be vested in the planning board if the town or city accepts the whole act? What conflict would it bring about between the planning board and the present appropriating body? Wouldn't the question of politics come in too fiercely, before any city or town could understand the proposition?

Mr. PARKER. Perhaps an advantage would be in having the

whole problem threshed out and understood before the act was adopted by the town. The powers granted in any bill likely to be presented to the Legislature would be not very far different from the powers given in the general and special boards of survey acts which have been obtained from the Legislature from year to year. There should be a sufficient harmony between the city planning boards and city governments so the conflict wouldn't occur.

Mr. LEVY. I would make a suggestion. Possibly in some places, possibly even in Fitchburg, the wheels might be greased so as to relieve some of the friction, if an act could be put through that would give an option, by which the city council might have the powers of the board of survey. In some places the city might be glad to have that power reside in some body, preferably the body which lays out streets. That body would be averse to dividing that power with a body like the planning board, which is supposed to be an advisory body.

Mr. STERLING. Any further discussion? If not, I shall take this occasion, on behalf of the Homestead Commission, to thank you all for coming. The number of members present has been more than double the number that we thought possibly would come when we suggested the meeting. A greater interest has been shown than we expected or dared to hope for.

On behalf of our Commission, and the Governor who joined us in calling this, I thank you very much for your presence and attention, and earnestly hope that all of you will come again whenever we have another meeting.

Adjourned at 4.30 P.M.

## APPENDIX 3.

## FOREIGN GOVERNMENTAL AID IN HOME BUILDING.

ABSTRACTED FROM FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

## New Zealand.

A manual or clerical worker whose wages amount to not over \$937 per year, under the "Advance Acts" (1908-13), may borrow, for the purpose of buying or building a dwelling, about \$2,200, the amount of the loan not to exceed the value of the house to be built, giving a first mortgage repayable from twenty to thirty-six and a half years in equal annual or semiannual installments. Interest charges are 5 per cent., or  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. if payments are prompt. The deposit on application for loan is \$10, with an addition of \$40 on the completion of the purchase. Under this act over \$11,000,000 had been loaned to workers up to March 31, 1913, of which \$9,700,000 was yet outstanding. Under the Workers' Dwellings Act of 1905, 126 dwellings were erected, of which 37 were sold and the remaining 89 are let at weekly rentals varying from \$2.68 to \$4.30. Under the Workers' Dwellings Act of 1910, which superseded the act of 1905, 138 dwellings had been built for workers on March 31, 1913, and 76 more were under construction, either upon public lands or upon private lands acquired for the purpose. A deposit of \$50 is required and the balance is distributed over a period of twenty-five and one-half years. The government Life Insurance Department will insure the purchaser's life for the amount that may be owing on his dwelling at the time of his death.

For farm settlers, under Land for Settlers Acts, 1892, 1900, 1908, 1909, 1912, which authorized the purchase and subdivision of large estates, 1,490,367 acres have been acquired at a cost for purchase price and improvements of about \$37,000,000. The land was taken by 5,529 selectors (making an average farm of 270 acres) and occupied by 19,398 inhabitants. Under the Land Settlers Finance Act of 1909 groups of individuals may incorporate to buy tracts of land for subdivision among themselves, raising the purchase money by means of loans guaranteed by the government. Thirty-eight such



associations have been incorporated with an area of 39,232 acres, valued at \$2,500,000, and 266 members. About 26,000 settlers have been placed upon 11,000,000 acres of land classified as ordinary crown lands, the Cheviot estate, endowment lands and Thermal Springs. To these settlers have been advanced over \$70,000,000, of which amount about \$34,000,000 has been repaid.

### New South Wales.

To June 30, 1911, 1,729,154 acres had been granted for *Homestead Selections*. Tenure is freehold, subject to perpetual residence and perpetual rent at  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. for the first six years, and thereafter  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., on the value of the land, which is appraised every fifteen years. Crown lands may be acquired on *Conditional Purchase* in areas varying from 40 to 640 acres on a deposit of 5 per cent. of the price of the land, payable in 30 annual installments, with 4 per cent. interest.

*Workingmen's Blocks* not exceeding 10 acres are leased for ninety-nine years to applicants not less than eighteen years of age at 5 per cent. on the capital value, residence required; exemption from seizure for debt.

Under the *Closer Settlement Acts* three or more intending settlers may buy an estate, for which the government will advance 95 per cent. of the purchase money. On June 30, 1911, 647,395 acres, comprising 1,578 farms, valued at \$12,500,000, had been acquired under these acts. In 1912 a housing act empowered a board to purchase land, survey and plan it and erect buildings thereon for sale or lease. The government has constructed a garden suburb near Sydney, and is making preparations to build other garden suburbs.

To December 31, 1910, over \$8,000,000 had been advanced to 9,115 actual settlers.

### Queensland.

Aid is given to settlers by the purchase, subdivision and sale of land, and by loans through the agricultural bank, a government institution; and to workers, by advances to build. Up to the end of the year 1909 the *Closer Settlement Acts* had resulted in the acquisition by the government of 497,000 acres of land at a total cost of \$6,746,250, of which 409,381 acres had been taken by 1,741 settlers. Under special agricultural selectors acts 568,000 acres, valued at \$1,346,850, had been applied for by settlers. Loans are made by the government bank to settlers to pay off existing mort-

gages or other debts, to make improvements, or to purchase stock or machinery, advances to be repaid within twenty-five years. Loans to the amount of \$1,434,396 had been granted on June 30, 1912, for the erection of workmen's dwellings.

### South Australia.

Besides disposing of unimproved crown lands the government has purchased for settlers 624,121 acres of improved lands at a cost of \$9,587,300. Protected homestead blocks of land of a value not to exceed \$500 are offered for purchase or perpetual lease to workmen, exempt from seizure for debt. Loans are made to settlers to effect improvements, pay off mortgages, or purchase stock, payable in twenty-five years; to holders of homestead blocks for improvement; to agriculturists and others for the purchase of wire netting for protection against rabbits and wild dogs; to workers to acquire homes to the amount of \$2,956,000. The worker selects his own land and the loan is made on the value of the land and the dwelling house erected or to be erected.

### Tasmania.

Homestead farms not exceeding 50 acres are sold at \$5 per acre, payable in twenty-five years. Farm allotments not exceeding \$7,500 in value are disposed of on ninety-nine-year lease, 5 per cent. on the capital value. Loans to settlers are made to pay off existing liabilities, to carry on agricultural pursuits, to make improvements, repayable in thirty years.

### Victoria.

Under a settlement of lands act of 1893, 30,000 acres were divided among 1,180 settlers, and loans made to the settlers amounted to \$336,895, of which, on June 30, 1912, \$194,415 had been repaid. Under the Closer Settlement Acts of 1904-09, for workmen's homes 616 acres have been acquired for \$278,000, and \$81,436 has been expended thereon; 945 allotments have been sold and 4,500 persons are housed; also 519,000 acres have been acquired at a cost of \$18,707,000; 24 farm allotments, 649 workmen's homes' allotments, and 256 agricultural laborers' allotments have been made. For buildings and other improvements the advances amounted to nearly \$1,500,000. In addition, more than \$10,000,000 has been advanced to farmers, graziers and gardeners by the Victoria State Savings Bank under an act of 1896.

### Western Australia.

For orchards, vineyards or gardens 5 to 50 acres may be purchased through the government at not less than \$5 per acre, 10 per cent. on application and the balance within three years. Nearly 1,400,000 acres have been granted as homestead farms of an area of from 10 to 160 acres, \$3.50 per acre to be expended within ten years on improvements. Under an agricultural lands purchase act of 1909, for \$1,300,000, 297,000 acres had been purchased, of which 262,000 acres were occupied on June 30, 1911. For workingmen, blocks of land not exceeding 5 acres may be leased; 440 such blocks had been taken on June 30, 1910. In the five years preceding that date loans had been made to over 10,000 settlers to aid them in establishing homes; \$4,679,000 was still outstanding. In February, 1913, \$375,000 had been expended in direct construction and \$635,000 had been advanced for workers' homes.

### England and Wales.

Under the various Housing of the Working Classes Acts, the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts, and the Small Holdings and Allotments Acts more than \$70,000,000, on March 31, 1911, had been loaned to local authorities, companies and individuals for use in providing workers' homes. Under the small holdings act, 1908, county councils and the councils of county boroughs are empowered to erect houses for small holdings, and councils or boroughs, city districts and parishes may erect houses on land acquired for allotment. Five hundred and sixty-nine cottages had been erected under this act up to December 31, 1913. Under the Improvement of Land Acts a landowner can borrow to build cottages; 462 cottages had been erected under this act by the end of 1912. During five years ending in December 31, 1913, 423 cottages had been erected under the Settled Lands Acts. At the close of the year 1913 over \$28,000,000 had been loaned by the local government board, under the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, to authorities outside of London, and \$24,000,000 to the London authorities; \$12,286,000 had been loaned under the Small Holdings and Allotment Act; nearly \$1,000,000 under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, and \$5,700,000 was loaned to private enterprises for workers' dwellings. Besides these sums various cities have expended large amounts to acquire unsanitary areas and to erect model tenements. About 50 private enterprises, many of them aided by loans of public funds, have created garden cities or suburbs.

### Scotland.

Under the English Housing of the Working Classes Acts, the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909, and various minor acts, \$1,500,000 had been expended to March 31, 1913, to provide homes for the workers. The Congested Districts Board (abolished, 1912) erected, or made loans for the erection and improvement of houses to the extent of \$140,000. The Board of Agriculture may advance money for the same purposes at  $3\frac{1}{8}$  per cent. interest, repayment spread over fifty years.

### Ireland.

Under various acts the government has assisted in the subdivision of large estates, has made advances to the tenants for the purchase of their holdings, and has purchased estates for resale to the tenants. The Purchase of Land Act, 1885, authorized an advance of \$24,330,000 for this purpose, and in 1888 an additional sum to the same amount was advanced. Repayment was extended over forty-nine years. By the Purchase of Land Act, 1891, the seller was paid in a special guaranteed land stock, exchangeable for consols, equal in amount to the purchase money. An act of 1896 allowed that deposit by purchasers might be dispensed with. About 8,000,000 acres valued at \$450,000,000 have been purchased and subdivided, and about \$40,000,000 is now being expended annually. Under various housing acts provision has been made for about 12,000 families at rentals of 40 cents to \$2 per week. Up to March 31, 1913, the commissioners of public works had loaned over \$2,000,000 toward the erection of 4,700 houses for dwellings in towns, and had advanced considerable sums for the erection of farmhouses and laborers' cottages. Under the Laborers Acts cottages with not more than 1 acre of land attached may be provided by local authorities for agricultural laborers, and cottages with garden allotments may be provided in villages or towns in rural districts. The average weekly rent of a cottage with half-acre plot is 20 cents, and of a cottage with an acre allotment, 27 cents, and the rents vary according to circumstances in each rural district. These rents do not cover cost, the deficit being made up partly by government subsidy and partly by taxes. Tenants keep the windows and fences in repair and must not sublet, subdivide or part with the possession of the tenement or any part thereof or keep lodgers. On March 31, 1913, 41,852 cottages had been erected and 2,538

were in course of construction. Loans for the erection of laborers' cottages may be obtained by owners of land from the Commissioners of Public Works, repayable in twenty years.

### Germany.

For many years the imperial government, the Federal States and the cities of Germany, for homes for public employees, have acquired land, built houses and encouraged the construction of small dwellings by guaranteeing mortgages, when the interests of the service required it. Up to 1912, for such purposes the imperial government had appropriated \$11,000,000 of which about \$7,000,000 had been expended for land and the remainder in guaranteeing mortgages, and large sums had been appropriated by Federal States for similar purposes. For housing persons other than government employees, the empire had invested \$105,000,000 of the old age and pension insurance fund to aid in financing the construction of workingmen's homes. A tax on the unearned increment discourages the holding of land idle. Some of the States make loans or provide cheap lands to facilitate the construction of low-cost homes. Prussian central authorities have made special efforts to provide means from which loans can be made at reasonable rates on *second* mortgages. The State has invested over \$39,000,000 in the construction of State-owned habitations; guaranteeing of mortgages on the land of building associations, suitable for the construction of such residences; guaranteeing of small loans for the construction of cottages for the railway, mine and public works service employees; concession of hereditary leasehold rights; and granting the right of purchase of house lots, with a restriction of a repurchase right in order to prevent speculative activity. The new housing law gives magistrates general power to provide new dwellings where necessary.

Bavaria has expended large sums in direct construction and in loans to building associations to house the State employees. The State Agricultural Mortgage Bank, founded and capitalized by the government, may grant loans to communes for the erection and improvement of dwellings, for people of small means, and for the colonization of agricultural workers. Such loans may amount to 90 per cent. of the value of ground and buildings.

Saxony, Wurttemberg and Baden provide houses for the public employees. The other Federal States extend the benefits of their loans not only to public employees but also to people of slender

means. A few of the States make special provision for agricultural laborers.

Forty-two German municipalities engage in the direct construction of workers' dwellings for their own employees, and 15 have erected dwellings for the working classes and people of small means. Many encourage co-operative home building by purchasing shares of co-operative building associations, by taking mortgages of such associations, by guaranteeing first or second mortgages, by acquiring, subdividing and selling building land at low rates to those wishing to build, and by special taxation favors.

### Austria.

The peculiar feature of Austrian efforts to improve housing conditions consists in the governmental guarantee of second mortgages. Besides granting taxation favors to workers' dwellings, Austria has established a State housing fund of \$5,075,000, the use of which is to be distributed over the years from 1911 to 1921. The fund is to be loaned to districts, communes, etc., and to public welfare building associations to purchase, remodel or construct dwellings with small apartments. Such public welfare building associations must limit their dividends to 5 per cent., and refund to members only the paid-up capital in case of dissolution. The fund may make direct loans or act as guarantor for second mortgages up to 90 per cent. of the appraised value of the dwellings. It is intended that the housing fund shall extend only indirect financial aid to housing work through the guaranty of loans. Twenty per cent. of the fund may, however, be used for direct loans, which, up to 1913, amounted to \$165,000, while the fund had guaranteed loans and advances to the amount of \$2,735,744. It is assumed that eight times the actual investment can thus be safely made secure on second mortgages or, in other words, with a capital fund of \$5,000,000, \$40,000,000 in second mortgages can be guaranteed, enabling construction to the amount of \$80,000,000. Besides guaranteeing the payment of second mortgages, the fund also guarantees credits in the construction of dwellings.

For State employees the government either builds houses or loans money to building associations whose membership is entirely or largely employees of the State. The Francis-Joseph jubilee fund makes loans on condition that a previous loan up to 50 per cent. of the value of the property must be secured from private sources, and the house may not be mortgaged for more than 90 per cent. of

its estimated value. Through various departments the government has built 755 houses, containing 5,714 apartments, for its officials and workmen. The accident insurance institutes have invested \$731,682 in the building of workmen's dwellings.

### Belgium.

Three principal features of Belgium legislation in aid of the construction of workingmen's homes were: —

1. *Loans by the National Savings Bank* (a semiofficial institution whose deposits were guaranteed by the government), of money at reduced rates to local co-operative societies which served as guarantors of loans made to aid individual purchasers to acquire a home. These societies helped and advised in all the purchase or building operations. They loaned the funds furnished by the National Savings Bank upon the most favorable terms to workmen, small business men, employees, agents, small farmers and all engaged in "modest trades" for the construction or purchase of a house, for the repayment of mortgages, and for the improvement of a house already owned. The borrower must himself live in the house. The society advanced up to 90 per cent. of the value. Loans were repayable in ten, fifteen or twenty-five year terms at the option of the borrower, but the term must always be such as to free the borrower of debt at the age of sixty-five. Up to the end of 1912 the savings bank had advanced for the construction or purchase of workmen's dwellings \$19,930,592, which amount had made possible the construction of about 57,500 houses. Most of the loans had been placed at 3 per cent. interest. Loans were also advanced to municipalities for housing purposes.

2. *Committees of Patronage*, established by law in each arrondissement, encouraged the building and letting or sale of healthful dwellings to working people; studied the sanitary conditions of workmen's dwellings and of the localities where workmen lived or congregated; encouraged the development of savings, life insurance and mutual loan and benefit societies and pension funds; and approved applications for tax exemptions and for loans to individuals by the societies which secured the funds from the savings bank and guaranteed repayment. At the end of 1911 there were 213 such societies, 150 of which were loan companies, and 63 building associations which might borrow from the bank to aid their members in acquiring homes. The Committees of Patronage seem to have been local committees on general welfare, under government

regulation. Public money might be granted to cover their working expenses and they reported annually to the Minister of the Interior.

3. *Life Insurance* in connection with the purchase of a family home was a marked feature of Belgian housing legislation. Such insurance was not compulsory, but more than 85 per cent. of the borrowers availed themselves of the privilege. Insured borrowers were given preference, and many societies gave a reduction in the rate of interest when the loan was made in combination with the insurance scheme.

The law did not prohibit municipalities from direct construction of houses, but there was no special local authority for such a course. A few cities have done so and a few have advanced funds to workmen for the construction or acquisition of houses on municipal land. About \$1,500,000 had been subscribed to workmen's dwellings companies by municipalities, welfare bureaus, and overseers of the poor. The savings bank had granted over 7,000 agricultural loans, aggregating nearly \$7,000,000, to co-operative and rural credit societies, in amounts ranging from \$200 to \$10,000, at  $3\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.

#### Denmark.

Under two lines of legislative action Denmark has sought to make homes available for agriculturists by the Small Holdings Acts, and for laborers and mechanics by the Laborers' Dwellings Acts. Under the former act the State may loan nine-tenths of the purchase price of a holding of not less than  $2\frac{7}{10}$  nor more than  $10\frac{9}{10}$  acres in extent. The law of 1909 authorized the Department of Finance to expend up to \$1,080,000 annually for five years for the creation of small holdings. About \$9,000,000 has been loaned for this purpose to 7,117 purchasers, of whom 73 per cent. were day laborers. The borrower pays interest at 3 per cent. plus a payment on the principal to make a total payment of 4 per cent. a year of the total sum loaned. In 1914 an additional appropriation was made for small holdings of \$107,200 annually for five years. In 1897 was passed a Laborers' Dwellings Act, which appropriated \$536,000 for loans to building associations or municipalities for erecting laborers' individual dwellings to be sold only to persons of small means intending to occupy them as their own homes. The law was operative for five years only, but was re-enacted in 1904 and again in 1909. Under its provisions \$1,576,000 has been loaned.



### France.

French housing legislation favors the construction by individuals and societies of workmen's dwellings by two methods: (1) by loaning money at reduced rates by certain government banks and public institutions, and (2) by allowing certain tax exemptions to building societies and on homes so constructed. The government can advance money at 2 per cent. to real estate credit companies which loan the funds on mortgages to private persons wishing to acquire a house or small property, and to co-operative societies which build cheap dwellings. The law allows the Bank of Deposits, a government institution, and the national old age retirement fund to make loans to building and loan associations for the construction of low-priced workmen's dwellings. It creates committees of patronage to encourage home owning, supervise sanitary conditions and promote mutual benefit societies. Life insurance by borrowers is in certain cases compulsory. Municipalities may loan to building societies and subscribe to their bonds or shares, may provide building lots or lands and may guarantee interest or dividends up to 3 per cent. on the shares or bonds of societies building low-cost houses during the first ten years of their existence. Savings banks, trust companies and charitable institutions may also invest their funds in bonds or shares of building associations or make loans to them. Three classes of companies are approved: (1) those receiving capital from the State at 2 per cent. interest, which they lend to individual borrowers at not more than 3.5 per cent. and to construction companies at not more than 3 per cent.; (2) companies which build individual dwellings or tenement houses, whose shares are taken by persons who do not acquire the houses; (3) co-operative associations whose shareholders buy the property acquired by the associations.

The Ribaut law extends to fields and gardens the advantages accorded to cheap dwellings. A large proportion of the houses built with the encouragement offered by the government are tenement or apartment houses. The rentals are fixed by law at 4.75 per cent. of the net cost of the property, and vary according to the population of the communes from \$50.95 for three living rooms, kitchen and toilet in communes of less than 2,000 population, up to \$138.96 for the same accommodations in the city of Paris. In 1913 there were 411 low-cost housing societies, 228 of them being co-operative, and 37 societies for furnishing credit on real estate. The various

housing acts give special favors to the building of low-cost homes for large families. Lower tax rates are allowed, municipalities are permitted to construct homes for such families, or may make subsidies toward their cost.

#### Holland.

Municipal councils have power to make loans to individuals for the repair of dwellings which the health inspectors report as being defective. Municipal building loans, returnable in a period not exceeding fifty years, are permitted to building societies, dwelling syndicates and other institutions which create better housing conditions for the working classes, and municipalities may purchase land for better housing purposes. The government undertakes to make loans to the municipalities where the municipality cannot advance money out of its own treasury. Government loans are repayable in equal installments within fifty years. To 8 municipalities \$43,550 had been loaned in 1910 for direct building of workmen's dwellings. In all, up to 1910, 111 loans, totaling \$2,313,150, were made, \$902,450 of which had been repaid. Loans are also made to municipalities to clear unsanitary neighborhoods. The rents charged for their dwellings must not be lower than the prevailing rates in the neighborhood for similar accommodations. There are 108 private associations entitled to receive State and municipal aid for housing purposes, of which 17 are in Amsterdam. Some other associations with a similar purpose exist which have not applied for public funds. Altogether the government has advanced about \$2,000,000.

#### Hungary.

The State government has created in Kispest, a suburb of Budapest, a garden city housing about 3,600 families. The houses contain two to twelve dwellings, with a small garden plot for each apartment. Rents range from \$44 to \$67 per year for two and three room apartments. The city of Budapest for itself voted a workmen's house building program involving the expenditure of nearly \$13,000,000, under which 40 buildings, containing 4,800 rooms, have been constructed.

In 1907 the government made an annual appropriation of \$61,000 to be used toward interest and repayment on municipal, communal and co-operative loans contracted to build dwellings for farm laborers. Single family cottages are erected in groups of 10 on lots of 9,000 to 12,000 square feet. Funds are raised by bonds

on which the government pays 2 per cent. of the  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. annuity. In the five years to 1912, 12,000 agricultural habitations were built. The government railways carry material for their construction free.

### Italy.

Italian communes are empowered to levy a special tax of 3 per cent. on the value of unused building sites when it is necessary to encourage the construction of dwellings. New dwellings built to be rented in the commune of Rome are entitled to exemption from fixed taxes and surtaxes for ten years. Thirty-one communes are operating under this authority. At the end of 1911 there existed in the kingdom 724 institutions duly incorporated, consisting of co-operative societies, incorporated companies, mutual aid societies, benevolent institutions and communes, having as their principal object, or one of their main objects, the building of houses for workmen. These societies secure their funds through credit granted them upon favorable terms by the government through savings and other banks, by charitable, mutual aid, insurance and mortgage loan associations, and by the national institution for insurance against invalidity and old age. Communes have the power to construct workmen's dwellings for renting purposes exclusively, lodging houses and free public dormitories. The government gives one-sixth of the interest on the loans required for such enterprises, which are exempt from the taxes on the buildings for ten years in the case of people's dwellings and twelve years in the case of lodging houses.

Rome, Bologna, Venice and Milan have been particularly active in properly housing their people. Near the city of Milan is being created the garden city of Milanino, modeled on the English type characteristic of Letchworth.

### Norway.

The assistance for workmen's homes in Norway is rendered chiefly through a State workmen's dwellings bank created by law in 1903 for the purpose of furnishing loans guaranteed by the communes at a low rate of interest, for the purchase of small parcels of land and homes. The bank is capitalized with \$2,680,000 of public funds, and may borrow not to exceed six times the amount of its capital on bonds guaranteed by the government. The bank grants loans for the purchase of small agricultural plots or holdings, and for the building, completion or purchase of laborers'

dwellings. Loans are made up to nine-tenths of the value of laborers' dwellings, repayable in equal semiannual installments in twenty-five years. Loans without municipal guarantee may not be in excess of five-tenths of the value on laborers' holdings or lands of not less than 1.24 acres nor more than 4.94 acres. The bank has placed 22,600 loans, of which 13,140 were for the purchase of land holdings and 9,460 for the erection of dwellings. About seven-eighths of these loans are guaranteed by the municipalities. Several cities have established similar municipal banks. The bank loans also to building associations under municipal guarantee and to communes for the purchase of small holdings.

### **Roumania.**

The essential provision of the Roumania law of 1910 is the encouragement of the formation of credit and construction societies by co-operation on the part of the city, and by State or city guarantee. The State, districts and communes are authorized to construct or acquire dwellings. The city of Bucharest may subscribe up to 40 per cent. of the capital of credit and construction companies, but such societies must limit their advance to a very low rate. The city grants abatements of taxes on workmen's homes and acquires large ground plots to be divided for low-cost homes. The houses are built to be sold and not rented.

### **Russia.**

The government-guaranteed credits for agricultural improvements amounted to \$1,500,000 during 1913. The total amount of such loans since 1904 is \$4,318,302. About 2,000,000 agricultural holdings have been allotted in European Russia, with a total area of 45,900,000 acres. In Asiatic Russia 48,600,000 acres have been appropriated and 350,000 new holdings allotted.

### **Spain.**

In 1911 an act to promote the construction of cheap houses was passed. It grants municipalities the power to use public funds for direct construction, it allows municipalities to give lands and make exemptions from taxes, and authorizes the organization of committees to promote the building and improvement of workmen's dwellings. The necessary expenses of the committee are to be paid by the municipality. Previous to the passage of this act numerous

cities had been authorized by special acts to exempt from taxation houses erected by building societies or to participate financially in their activities. The Spanish government may appropriate annually \$96,500 to encourage the building of low-priced houses, to be used for the payment or guarantee of interest on sums borrowed by individuals, co-operative societies or other bodies building low-priced dwellings which are to benefit large numbers of persons. Municipal governments which undertake direct construction may claim their portion of the government appropriation. The National Provident Institution is to organize life insurance as a further guarantee of loans for the construction or purchase of low-priced dwellings.

### Sweden.

Sweden has made loans through agricultural societies, stock companies and other associations amounting to \$4,617,890, which went to 6,237 borrowers for the purchase of small agricultural holdings, and \$1,890,795 to 3,283 borrowers to purchase houses, making a total of \$6,508,685 advanced to 9,520 borrowers to enable them to acquire homes. Loans are made to Swedish citizens twenty-five to fifty years of age, earning their living by manual labor, and the maximum amount varies from \$1,072 to \$2,144, according to the nature of the property. The purchaser of a farm plot must supply one-sixth of the purchase price, while the borrower who buys a house must supply one-fourth. The annual charge which includes interest and payment on principal on a dwelling house loan is 7 per cent., and on a ground plot loan 6 per cent., of the total amount borrowed. The area of land that may be purchased with State advances ranges from 5 to 20 acres. The borrower pays only the stipulated interest during the first three years, and with the fourth he begins to pay on the principal. A number of the cities purchased land freely for subdivision and cession for building. The cities and towns generally afford financial assistance for homes on the subdivided tracts. Stockholm is the only city undertaking directly to build homes. An effort to facilitate the breaking up of large estates and the creation of small properties was begun in 1869. Selectors were allowed to establish themselves in homesteads on State lands in agricultural districts. In 1894 the government was authorized to alienate, subdivide and sell certain agricultural lands to purchasers for homesteads. Under this law 1,200 homesteads had been disposed of up to 1909. Under amendments to prevent speculation and provide a system of deferred payments

400 more homesteads had been disposed of in 1912. A measure of 1907 established a fund to advance capital for stock companies and associations, to create small farms and construct low-cost dwellings without profit. The government has invested extensively in the construction of houses for its own employees.

#### Switzerland.

Switzerland has no Federal law to promote better housing for workmen, but certain cantons encourage the construction of workmen's dwellings by tax exemptions and by the guarantee of interest on certain loans, and discourage the withholding of land by a tax on unearned increment. A few cities have undertaken directly the construction of low-cost houses. Several cities have built houses for their own employees.

#### South America.

*Argentina.* — Buenos Aires has contracted for the building of 10,000 houses for employees and workmen, 2,000 houses per year.

*Brazil* exempts from tariff taxes materials used in the construction of homes for working men, and exempts the property itself from Federal taxation for not less than fifteen years, provided the municipalities in which they are located do the same; grants unoccupied government lands free of cost for building, and authorizes loans from the deposits in the government savings bank to companies building and renting homes for workmen.

*Chile* has established a superior council and local councils to encourage the building of healthful working-class dwellings. Exemptions from certain national and municipal taxes are granted and public land is supplied. A small fund is authorized to build homes for government workmen and clerks. By an act of Congress in 1907 an issue of bonds amounting to \$1,140,000 was authorized for mutual settlements at Santiago. Under this law bonds to the amount of \$522,500 had been sold. The money was at the disposal of the superior board of dwelling houses which built homes in four districts.

#### Cuba.

Under the law of July, 1910, for workingmen's dwellings authority was given to the Executive to construct 2,000 small cottages. At the end of 1913, 950 houses had been constructed in Havana, 45 in Pinar del Rio and 58 in Santa Clara.



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