

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP LEAGUE IN LONDON

Things are shaping themselves for a very interesting municipal campaign if all signs do not fail. The Municipal Ownership League of this city is taking a lively interest in the affairs of the city and a definite movement is being made to interest well-known and prominent citizens in municipal politics.

The chief object of the league is the ownership of public utilities. There are branches of this organization in many large cities, Toronto, Hamilton and others having large memberships. In this city the object of the league is not only to interest the citizens in municipal government, but to acquire an electric light plant and the street railway, and run them by the municipality. The arguments that are usually put forward for this scheme are being urged here.

For Municipal Ownership

The time for definite action so far as London is concerned has come, they say. The contract for lighting the streets made with the London Electric Company expires shortly. The company has refused to grant the city more lights until contract matter is definitely settled. The question of owning the lighting plant is therefore, a very live issue with the citizens at present. The league has figures of the cost and maintenance of such a plant, and they will be submitted. The acquiring of the street railway plant is another matter to be decided upon.

A Full Ticket

The league has formed, or rather, is forming a slate for the coming municipal elections. A full ticket for mayor, aldermen, board of education and water commission will be put in the field. The nominees will be largely young business men, and others interested in the welfare of the city.

The league will indorse the five members of the council who voted to submit the question of Sunday cars to the people.

This will mean that Ald. Cooper, Saunders, Garratt, Rose and Stevenson will have the active co-operation of the Municipal Ownership League in their campaigns.

Meeting This Week

The executive of the league will probably meet this week if the slate can be completed in time. After that a convention of the citizens will be called to indorse or refuse the slate as prepared. Any candidate who is displeasing to the majority of the citizens at the meeting will be struck off the list.

"It is high time," said Mr. Woodcock, one of the movers in the Municipal Ownership League, "that more interest was taken in municipal affairs. There are many live questions to be discussed, but they are avoided. There is no move made towards a greater London. The league stands for something, and we are going to insist that our ideas are placed before the citizens. We will name a full slate, and it will be of such a quality that the people will not refuse to elect at least a considerable number of them. It is time the citizens took up the question of public ownership. It is a live question, and it must be reckoned with."—*London Advertiser*.

PUBLISH THE ASSESSMENT ROLLS

The assessment of Peterborough for the year 1907 is about completed, and in a few days the rolls will be handed over to the city clerk. It is stated that the increase this year in the taxable valuation of city property will be over \$1,000,000. Valuations have been raised in many parts of the city, and as naturally expected, there are many complaints and mutterings of alleged unjust treatment, favoritism, bias, etc. No man seems to take kindly to an assessor or tax collector. He regards such an

official with a certain "stand-offishness", and as a necessary evil. He is inclined to think that the other fellow pays less taxes and has a lower assessment, very much on the same principle that the average holder of a position opines that the other chap has a bed of roses, while his own pathway is strewn with thorns. It is in human nature to believe that others are more favorably circumstanced than ourselves. Why? Who can tell?

One effective method of allaying complaints and reconciling alleged grievances in connection with the question of assessment, is to have the rolls printed, so that they can be easily and conveniently examined by every ratepayer. This information may come high, but it is worth the price. The publication of the rolls, generally makes the work of the assessors, during the following year much easier.

The Peterborough *Review* has long had a firm belief that the rolls should be printed once, at least every three or four years. In publishing them no reflection whatever is cast upon the thoroughness, care or fairness of the work of the city assessors. It is a well known fact that publicity is a cure for nearly everything that requires a remedy. If there are any errors, excessive valuations, or other defects in the rolls, publicity will bring them to the front and there will be better satisfaction all around.

The Hamilton *Herald*, Belleville *Intelligencer* and other journals, have consistently advocated this method of relieving anxiety, misunderstanding and turmoil as to assessments, and no better method could be adopted.

Hamilton city council has decided to print the assessment rolls of the city and the Brantford *Expositor* thinks the same thing should be done in its city. It should be possible, it says, for any ratepayer to know, without going to the city hall, whether or not he is fairly assessed in comparison with his neighbors; also whether or not the assessment as a whole has been fairly made.

HOW THEY SHAVED DEBENTURES IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Municipalities nowadays think that too much shaving of their securities is going on.

But did not the then wealthy County of Waterloo in 1868 sell debentures totalling \$20,000, in two blocks of \$10,000 each, and bearing interest at the rate of seven per cent. per annum, for 96 and 95¾ cents on the dollar?

This is what it did. Its gilt-edged securities, which were placed on the market by shrewd business men, were clipped and lost four points in the shaving process.

Undoubtedly money was tight in those days, but that fact didn't prevent our county fathers from putting \$20,000 into a House of Refuge. Municipalities that cannot now sell their 5 per cent. debentures at par think themselves badly treated. But the money market has sagged so much that it cannot be blown into a normal condition in a day. Meanwhile, let us be thankful that a shave of 4 points on 7 per cent. debentures, as in the good old times, the tough old times of the sixties, is not now possible.—*Galt Reporter*.

WANTS THE ROLL PUBLISHED

The mayor of Barrie has offered \$100 of his own toward the expense of publishing the assessment roll. As reason for urging its publication, the *Examiner* says: "In the assessment there are many inequalities for which perhaps the assessor can be hardly blamed. Publication of the roll would make this evident when the assessor made his rounds. The following year every ratepayer, knowing the assessment placed on other properties similar to his own, would be in a position to secure a fair rating. Having the roll in this handy form would also be a great convenience and help to the assessor in comparing properties and arriving at a fair valuation."