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ST. THOMAS, MAY 1, 1900

The example of the municipalities of the village of Athens and the township of Rear of Yonge and Escott in moving towards the abolishment of toll-gates in their municipalities is worthy of emulation. For many years in these counties it is an admitted fact that the maintenance of toll-gates is no guarantee of good roads and yet the roads are full of these relics of a by-gone age. Brockville is surrounded on every side by these barriers to trade, and its citizens hope that this closing year of the nineteenth century will see these nuisances completely wiped out from Leeds and Grenville counties.

* * *

His Honor Judge Hardy has handed out his judgment in the case Cornell vs. Township of Brantford, dismissing the action against the township.

The case is of considerable importance to the municipal authorities, as it was contended on behalf of the plaintiff that all roads in the township should be kept free from snow during the winter.

In the present case the road leading from Brantford to Lynden was drifted full of snow two to eight feet deep, for about fifty rods, early in the winter of 1898. Instead of trying to dig this drift out, the council opened up a driveway to the east side of the road. Just after the new year the plaintiff in turning off the sideroad to the centre, broke his horse's leg. This action was for $200, the value of the horse.

The Judge holds that the council used proper judgment in opening up a road around the drift instead of attempting to dig it out. This decision will apply to all country roads.

* * *

Mono township council has bought a road-grader.

Thinks it a Farce.

A clause in the Municipal Act that is badly in need of amendment is that providing for a property qualification for municipal councillors. Either such qualification should be abolished or steps should be taken to make it of some effect. At present, men who are judgment proof and head over heals in debt, can sit in the city council, although the spirit of the act is that a man should be solvent and have some stake in the community. The act is so easily evaded that it is merely a by-word, and should not be allowed to cumber the statute-book unless it is made more stringent. — *Toronto News.*

Mr. D. B. Eaton who is an American who thinks it is time for a change in the municipal system as it exists in the United States, has given $100,000 each to Harvard and Columbia on the understanding that the money is to be devoted to inculcating correct principles of municipal goverment. Mr. Eaton says :

A true and safe municipal system is yet to be created in the United States. Nowhere is patriotic and wise leadership on such a subject more needed, or would be more useful, than in the city of New York. To determine a definite sphere within which cities and villages shall substantially control their own affairs ; to fairly mark the limits of co-operation between them and the state beyond their sphere ; to provide the best methods of municipal administration ; to create councils in cities and villages which shall, in substance, excercise their local authority and represent their public opinion rather than their party opinion ; to greatly reduce the number and frequency of elections in municipalities, to prevent the control of their affairs by parties and factions, and to make good government the ambition and endeavor of the worthiest citizens ; these seem to me to be the great problems of statesmanship, towards the solution of which I trust this professorship will largely contribute.

* * *

Councillor Day who was elected at the last election for Brantford township, has been compelled to vacate his seat, on the application of one of the unsuccessful candidates, William Croome. Mr. Day had become bondsman for collector Westbrook for the municipal year, 1899. The last year's council extended Mr. Westbrook's time for collecting taxes till it overlapped into this year, the year in which Mr. Day had been elected. The Municipal Act says clearly that no one who was financially interested in the affairs of the township could sit at the council, so he had to retire.

* * *

Orangeville wants a cement works in that town, and will vote on a $5,000 bonus by-law.

Anten Mills School Case.

An interesting decision has been given by Mr. Morgan, the Public School inspector, in an investigation lately held as to the regularity of the School Election at Anten Mills. As it was given with considerable care and deliberation, and with the assistance of the County Judge and the Minister of Education, it will doubtless become a precedent for all school elections.

The sitting trustee, J. J. Inkley, contended that the assessment roll was the standard and the only standard, and that it governed, right or wrong, and with all its errors or omissions.

Mr. Knapp, his opponent, as strenuously urged that it was an open question of qualification, and that the roll did not necessarily govern.

Judgment has been given upholding Mr. Inkley's contention.

A Municipal Experiment.

The municipal council of the borough of St. Helen's, Lancashire, England, has apparently taken a new step in the evolution of municipal ownership of public utilities. For some years the gas works have belonged to the municipality. This year, in order to increase the use of gas among the people for all purposes, the council offers to supply, free of charge, cooking stove and heating apparatus to all householders, providing only that they use the gas furnished by the municipality as fuel The plan has worked well and, it is said, has proven profitable to the municipality.

Thompson vs. City of Toronto.

Judgment on appeal by defendants from judgment of Robinson, J., in favor of plaintiff upon special findings of jury in action for negligence. The plaintiff's son while looking at a fire, was knocked down and injured on Victoria street, Toronto, by the runaway horses of one of the steam fire engines. The appellants contended that the evidence did not support the special findings of negligence and therefore the case was distinguishable from Hasketh vs. City of Toronto, 25 O. R. 449. Held, Maclennan, J. A, *dubitante*, that the finding of the jury cannot be set aside. Appeal dismissed with costs.

Township of Chinguacousy vs. McLellan.

Judgment on appeal by defendant from judgment of Rose J., granting an injunction and mandamus. In 1883 the plaintiffs, pursuant to an old agreement between them and defendant, filled in two old culverts and constructed a new one across the highway in front of defendant's lands and dug a ditch or watercourse across his lands to the river. The defendant objected to the ditch being dug without paying him a compensation, and had partly filled it in when this action was commenced. Appeal dismissed with costs.