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ST. THOMAS, SEPTEMBER 1, 1892.

As the season advances, local boards of health are apt to become negligent. Many are satisfied with having made a good showing in the early part of the year. We would remind them that it is neglect of this kind that causes epidemics, small-pox and cholera to take a strong-hold on localities, and in this season, in towns and villages especially, should the authorities be vigilant, for they cannot tell at what time they may be called upon to contend with cases of these dreadful diseases, of which so many cases are reported, and which the provincial authorities are trying to keep from entering the province.

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Municipal clerks are no doubt often amused at the requests for special information received from individuals living in different parts of the province and the United States. The circular issued by *The Bankers' Journal* is the most elaborate we have seen for some time. It contains a politely worded request for a copy of any and every by-law under which de-bentures have been issued, together with other particulars. We hope *The Bankers' Journal* and *Financial Review* will not suffer if it fails to receive replies from all the municipalities. At this season of the year clerks have enough to do to attend to the duties of their office, without devoting the time required to answer the thirty-seven or more questions contained in the circular. Manufacturing concerns are also in the habit of endeavoring to ascertain from clerks the financial standing of rate-payers in a municipality, against whom they have claims. Clerks will do well to refuse all such applications for information, unless they are accompanied by a sufficient sum to remunerate them for their services.

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An interesting matter was brought to our notice the other day by a solicitor who was asked by a council to advise

them as to their authority in reference to the cutting of trees on property adjoining a road, and as provided for in section 266, sub. sec. 3, Consolidated Municipal Act, 1892. This section does not apply where the trees are only on one side of the road, the words in the section, "through a wood" means that the council would only have the power when there were trees on both sides of the road. This renders the section comparatively inoperative, and we believe it should receive the attention of our legislators, as very often councils will be prevented from improving high-ways owing to their inability to cause the removal of trees which may shade it.

* * *

Towns and villages considering the advisability of making street improvements under the local improvements clauses of the Municipal Act, will do well to decide, before improvements are made, whether street intersections are to be paid for out of the general funds of the municipality, or by frontage on the streets improved. Where one street is improved and it is crossed by a number of streets which are not improved, but which may be at some future time, it does not seem right that the street at first improved should be required to pay for intersections for which other streets, when improved, will receive the benefit. Section 627 of the Consolidated Municipal Act, 1892, refers to the by-law necessary to determine this matter. Section 620, sub-section 4, relating to the assessment of corner lots for local improvements, should also receive consideration.

* * *

It has been suggested that the legislature should pass an Act doing away with the statute labor system at present in operation in this province. It is now optional with townships whether they repair the roads under this system or not, and wherever a change has been made, it has been found to work satisfactorily, and bring about great improvements in the roads with more economical expenditure of public money.

The agitation for doing away with the statute labor may be compared with that which resulted in the establishment of our free school system, and which would never have been a success had it not been made compulsory by legislative enactment. Any reform suggested meets with strenuous opposition, and in the case of the abolition of statute labor the opposition will be found to come from parties who, every year, perform their work in such a

ridiculous manner as to render the adoption of some better system almost compulsory, and rather than waste time discussing the matter with these individuals councils should take the matter into their own hands, and at the same time order a petition to the legislature to pass an Act repealing the sections of the Municipal and Assessment Acts relating thereto. It might be necessary to make some special provisions so that in unorganized townships the statute labor system could be continued if it was thought advisable on the part of the local council.

* * *

The amendment of section 109, of the Public Schools Act, so that it does not apply to union school sections composed of part of a township and an incorporated village or town, draws our attention to an injustice in the payment of the county public school grant. Under sub-section 3, of section 122, of the Public School Act, county councils are required to levy in township municipalities an amount for public school purposes equal to the legislative grant. The county inspector, in apportioning these grants as required by section 123 of said Act, to union sections, composed of part of a township and an incorporated village, or town, distributes an amount equivalent to the number of pupils from the township portion of the union section that attend the school, this goes in with the general funds of the section.

The council of the town or village portion of the section is not required to raise an amount equivalent to the government grant, and while the township portion is called upon to pay its full share with the other parts of the section, they do not get credit for this special county grant paid in through the inspector's order. If a town or village were required to raise an amount equivalent, and pay it to the school board, and the balance required raised from the section as a whole, no injustice would be done to the township portion, and they would not be required to pay any part of the amount the village or town should be required to raise. We would suggest that section 122 be amended so that the rate for county public school grants be not levied in union school sections composed of part of a township and a village or town, and also that section 123 should be amended so that the inspector in distributing the county grant shall not include these sections. All schools are on about the same basis as far as the legislative grant is concerned.