

The Municipal World

Published Monthly in the Interests of Every Department
of the Municipal Institutions of Ontario

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Box 1321, St. Thomas, Ont.

ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO, MARCH 1, 1907.

CIVIC EDUCATION.

Dr. R. A. DUFF, of Glasgow University, recently delivered an instructive address in that city on "The Governing of a City as a Science and an Art." After sketching the great and rapid growth of municipal activity, which he described as one of the most striking features of the past generation, Dr. DUFF said that few impartial observers would deny that, taken as a whole, modern civic enterprise had been wise in conception and beneficent in operation. What was still more important was that this increase of municipal activity had been attended by a considerable extension of public interest and public spirit. This involved civic education, not only for the working man, but also for the propertied classes; for civic patriotism, and the want of it, was not a monopoly of any social grade. Hardly less important, but much less noticed, was the question of the education of the men who govern. Why should they not raise the standard in this sphere of service as well as in others by requiring from those who would enter it proof of some knowledge and understanding of social conditions, of the history and present position of their municipal enterprises, of the functions which local government would discharge, and of the directions in which advance was possible and desirable?

There were not a few signs, said Dr. DUFF, that ere long their whole system of local administration would need to be reconstituted, and the success or failure of that reconstruction would depend upon the type of men whom they had willing and able to fill the new offices. In many ways their present machinery was antiquated, overburdened and ill-adapted to the work required of it. Owing to accidental circumstances in the origin or development of the various departments of local government, the organs of civic life had become widely separated. Not only were the boards that dealt with the poor, with education, with juvenile delinquents quite independent of one another and of the many voluntary agencies working for the same end, but they were quite independent of the municipal council. In government by departments or compartments there was much waste and loss, and a better-considered and simplified correlation and unification of the various functions of civic rule was one of the pressing questions of the time.

THE LEGISLATURE AND MUNICIPAL LAW

The Municipal Act is not receiving as much attention as usual from the members of the Legislature. The closing days of the session will no doubt be prolific in this respect. Among the more important bills before the House are:

No. 77 MR. CARNEGIE to amend Section 740 of The Municipal Act and authorize an application to the county Judge to determine the proportion of the township rate payable to the trustees of a police village.

No. 79 MR. CLAPP, re settlement of disputes as to county boundary lines.

No. 81 MR. MUNRO, re filing declaration of property qualification by candidates in cities of over 30,000 population and providing for council filling vacancy occurring after 1st of July.

No. 82 MR. CAMERON, re petition to township council for establishment of a highway in a police village.

No. 90 MR. HOYLE, to repeal section 618 and substitute new sections providing for the settlement by the county Judge, of disputes between counties and local municipalities as to liability for construction or maintenance of bridges.

No. 93 MR. CLAPP, for the appointment of trustees to take charge of a fire engine and appliances for fire protection when purchased by a township council.

Nos. 105 and 108 MR. CLARK, Bruce, to enable councils to appoint the clerk or treasurer as assessor or collector and authorize the mailing of tax notices in townships.

No. 121 MR. CRAIG, to amend section 617a and determine in what towns bridges over 300 feet in length may be maintained by a county council. Bridges in towns do not come within the present Act.

No. 117 MR. MCNAUGHT, to amend The Assessment Act and to reduce the business tax on manufacturers from 60 to 50%. And by providing that a shareholder owning ten per cent of the paid up capital stock of a corporation shall not be subject to assessment in respect to any income derived from the business of such corporation. This is an amendment necessary to place owners of commercial corporations in the same position as private businesses as far as the payment of the business tax is concerned.

No. 85 MR. BOWYER, to abolish the poll tax in cities, towns and villages.

No. 116 MR. HENDRIE, refers to the powers of the Railway and Municipal Board in reference to public utilities operated by a municipal corporation by providing for a report as to whether or not the rates charged are sufficient to meet debenture debt and interest created in respect thereof.

This Bill also provides for substituting the board for arbitrators that may now be appointed under the authority of The Municipal Act or Municipal Arbitration Act. This would not appear to be advisable until the board has completed the other municipal duties referred to them.

The announcement that the Revised Statutes will not be ready until 1908 means that a more extensive revision than usual may be expected. This will affect the introduction of legislation during the present session, as many questions will be referred direct to the Statute Revision Commissioners for their consideration; if approved they may include amendments and additions in the Statutes to be passed *en bloc* by the Legislature.

The supply of copies of The Consolidated Municipal Act 1903 which was issued by the king's printer in separate form, is exhausted. A new edition will not be available until the Revised Statutes are issued. This will be a disappointment to many of our readers who would like to procure a copy of this Act to assist them to a better understanding of the law relating to their duties.