SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY. MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK: THE MUNICIPAL POLICY OF SIX GREAT TOWNS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THEIR SOCIAL WELFARE

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FREDERICK DOLMAN

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Trieste

SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY EDITED BY H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A.

MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK

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17

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THE MUNICIPAL POLICY OF SIX GREAT TOWNS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THEIR SOCIAL WELFARE

BY

10

FREDERICK DOLMAN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY SIR JOHN HUTTON, J.P. Chairman of the London County Council

METHUEN & CO. 36 ESSEX STREET, W.C. LONDON



INTRODUCTION

35.

BY

SIR JOHN HUTTON, J.P., L.C.C.

MR FREDERICK DOLMAN has rendered excellent service by bringing together, in this concise form, the various steps which indicate the growth of that municipal spirit which, happily, is spreading throughout the United Kingdom. Of all those who read this book it is probably the Londoner who will most be stimulated by it, for here he will read that the policy which in London is always being met by the cry of *non possumus*, is, in many provincial towns, an accomplished fact. Cities with populations far less than that of a moiety of London have municipalised their markets, gas, water, tramways, electric light, and art galleries, and, so doing--in addition to reducing the cost to the community--have secured a municipal fund, without an increase in rates.

Birmingham in seventeen years made a profit on its gas

INTRODUCTION

of \pounds 714,000; the markets of Manchester hand over \pounds 15,000 annually to the City Treasury; while the markets of Liverpool make a profit of \pounds 16,500; the surplus of nearly \pounds 7,000 on the trams of Liverpool goes towards the relief of the paving rate; Glasgow in 1893 made a profit of \pounds 42,000 on water, \pounds 29,500 on gas, and \pounds 3,300 on markets; while Bradford made a profit on its electric light of over \pounds 2,000.

These are a few only of the many facts which will appeal to the residents in the county of London and confirm them—unless they are shareholders in such undertakings—in their objection to a system which permits of private gain being made out of public necessity. The policy of the Cities mentioned makes manifest their identity and corporate character, and is not without its effect on the citizens.

While the London reformer will be delighted with Mr Dolman's ounces of fact with which to stay the plentiful tons of inconsequent but delaying argument by which he is opposed, he cannot but feel somewhat humiliated that London should in so many important directions tarry far behind the chief centres of provincial life. To the man of faith, the facts here presented will act as a stimulus, because what man has done man can do; to the man who

vi

INTRODUCTION

only feels through his pocket, self-interest calls for a similar policy for London; and to the man who believes in the brotherhood of man, the collectivist policy is the only one which makes for righteousness, because it is based upon justice.

JOHN HUTTON.

February 1895

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