

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT

LEGAL DECISIONS AFFECTING MUNICIPALITIES.

A case of more than usual municipal interest has been decided in the Superior Court by Mr. Justice Langelier. A contractor named Pauze tendered for the construction of certain drainage works in the municipality of Maisonneuve, Que. He had in connection with the business to see one Mr. Martineau, a member of the municipal council and also a member of the committee which had immediately to do with the awarding of the contract. To secure his good-will, or to avert his opposition, the tenderer gave him a note for \$1,250. The matter came before the courts in the course of an effort by the holder of the note to enforce its payment. The makers of the note pleaded that it was given as an illegal consideration and set out what is stated above. They supported it also by such evidence that the court accepted it, and dismissed the suit. The civil side of the case is thus disposed of; but there is another that is of even greater public importance. The defendants' allegations, accepted by the court, were equivalent to a charge that a grave crime punishable under the law has been perpetrated. Section 136 of the Criminal Code defines among corrupt practices in municipal affairs the act of any person who, being a member or officer of a municipal council, accepts or consents to accept any offer, proposal, gift, loan, promise, agreement, compensation or consideration, or in consideration thereof votes or abstains from voting in favor of or against any measure, motion, resolution or question, or performs or abstains from performing any official act. There is some reason to fear, says a Montreal paper, that such acts as are here condemned are not uncommon in municipal administration. At least there is a strong public belief to that effect, which this Maisonneuve case will give justification for, and which will be increased if, after the exposure of the civil courts, there is not a prosecution in the criminal courts that will bring about the punishment of the presumed wrongdoer, or, if he is not a wrongdoer, will give him the opportunity of clearing himself. The case is the second of the nature to attract public attention.

DEBENTURES

Municipalities contemplating the issue of Debentures will find it to their advantage to communicate with

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tention in the district of Montreal within a brief time, and it is not well that it should remain to increase the belief that the law for punishing municipal wrongdoers is a dead letter.

A GIGANTIC PUMP.

In the waterworks at Coulonier, near Genoa, an enormous centrifugal pump has been installed. It lifts water 460 feet, and when running at full speed of 600 revolutions a minute absorbs 2,000 horse power. It is driven by two-phase induction motors operated by electric currents from Chevres. The pump is arranged to give the necessary pressure to overcome the great head against which it works by a simple tandem arrangement of two centrifugal vanes. Injectors are provided to fill the casing with water, the pump being started with closed valves. This gives the motors only the friction of the water in the wheel case to work against in starting. After they have attained full speed the valves are gradually opened. The pump delivers 5,000 gallons per minute.

When the streets are muddy in London, there is said to be a marked falling off in such diseases as are prevalent when dust is being blown about. But when by the addition of water the dust becomes mud, then the power for harm in the matter in the wrong place is gone, since mud is not an inhalable quantity, and the germs which abound in dry mud, however vicious

they may be, become inert in mud and too lazy to go away unless they are carried. In course of time also the mud is likely to be washed into the sewer gutters, in which case the germs are moved off to where they can do no harm. Copious street sprinkling, therefore, should be had recourse to in dry weather (and if with salt or salted water which kills many kinds of germs, so much the better) and streets be kept well wetted down, so as not to give the microbes a chance to be blown about into people's mouths or noses. Cold water is as big a bugbear to a germ as to a tramp.

Chicago is about to try an experiment, the result of which, it is hoped, will be that in a short time the whole of the city will be completely free from overhead wires as the down town districts. Five corporations doing business in the city, the Western Union and Postal Telegraph Companies, the Chicago Telephone Company, and the Chicago Edison company, have decided to build a combination conduit three feet square. The city will own it, but the other four corporations will have equal rights in its use, and the conduit will be built in Archer avenue, from Nineteenth street southwest for half a mile. The poles at present standing in that section carry 125 wires. As soon as the cost of the experiment is learned, an ordinance will be introduced to put all wires underground in every section of Chicago where there is any danger from overhead wires.

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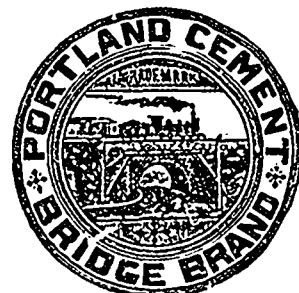
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