

## The County Councils Act.

The division of the counties into districts is progressing rapidly. The commissioners are unable to satisfy all, and as a result the New County Council Act is the subject of unfavorable criticism.

## COUNTY OF PETERBOROUGH.

The Peterborough *Review* says: "Under the County Council's Act passed at the last session of the Provincial Legislature the county has been divided into five county council divisions. Each of these divisions will be represented by two councillors, so that the county council after the next election will be composed of ten members instead of twenty-three, as it is at present. This is a decided decrease in the representation, and the act as a consequence comes in for a good deal of condemnation. Yet, that ten good men can successfully and satisfactorily conduct the business of the county seems reasonable enough, but it will be necessary that the districts should elect the very best men resident within their limits regardless of municipality or any other consideration. The great danger is that politics will enter into these elections. If they do the system will be found to be a dismal failure and a constant cause of friction and dissatisfaction. Good men will be overlooked in political fights, for different reasons for giving a man nomination and support will come into the case, and ability will not be the one thing looked at. Now that the act has been passed and the conditions are presented and have to be faced, it is important that the county council contests should be kept purely non-political. A reduction in the representation could probably justly be made, but it is the general opinion that, in the case of Peterborough, at all events, the act is a mistake. We think we have pointed out the only way in which the reduced representation can be made satisfactory."

Judge Dean referring to the division said, the change was not a matter of burning interest in this part of the province so much as in the west. There the county councils had in some instances sixty members and the expense was heavy. When the commissioners were holding a preliminary meeting in Toronto a judge stated that in his county the council met three times a year.

The members of the new council will represent larger districts and be elected for two years. In counties where there is no county engineer, the Reeves dispose of the money appropriated for roads and bridges and in many cases they use it to good effect for the next election. The money was not spent on any uniform plan and it was not used to the best advantage. His honor did not think men representing a large division would be found doing work of this kind.

## COUNTY OF WELLAND.

The division of the county of Welland is referred to by the *Tribune* as "emi-

nently unsatisfactory, incongruous, and in at least one material respect inequitable."

Truly the act needs amendment, and in no respect more so than in affording the right of appeal from the arbitrary dictum of a commission who themselves know nothing of local circumstances and conditions, and utterly refuse to regard those who do. The warning to the Provincial Government was publicly given at the sitting, and we but repeat it here, that this act, and especially as it is being worked out in utter defiance of local public sentiment, if persisted in, will militate strongly against the government that passed it when the people get an opportunity to express their opinion. It is quite true that under the present system of county councils there is a crying evil that needs remedy, but the remedy proposed undoubtedly needs revision.

Judge Bell closed the proceedings of the commissioners' meeting by saying that he was aware that the law was unpopular with county councillors, but he had yet to learn that it was unpopular with the people. To the contrary, he had reason to believe that the people of the county in which he resided looked upon it as affording relief from a county council so large as to be cumbersome and unduly expensive. He anticipated there would be some little difficulty in the working of the measure at first, but after a few years he believed this would disappear, and people, instead of thinking of the municipality they resided in would think only of the county council district as a unit; in short, that municipal boundary lines would become obliterated with respect to county council divisions.

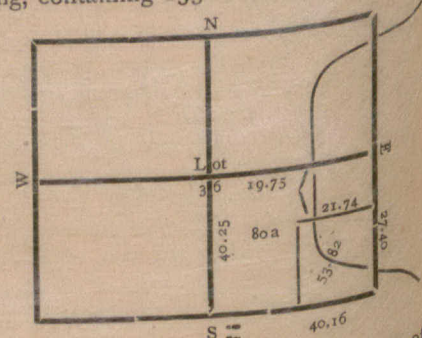
## Descriptions in Deeds.

The title of a man's home is no trivial matter, and therefore the care and precision with which a conveyance should be drawn is manifest and the importance of such care in describing land becomes more prominent upon the Court records, showing as they do the vast amount of money wasted, the worry and trouble involved in litigation, and the cause of which nine times out of ten, is traced to the abortive attempt of some person to do something he knew nothing about.

It has frequently occurred that the scrivener had confounded the courses and distances for bearing trees with the courses and distances of boundaries, and it also frequently appears where the measurements are made in chains and hundredths, that the hundredths have been mistaken for full chains and thus they make a confounded mess of it.

Take for illustration the following case: The intention was to convey 53.82 acres out of a tract of land which had been surveyed, and the boundaries were as plainly given as it is possible to write, and

are shown in the following sketch and which reads as follows: A part of the south-east quarter of lot No. 36 in township 26 N. of range 2 W., beginning at the south-east corner of said lot, thence west 40.16 chains to a stone; thence north 40.25 chains to a stone; thence east 19.75 to a stone; thence south 5 degrees, west 3.36 chains to a sugar tree 20 inches in diameter; thence south 30 1/2 degrees, west 3.63 chains; thence south 11 1/4 degrees, east 6.15 chains to a stone; thence north 89 1/2 degrees, east 21.74 chains to a stake, thence south 27.40 chains to the beginning, containing 133.82 acres.



The deed was written by a justice of the peace, and this is how he wrote it: A part of the S. E. qr of lot 36 T., 26 N.; R. to W; beginning at the S. E. corner of a said lot; thence W. 40 P., 16 chains to a stone; thence North 40 P. and 25 chains to a stone; thence E. 19 P. and 75 chains to a stone; thence S. 5 degrees W., 3 P. and 36 chains to a sugar tree 20 inches in diameter; thence S. 30 1/2 degrees W., 3 P. and 63 chains to a stone; thence S. 11 1/4 degrees E., 6 P. and 15 chains to a stone; thence S. 89 1/2 degrees W., 21 P. and 74 chains to a stake; thence S. 27 P., 40 chains to the beginning; containing 133.82 acres, all the above real estate except 80 acres heretofore sold to wool out of the west side of the above described real estate, containing 53.82 acres.

The man certainly had no idea of measurement, and perhaps the only conception he had of a pole was a small tree with the twigs trimmed off. The area embraced within the boundaries as he had it if made to close would be over 600 acres; but as he never gets clear around the tract of land he was trying to describe, and never gets back to the beginning, it amounts to nothing, and it costs the owner over one hundred dollars to get a deed of his land.

There is no law to prevent any person from writing deeds, nor are we willing to say that there should be; but there ought to be some liability on the part of the man who assumes to do such work. No man has a right to be ignorant of the work he undertakes to do, and if he does it through ignorance, in a manner to the damage of his employer, he should be accountable for such damage. Every description should be written with such certainty that it would stand on its own merits, and not require a court to determine its meaning or intention.