

**SCOTTISH LOCAL
GOVERNMENT: LECTURES ON
THE ORGANISATION AND
FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL BODIES**

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Scottish Local Government: Lectures on the Organisation and Functions of Local Bodies by D. Oswald Dykes

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D. OSWALD DYKES

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**SCOTTISH
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

*LECTURES ON
THE ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS
OF LOCAL BODIES*

BY

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WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY
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PREFACE

THESE Lectures were delivered during the past winter in the four principal towns in Scotland by request, and under the auspices, of the National Union of Women Workers. Their purpose was merely expository. They were not intended to advocate any views as to the many problems connected with Local Administration, but rather to give a general sketch of the organisation of the different administrative bodies and of the work which they respectively perform. They are published at the request of the Society, and are printed substantially as they were delivered.

EDINBURGH, *May* 1907.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN WORKERS, formed in 1895, specified among its main objects its desire *to promote sympathy of thought among the women of Great Britain and Ireland, and to promote the social, civil, moral, and religious welfare of women.* In striving to attain these objects, the Union has had to assume in some degree the rôle of an educative body, since it had in the first instance to make clear the present position of women in these relations, before it could discuss the particular need of the place and the hour. Thus during the years of its existence, the National Union has unquestionably fostered in women of all ranks and classes a more intelligent and practical interest in the economic concerns of the whole community, and has constituted a standing appeal to women of culture and leisure to be willing to expend a part of their time in the consideration of the harder problems of labour and life which press upon women in working-class homes.

If a woman wishes to be helpful in social work,

or even adequately to fulfil her duty as a citizen, it is essential that she should know something of the work of the public organisations throughout the country. In England, the chief Public Boards are the County, County Borough, and District Councils, and the Boards of Guardians; in Scotland, they are the County Councils, Town Councils, the School Boards, and the Parish Councils. The powers vested in these bodies are designed to meet all the normal requirements in a present-day community. It is true their powers are not always fully realised and applied by the Authorities themselves, as local voluntary agencies are frequently engaged in work which would otherwise come under the supervision of the Local Authorities. One hears in many places of the overlapping of voluntary agencies with one another, and with the work of Public Boards.

As women have to perform a large part of the voluntary work in Church and Social Organisations, it seemed to me very desirable that our National Union of Women Workers should endeavour to spread amongst its members a fuller and more accurate knowledge of the work undertaken by Local Authorities, and thus enable women to select definite lines of work, which should either give support to the measures adopted by the Local Authorities, or should supplement the work of the Authorities where the case seemed to demand it.

With this in view, I drew up an outline of a series of six lectures on the Administrative Work of Public Boards in Scotland and submitted it to the Scottish Branches of the National Union of Women Workers at a Conference held in Aberdeen on 5th and 6th October 1906; my proposal, that our Scottish Branches should arrange for such a series of Lectures to be given in our four chief cities, was accepted, and Mr. Oswald Dykes was invited to be the lecturer.

Mr. Oswald Dykes' treatment of the subject made it an exceedingly acceptable course, and many of those who listened to the lectures expressed the desire to be able to purchase them in book form.

Mr. Dykes has kindly consented to the publication of the lectures, and this will happily bring them within reach of that large public which has to record its votes periodically in the election of the Local Councils and Boards, and to whom it is of signal importance to be familiar with the particular functions of these Boards and their methods of working.

MARIA M. OGILVIE GORDON.

1 RUBISLAW TERRACE, ABERDEEN,

April 1907

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