

powers conferred upon it might become a sufficiently influential body to attract able and worthy members; but if, as is implied in some of the papers, city government is primarily administrative, there is certainly danger that the attempt to confine the council to so-called purely legislative functions may in practice mean the concentration of almost all powers in the hands of the mayor and continued degeneration of the council. It is doubtful whether a very sharp line can be drawn between administration and legislation, especially as regards city affairs. Moreover, there is at least a fair chance that more effective control over the administration could be secured by making executive officers continuously responsible, within certain limits, to the city council, than by trusting solely to the responsibility of the mayor to the people, enforceable only at intervals of two years. So long as there is no direct method by which the mayor can guide the actions of the council or the council control the actions of the mayor and his subordinates, one may doubt the practical efficiency of the provision suggested by the committee, permitting executive officers to attend council meetings and requiring them, when requested, to attend and answer questions. Would it not perhaps be feasible, at least by gradual evolution, to establish in city government something akin to the cabinet system, in which close harmony, rather than separation, of executive and legislature should be sought?

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*The Government of Municipalities.* By DORMAN B. EATON.  
New York and London, The Macmillan Company, 1898. —  
526 pp.

Among the innumerable books upon municipal government published during the past decade, none has appeared that will prove more suggestive to the student or to the man of affairs than this last work from the hand of the late Dorman B. Eaton. As the fruit of a long life, devoted, on the one hand, to the practical matters of a lawyer's career and, on the other, to an earnest study of contemporary political movements, the work is to be commended for being so comprehensive in its scope and so judicious in its treatment of the controverted problems which concern the organization and administration of our cities. While our ideas may differ from those of the author, both on the analytical and on the constructive sides of his work, we must grant that in the array of historical mate-

rial and the marshaling of the facts, he has shown himself to be the ablest exponent of those principles and measures of local government which he has endeavored to set forth.

The evils of our city government are shown by Mr. Eaton to be in no small degree due to the lack of the recognition of a definite sphere of municipal action, freed from the trammels of legislative control. But the primary problem of good local self-government — the fundamental condition of good city administration, as he conceives it — is to bring the worthiest and ablest citizens into the municipal offices. This, in his opinion, is the end to which all other efforts should be subordinated, and to its attainment he looks for the solution of the various evils presented. In proposing the measures requisite to bring about this result, the author fully recognizes the need of framing our municipal system in harmony with our constitutional principles and our social life — of a true adaptation of legislation to existing conditions.

The measures suggested include the abolition of national and state politics from municipal affairs; the introduction of a primary system which, together with proportional representation, shall give the voters a direct and effective influence in the choice of elected officials; and an adequate civil service for the purely administrative offices.

All other forces [says the author] which tend to defeat Home Rule in cities are insignificant compared with that of parties and their managers. . . . Experience has shown not merely that party rule has been more corrupt in cities than elsewhere, but that it has been more despotic, and more destructive of manly independence in the whole range of citizenship from the laborer to the great merchant.

To sustain these propositions, there follows an elaborate exposition of the system, theories and methods of Tammany Hall. It would be difficult to present a more forceful arraignment, supported by appropriate testimony, of that class of organizations of which Tammany is the type. While it might be contended that the argument is not altogether pertinent to prove that state parties are a necessary evil in municipal politics, no one can fail to recognize the value of so powerful a portrayal of the corruption inherent in the system of a strongly centralized and uncontrolled local machine like that described.

The recommendations of the author as to the detailed reforms advisable in local elections are in general worthy of acceptance. The merit system for subordinate administrative officials, with a

practically permanent tenure for efficient officers, meets the approval of every well-informed student of the subject. The application of free nominations and free voting to municipal elections is certainly a consistent recommendation, but the author as certainly overestimates the force of the testimony of American experience in this direction. As if confessing a misgiving as to the absolute value of any such method, he favors a restriction of the municipal suffrage by educational, if not property, qualifications; and he continually lays emphasis upon the duty of the best citizens to promote the acceptance of sound principles and to be active in securing the nomination and election of competent officials.

Chapters upon the functions of mayors and city councils and of the several departments of administration and a commentary upon the new charter of Greater New York complete the book. It may be easy to criticise this work for the localism of its treatment and for its open advocacy of the principles accepted by the adherents of one branch of the municipal reform movement; but the answer to these objections is that the book is by far the most able and forceful exposition of those principles that has yet appeared. The thought is vigorous and sustained throughout; the style is clear and pointed; not a page of the entire work is without its suggestive statement and appropriate illustration. And when we feel the scholarly devotion and earnest patriotism which the writer breathes through the entire book, we may freely assert that it deserves to be accepted as the crowning work of a long and well-spent life.

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C. W. TOOKE.

*Municipal Functions.* A Study of the Development, Scope and Tendency of Municipal Socialism. By MILO ROY MALTBY, Ph.D. New York, The Reform Club, Committee on Municipal Administration, being the December, 1898, issue of *Municipal Affairs*.

Students of municipal government throughout the country have had good reason to thank the municipal committee of the Reform Club for its work during the last few years. The library of municipal reports, books on city government and magazine articles on allied topics which the committee has collected is probably the best of its kind in the country. The first number of the committee's quarterly magazine, *Municipal Affairs*, was devoted to a bibliography of city conditions and problems, and this bibliography has been kept up to date in the succeeding issues of the magazine. One other