

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.

President of the Council and Minister of Education; the Provincial Treasurer is also Minister of Telegraphs and Telephones; the Attorney-General is also Provincial Secretary; and the Minister of Railways has in charge the administration of highways. In Alberta the premier is also Minister of Railways and Telephones, but each minister has in charge a single department.

Legislative Power.—Each province has a Legislature consisting of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Legislative Assembly. There must be a yearly session. Though the Assembly may be dissolved at any time it must not continue longer than a fixed period of years after a general election. Section 92 of the British North America Act enumerates the exclusive powers of the Provincial Legislatures.¹

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 five different forms: (a) Local Improvement Districts; (b) Rural Municipalities; (c) Villages; (d) Towns; (e) Cities.

*Local Improvement Districts.*²—These consist 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 square or nine townships. The form and size of these units occasionally vary to fit into the physical features of the country. The local improvement district is not regarded as a permanent organization. Its powers are circumscribed. In Saskatchewan the local improvement and supplementary revenue taxes are collected by the Department of Municipal Affairs and spent for public works through the Board of Highway Commissioners. A certain portion of them is disbursed for wolf bounties. In Alberta a council is elected, a councillor from each of the six wards or divisions. The power of this council is very limited. It has the right to levy a small tax, at a rate fixed at so many cents, never exceeding five, on the acre. It can expend the revenue so raised in payment for work on roads and bridges, a little assistance to agriculture and the running expenses of the district.

Rural Municipalities.—The rural municipality is a permanent institution and a body corporate. It passes by-laws for the general welfare of the community. These relate to such matters as public health, nuisance grounds, cemeteries, hospitals, granting aid to the sick and worthy indigent, providing for tree planting in public places, imposing fines for light weight and short measurements, preventing cruelty to animals, restraining the running at large of dogs, the application of herd and pound laws, preventing prairie fires, licensing hawkers

¹See Canada Year Book, 1914, page 12.

²In Manitoba this term is used to denote a portion of a rural municipality or incorporated village formed into a particular territory to provide for local improvements.