

# The Municipal World

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ST. THOMAS, NOVEMBER 2, 1903.

Mr. C. H. Ashdown, clerk of the Town of Sandwich, died suddenly from the effects of a stroke of apoplexy last month. He was 67 years of age.

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Mr. D. B. Robertson, for the past twenty-two years clerk of the City of Belleville, died last month, and Mr. W. C. Mikel, barrister, has been appointed to succeed him.

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The council of the Township of Christie, at its meeting held on the 19th September last, passed a by-law commuting statute labor in the municipality to a money payment of sixty cents per day.

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Mr. John A. Jackson, clerk of the Township of Eldon, has resigned, owing to ill-health, and will remove to Toronto. Mr. Edward Mosgrove, of Kirkfield, has been appointed in his stead, and will also fill the office of treasurer.

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One Robert Taylor recently obtained judgment against the Township of Collingwood for \$100 damages and costs for the flooding of his lands by freshets coming from an adjoining mountain. The cause of the injury, the plaintiff alleged, was the negligence of the defendant municipality. A perpetual injunction was also granted restraining the municipality from accumulating water on the mountain road above plaintiff's property and distributing it over his lands.

## University Influence in Municipal Affairs.

Municipal conditions are gradually changing. In 1881 the rural population of Ontario was 70% of the whole, and in 1901, 57%. The trend is towards the cities and towns, not only in this Province but throughout the world. The conditions incident to the concentration of population within limited areas has, of necessity, enlarged the municipal idea. Annual town meetings of 100 years ago disposed of the public business of what are now populous communities, in one day. The affairs of a modern municipality include a multitude of things about which men of the early nineteenth century troubled themselves very slightly.

The appreciation of this fact has shown itself in the growing bulk of the literature devoted to municipal government and administration. Most of the writers are men who have had a University training, while some of the most active are officially connected with University faculties.

The University of Toronto has for some years devoted considerable attention to municipal problems; it is one of the important functions of a Department of Political Science to stimulate interest therein and give as many students as possible accurate, broad, up-to-date knowledge of municipal conditions and to compel comparisons of the different forms of municipal management in actual operation to-day.

In connection with the University of Toronto studies, the publication in 1889 of "The Ontario Township" by J. M. McEvoy, now a prominent London barrister, was the first of a series of articles relating to municipal affairs, which includes "Municipal Monopolies and their Management" by Sinclair, "City Government in Canada" by Dr. Wickett. The last number of the series was issued in September, and contains a valuable historical article by Mr. Adam Short, M. A., Professor of Political Economy, Queen's University, Kingston, entitled, "Municipal Government in Ontario." This is a concise history of our municipal development, showing the influences which determined the various changes in municipal legislation, both public and private, from 1792 to the

passing in 1849 of the Baldwin Act, the foundation of our present system of local self-government. In referring to this the writer says: "Looking at the Baldwin Act in its historic significance we must admit it to have been a most comprehensive and important measure, whose beneficial influence has been felt not merely in Ontario but more or less throughout the Dominion. Scarcely a session of the Legislature has passed since the year of its enactment without bringing amendments, altering and enlarging, though not always clarifying its details. Yet in all essential principles its spirit and purpose are embodied in our present municipal system."

A second article, entitled "Municipal Organization in Ontario" by K. W. McKay, the editor of this paper, deals with present conditions which are familiar to our readers, but not to students and others for whose information it was prepared. The number concludes with a list of publications relating to Canadian municipal government by Dr. Wickett, Lecturer in Political Economy, University of Toronto, who has taken a special interest in the investigation of municipal problems, and who believes that the future leaders in the special field of municipal affairs will be the students of to-day.

The electors of the City of Guelph voted, on the 29th September last, on a by-law providing for the acquisition by the municipality of the Street Railway. The by-law was carried by the substantial majority of 279.

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Mr. Samuel Cunningham, clerk of the Village of Waterford and Township of Townsend, is dead. Mr. Cunningham was also treasurer of the village and of the Townsend Agricultural Society, and secretary-treasurer of the Townsend Mutual Fire Insurance Company.

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The electors of the Town of Barrie last month carried a by-law by a vote of 711 to 13 providing for a loan of \$20,000 to the Barrie Carriage Co., and by a vote of 588 to 112 a by-law to raise \$3,900 for improvements to the Fire Hall and for the installation of an electric fire alarm system.