

1897 the Legislature of the Territories passed a Statute Labour Ordinance. The year following produced the Local Improvement Ordinance which, with its amendments, was the law observed until 1904. The average area of each local improvement district was one township. In 1903 a new local Improvement Bill de-organized all one-township local improvement districts and abolished the provision for statute labour. The new Bill provided for local improvement districts with an area of four townships, each of which was a division electing a councillor annually. The four thus secured formed a Council Board. In 1904 the Legislature made financial provision for inquiry into municipal organizations in general in order to provide a safe, economical system of rural municipalities and to improve the ordinance under which cities, towns and villages were administered. The breaking up of the Territories in 1905 into the present provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan caused delays; but municipal commissions with urban and rural sections were appointed. As a result of the experience gathered during territorial days and later, and of the findings of these Commissions, Local Improvement Acts were amended, Rural Municipality, Town and Village Acts were passed in both provinces, and a City Act was passed in the province of Saskatchewan.

Municipal Government.—The school district constitutes at once the most important and elementary unit of self-government on the prairies. Of municipal organization there are generally five different forms: (a) Improvement Districts; (b) Rural Municipalities; (c) Villages; (d) Towns; (e) Cities.

Alberta has five forms of municipal organization, Improvement Districts, Municipal Districts, Villages, Towns, Cities. Improvement Districts are administered by the Department of Municipal Affairs. Each city is governed by the provisions of its own charter.

In Manitoba the term "Improvement District" is used to denote a portion of a rural municipality or incorporated village formed into a particular territory to provide for local improvements.

School Districts.—The school district is the local organization for the support and administration of educational affairs. In each of the three Prairie Provinces its organization is somewhat different according as it is a rural, village, town or city or consolidated district, but the most common of these, the rural district, is in all three provinces governed by a board of three trustees elected by the ratepayers for three years, one being elected and one retiring annually. In Manitoba there is in addition to the types of district mentioned, a rural municipality school organization, being an aggregation of rural schools under one board of trustees.

Improvement Districts.—These consist, except in Manitoba, of those sparsely settled areas where there exists either no municipal organization whatever or organization of a very simplified and elementary character. As a rule each local improvement district has exactly the same area as the rural municipality into which it may subsequently be transformed. This is generally the territorial unit of 18 miles