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ST. THOMAS, OCTOBER 1, 1892.

The manner of enforcing the Act respecting noxious weeds and diseases of fruit trees makes it a dead letter in nearly every municipality. If land owners and others are really in earnest in their desire to rid the Province of these pests, they should petition the Ontario Legislature to amend the Act so that the fine for each conviction would not be less than \$2.00, nor more than \$10.00, and costs, in any case, and also that half the fines should be paid to the informant. With this provision in the act tramps and others out of employment would be able to make a comfortable living while pursuing their usual avocation, and after a few delinquents had been fined all would see the desirability if not the necessity of at once clearing their premises of the weeds and trees mentioned in this act.

* * *

The public and local health authorities need to be more than vigilant during this month, as they may at any time have to contend with the dread disease, cholera. It is very gratifying to know that the enforcement of the quarantine regulations are carried out so efficiently, for in one day, with our rapid means of communication, any such pestilence is easily transmitted from one country to another, and it does not take long to cause sad havoc among the populations of careless and improvident communities.

Local boards of health should be composed of the best men in the community; men possessed of sufficient determination to enforce regulations even if it does inconvenience their fellow-citizens. The worst trouble to be contended with in case of an epidemic such as small-pox or cholera, arises from actions of people who are in no way likely to be affected by the disease, but who, as soon as anything of the kind is announced, become so frightened and unreasonable as to interfere with the authorities in the proper discharge of their duties.

The resolution referring to reduction of members of county councils, mentioned on page 39 of the August number, was not carried by the Middlesex county council, but referred to a committee who recommended no action. The report was adopted.

* * *

The prompt collection of taxes is a matter that every member of the municipal council should insist upon. In many municipalities the roll is not returned for months after all the taxes collectable should be in the hands of the municipal treasurer. This delay is owing to the action of the collector in waiting on delinquents, and we are sorry to say that they are often encouraged by members of the council. The time fixed by the Act for the return of the roll is the 14th December; the greater part of the taxes should be in the hands of the Treasurer by that time.

If the ratepayers are given to understand that the taxes must be paid by a certain day, and that all not then paid will be collected in the manner provided by the act, there will be no difficulty in securing the money, and the finances of the municipalities will be placed on a better and more business-like basis.

The salaries paid collectors are never very exorbitant, and they should make every effort to be in a position to make their final report to the treasurer on or before the first of January, and in this they should be encouraged by the council.

* * *

We have not received many replies in reference to our suggestion of holding a meeting of municipal officers in Toronto, and from the success that has attended the formation of county associations in different parts of the province, we would suggest that an effort be made to hold a meeting of the clerks in each county during the months of October or November, before the assessment roll slips, etc., are prepared for next year. Every clerk, no matter how well posted, would receive some benefit from attending a meeting of this kind, and if properly represented to the county council, the action of the Oxford county council in encouraging the Clerk's Association would no doubt, be carried out in each county.

At the county meeting, the advisability of forming a provincial association could be discussed, and if thought desirable, we will fix a date and announce it as thoroughly as possible in the January number,

but by all means let us have an association in each county.

Reduction of Members of County Councils.

The secretary of the Bruce county association of Patrons of Industry, has kindly forwarded us a resolution adopted at the last meeting of their association in reference to reduction of number of members of county councils. It is more comprehensive than many of the resolutions published, and while it recommends the act submitted to the legislature of last session, it suggests important amendments thereto, the principal being the division of counties into districts, which in our opinion, is the key of the whole question. In general the resolution agrees with our opinion expressed in article on reduction of the number of members of county councils published in the April number of THE WORLD. We recommend the resolution to the consideration of all who are desirous of bringing about a reform in that direction.

The resolution reads as follows:

1st. We recommend the reduction of the number of county councillors as proposed by the act before the Ontario Legislature at its last session.

2nd. That the number of representatives be based upon a rate, according to population, as mentioned in proposed act.

3rd. That each county be divided into districts for this purpose, each district to elect its representatives by public vote to be taken at the municipal election.

4th. That each district formed be bounded by existing municipal boundaries.

5th. That the method of electing candidates should be as follows: The county council at its last session in each year should appoint a returning officer in each district whose duty it would be to receive nominations from any qualified voter in the district, when, if there is more than one nominee, he will prepare ballot papers to be used under the supervision of the municipal returning officer.

To save a few dollars a number of councils, last winter, refused to publish the auditors' report as required by statute. They have received notice from the bureau of statistics asking for a copy of the report and pointing out that, in not sending a copy, they have violated the law. As a result the councils will have to get the reports printed.