

Publications Received.

*Meat and Milk Inspection*—Issued by Provincial Board of Health, with regulations relating thereto.

*Third Annual Report on Births, Marriages, Divorces and Deaths, State of Maine, being for the year 1894.*—By A. G. Young, M. D., Registrar of Vital Statistics.

Six hundred and seventy-four divorces were granted during the year.

*Financial Statement, Township of Pelham.*

*Financial Statement, Village of Streetsville.*

The expenditures of the village amount to \$2,500, but the statement as posted on 15th December last is four feet long.

*Financial Statement, Belmont and Bethune.*

*Instructions to Deputy-Returning Officers.*—By W. A. Clark, clerk township of York.

This draws attention to the more important points to be observed in conducting an election, and makes special reference to the County Councils Act.

*Special Report of P. S. Gibson & Sons, York Township Engineers.*

This is most complete, and contains a statement of the local improvement work during 1896, together with information of expenditures on roads, as follows:

SIDEWALKS.

Of about 45 miles of sidewalk, only a few new pieces have been built this year, but a considerable expense has been incurred in re-building and repairing old sidewalks, as on Kingston road and on Yonge street in Deer Park. In these cases the good plank were relaid together, and the remaining parts laid with new plank, and in both cases generally on new stringers and sidewalk kept well up to keep them from decay, by allowing a circulation of air beneath as also to facilitate cleaning snow off.

A considerable part of the expense of repairs of sidewalks arises from cattle and horses being allowed to tramp over them. Some action should be taken to prevent this, and if necessary, legislation secured, otherwise accidents will happen and damages incurred, as often during a single night a number of planks will be broken by horses.

ABANDONED TOLL ROADS.

The abandoned Toll Roads, including the York Roads, are as follows: Don Mills Road, Don and Danforth Road, Vaughan Road, Davenport Road, Weston Road, Dundas Street, Kingston Road, and Yonge Street—in all about 27 miles, equal in length to that part of Yonge street, lying between Eglington Avenue and Holland Landing, and we are quite safe in saying that the portions of said roads and the bridges thereon, which have been under the control of the Corporation of the Township of York are in a much better condition than when owned by the different companies.

These roads, as all other leading roads which the Council propose to keep up, require a complete system of drainage and grading, as it is practically impossible to have good roads without good drainage. We called upon Mr. Campbell, lecturer on good roads, at the Government building, and have also written him in the matter of drainage of roads, and have received word from him that the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Dryden, has the matter under consideration. The object we have in view is that municipalities in the rural districts shall have the right to make reasonably deep ditches along public roads, and that the public travelling these roads so ditched are required to exercise due diligence to keep out

of them, failing which, the municipalities shall not be held responsible.

After these roads are properly drained and graded if they have not already a fair foundation of macadam, it should be put on if there are sufficient funds, and rolled and consolidated, so the macadam may be properly bedded, and then gravel applied in coats of about three to four inches thick, and while being applied the larger gravel stone to be raked in and covered, the whole then rolled with a heavy iron roller.

The macadam and gravel should be put on early in the fall, but drainage and grading early as possible in the summer, so roadway may be properly consolidated before the fall.

SNOW.

The heavy snow storms and drifts of last winter caused a larger expenditure than usual in trying to keep open, leading roads and deviations therefrom into the adjoining fields, and later in the spring opening a large number of other roads.

These expenditures reduced materially the funds usually available for road improvements. It would be well, so soon as the township funds would permit, to pass a by-law encouraging, by grants, the building of wire fences adjoining the roads, which, while in cases of well travelled roads, are apt to cause accumulation of snow in the centre of the road, and make a "heavy road" to travel, still prevent deep snow drifts, and in cases of roads not much travelled are not open to objection.

BRIDGES.

We have had a much larger expenditure in bridge repairs than usual, which we found necessary—about \$1,400—to protect the public from accidents and the township from suits for damages. Most of the large bridges had been rebuilt in 1878-9, after the destructive floods in 1878. Previous to that date nearly all our bridges were built on bents, cribs and stone abutments on not very good foundations, but which answered very well so long as the mill dams and timbered lands were in existence. In rebuilding, the bridges were put on pile bents and piers, and given wide water ways. Now, after eighteen years, we had to make numerous repairs and some improvements, especially as in rebuilding in 1878-9, considerable old material were used in the new bridges.

We had also to take into consideration the now general use of steam engines of the ordinary kind, and also traction engines, the immense weight of which concentrated very much on the driving wheels, causes a very great strain on the bridges and damage to the planking, especially when longitudinal planks are not put on to protect them.

In view of the probable damages to bridges and accidents, we notified the owners of the traction engines, on the opinion of the township solicitors, that they were bound to strengthen the township bridges before crossing them with their traction engines, except those on toll roads.

The general expenditure in each of the four divisions into which the township is divided is then given, and this most complete report concludes with a list of the machinery and implements in charge of the foreman for each division.

*Report of the Bureau of Industries containing Municipal Statistics for 1895.*

In townships, the rate of taxation in 1895 was \$4.03 per head, an increase of eleven cents in ten years. In towns and villages the rate in 1895 averaged \$4.64 per head, and in 1895, the average in towns was \$6.77 per head; and in villages \$4.15. During the same period the taxes in cities increased from \$9.23 to \$12.68 per head. The total increase in taxation for the province being from \$4.93 to \$6.29 per head in ten years, amounting to \$330,000 per year, all in the urban municipalities. In addition debenture indebtedness is growing at the rate of two million dollars annually in these municipalities, while in townships and counties the amount of outstanding debentures is decreasing. It is also necessary to note, that while the assessed value of townships shows a slight decrease, that of other municipalities has increased over \$130,000,000 in ten years. The report concludes by giving a few pages of notes and comments taken from the numerous returns received from municipal officers, showing the great necessity for a uniform system of keeping municipal accounts and records.

The Embro council at their last session decided to petition, in accordance with section 383, Municipal Act, praying the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to appoint a commission to investigate the voters' list of 1895 and 1896 re the James McDonald, A. B. McKay, J. W. Duncan, and Thomas Masters surveys.

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At the January meeting of the Oxford County Council, School Inspector Carlyle drew the attention of the council to the necessity of having a set of regulations drawn up for the guidance of the chairman at the annual meetings of the different school sections. He thought that this might reduce the number of irregularities which had occurred at annual meetings recently.

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The great bane of municipal government is the ward system. There is no inducement to the ward member to interest himself in the general affairs of his municipality. The idea of a council elected irrespective of ward divisions is the correct one, it enlarges the constituency of a councillor and calls for a wider application of his influence. The aim should be to adapt the public expenditures and improvements without consideration of ward boundaries.

Underpaid Municipal Clerks.

As a rule municipal clerks are underpaid. Why they should be, no legitimate reason can be advanced. The work of a town or township clerk is enormous. Some town clerks are reasonably well paid, but we cannot recall the name of a township clerk that receives even a fair remuneration for his services. Take Goderich township as an example. The clerk there has about five months work for the township, and the work is by no means light. He receives a salary of something like \$100 or \$105. For this he works about 150 days, which means less than seventy cents a day. The majority of school teachers perform less work than a municipal clerk and receive from \$300 to \$1,000 per annum.—*Clinton News-Record.*

"I'm going there," she said in style!  
The girl of Gotham did—  
And on each slender hand the while  
She drew a yellow kid.