

The Municipal World.

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ST. THOMAS, AUGUST 1, 1892.

Making promises in advance is a matter that every member of a municipal council should avoid. That it is done, every one knows, more especially where an official is to be appointed. It is not very encouraging to see members of councils voting without considering which applicant would be the best for the position. In many cases a dead-lock is caused simply because councillors have promised to support their candidate although other better applications are before them.

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We have received a copy of the Municipal and Assessment Acts consolidated in one volume, with index for each. The only omission we notice is that index to the Municipal Act is not alphabetical or as complete as that to the Assessment Act. Notwithstanding this, municipal officers will appreciate the publication of the acts in a separate volume.

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It is made clear by the Election Act of 1892, sec. 85, that persons are only to vote at legislative elections in the division in which they reside, if entitled to vote in such division. We agree with a correspondent who states that a person should only be entered in the list for a legislative vote in the sub-division in which he resides, and if qualified in polling sub-divisions in other wards he should be placed in part two.

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We have to thank a correspondent for drawing our attention to an error in the article on voters' lists published in the July number. In giving the letters that may be used to designate the qualification as owner and manhood franchise in the fifteenth line of said article, the letters "F. & M. F." should be "O. & M. F."

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We have received several communications from clerks asking if anything has been done towards the formation of a Municipal Officers' Association. As far as we are aware, no action has been taken up to the present time, and it is doubtful if arrangements could be made to hold a successful meeting before next January or February, and not then unless a majority of those interested express themselves in favor of the formation of an association.

We are willing to assist in every way, but unless it is shown that such an association would be largely attended we do not propose to make any move in the matter. On a previous occasion a strong effort was made in this direction, which was an entire failure. An unsuccessful first meeting was held in Toronto, a second meeting was not attended, and we believe the officers appointed had to shoulder a large portion of the expenses in connection therewith. If those in favor of the formation of such a society would kindly send their names to the MUNICIPAL WORLD we will keep a record of the same, and announce through our columns the number received from time to time. A correspondent in another column offers some suggestions which, if carried out, would, no doubt result in the successful formation of an association.

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Since the granting of municipal bonuses to manufacturing industries was declared illegal there is a tendency to exempt the plant of such from taxation. This is seen in Toronto and Brantford, and the idea is likely to extend. If every place carries out the principle, the relative position of the industries will not be changed, nor will the relative advantages of the towns and cities that are competing for them. The manufactories will get the benefit of this movement and other people will pay the taxes.

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P. H. Bryce, M. D., Secretary Provincial Board of Health, is now Deputy Registrar-General, and will in future have charge of returns under the act for registration of births, marriages and deaths. These events must be registered with the clerk of the municipality. The person to report a birth is the father or mother of child, and it must be done within thirty days. A death must be registered by the occupier of the house in which the death takes place, and the return must be made before the burial of the body. A marriage is to be registered by the clergyman performing the ceremony within ninety days. There is a penalty of twenty dollars for neglecting or refusing to make these returns within the specified time. There is no charge made for registering. Clerks make their report to the government immediately after the 1st of January and 1st of July.

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County councils should consider the advisability of having a police magistrate appointed. If in any instance the salary required to be paid is found to be in excess of the probable benefit to be derived therefrom, the government would no doubt consider a petition for an appointment at a smaller salary than \$600 per annum, or if required amend the act passed at last session to meet the views of counties desiring to take advantage of it.

This season of the year is the time to agitate doing away with statute labor. It is easy to show the difference between work under the statute labor system, and that performed by contract and the expenditure of grants from the council. We are very strongly in favor of the total abolition of statute labor, and recommend that proceedings be taken in each township to obtain the decision of the people in reference to this important matter, that meetings should be held to discuss the question with a view to having all improvements on roads paid for the same as other expenses of the municipality out of the general fund.

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The practice of municipalities sending deputations to Ottawa and Toronto, to advocate measures that will revive their business interests at the expense of the country at large, seems to be unnecessary, and it would require a large government purse to supply all their alleged requirements.

Would it not be better to elect efficient men as representatives, and encourage them to look after the interests of their constituents? There may be special cases where deputations assist in giving important information that might otherwise be overlooked, but as a rule members of deputations have a good time at the expense of the municipality, are unable to give a definite report or any thing else, other than that the powers that be have promised to take the matter into their consideration.

There was no Secunder.

John Barry, mayor of Comwell, an Australian mining town, had been away on leave, and, as he outstayed it, a vote of censure was passed upon him. At the next meeting of the council, he, in his capacity of mayor, directed the minutes of the previous meeting to be read, which contained the following entry:

"A vote of censure was passed on the mayor for outstaying his leave, and it was resolved to ask for an explanation."

"Who proposed this vote of censure?" inquired the mayor.

"I did," said a councillor, standing up.

"You did, did you?" continued Mr. Barry stepped from his presidential chair to the unfortunate member. "Then take that!"

With these words the mayor smote his enemy in the right eye, and felled him to the ground.

"Who seconded this resolution?" Mr. Barry asked, quietly resuming his position.

There was no answer; the councillors were not anxious for a physical contest with so hard a hitter as their mayor.

"Who seconded this resolution?" he asked again.

Still there was no reply.

"Then," said the mayor, taking up his pen, "as there is no secunder, it's informal. Scratch it off the minutes."