

# The Municipal World

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ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO, FEBRUARY 1, 1907.

The Executive of the Ontario Municipal Association will meet this month to confer with members of the Government in reference to desirable amendments to the municipal law and to consider a proposal for the federation of the provincial municipal associations of Canada, for the purpose of promoting or opposing legislation affecting municipalities, that may be brought before the House of Commons.

An extensive organization would not appear to be necessary if the provincial associations are well organized; a representative at Ottawa retained to watch their interests and confer with them in reference thereto would meet all requirements.

The date of the annual meeting of The Western Ontario Good Roads Association has not been fixed, but it will probably be held this month. The previous meetings have been largely attended, the papers and discussions being in reference to county road systems and the building of roads, bridges and culverts generally. An association such as this is a necessity for the exchange of practical ideas in reference to the most important questions municipalities have to deal with.

The Government has not made any grant to the association which has not had sufficient funds to print a report of the proceedings.

Every county and municipal council should appoint a delegate to attend the meeting and make a small grant towards the funds of the Association; of which J. E. FAREWELL, county clerk, Whitby, is secretary-treasurer.

That the people of Ontario are opposed to any interference with their privilege of local self government, is shown in the feeling aroused by the compulsory features of the amendments to The Public Schools Act passed at last session of the Legislature, fixing the minimum salaries to be paid teachers in the rural public schools of the Province. Contracts with teachers for the present year have been made at increased salaries in most cases, and now the Government announces that the compulsory clauses will be discontinued, and that owing to the large increase in provincial revenue the Government grants for public school education will be materially increased. The Government appears to have discovered that the people should not be forced into an increase of taxation for school purposes and that the desired change may be brought about by another method.

## Re SECTION 606.

An exchange says :

"The Ontario Municipal Association is putting up a strong fight throughout the Province for the repeal of section 606 of The Municipal Act of 1903, which makes municipalities liable for all damages caused by their neglect to keep in repair roads, streets, byways or bridges. From every part of the Province come petitions in batches, praying for the repeal of the section, but at present there is little prospect that they will be effectual.

One of the most influential of the ministers of the crown, when spoken to on the subject recently, remarked :  
'We are certainly getting a flood of petitions. I have a big bunch to put in myself for my constituents.'

'Then, when will the section be repealed?' he was asked.

'I do not know that it will be repealed at all,' was the reply. 'I do not see myself why it should be.'

And until the Government makes a formal statement on the matter, all that the Municipal Association can do is to send in more petitions."

The executive of the Ontario Municipal Association will wait upon the Government this month and urge them to take definite action during the present session. There is no doubt about the demand the municipalities have made. The question is not new to the members of the Government who seem adverse to relieving the municipalities of a liability that does not exist in England or the other provinces of Canada.

During three days of the first week the Legislature was in session 158 petitions for the repeal of this section were received from the councils of the province. If the petitions are acted upon the present section would be repealed and a new one substituted to read as follows :

"606. Every public road, street, bridge and highway shall be kept in repair by the corporation, and in default of the corporation so to keep in repair, the corporation shall be subject to any punishment provided by law."

The Howard township council has appointed a committee to procure a map of the township on a scale of not less than 100 rods to an inch, showing all municipal drains and school sections.

In concluding his inaugural address Mayor FULFORD, of Brockville, said : "The town councils of the past three years were record ones in the history of Brockville in the matter of paying strict attention to business on business principles. I am very pleased to say that the deliberations of the council were marked by a complete absence of personalities and I do most sincerely hope that our successors may bear similar testimony when we retire. Let us all strive to treat each other as gentlemen and act for the whole interests of the good old town of Brockville, first, last and always."

The Home for the Poor of the Counties of Northumberland and Durham was opened at Cobourg on the 10th January. The building used for many years as a gaol was made over and enlarged by the counties council, and is now admirably adapted for the purpose of caring for the poor and aged ones. The opening ceremonies, which were in charge of Warden WEIR, were attended by the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, Provincial Inspector SMITH and other prominent men of the county and district. We will publish further particulars in our next issue.