

The need of maintaining an adequate proportion of well-wooded land is so vital to our national prosperity that the efforts of the Provincial Government to stay the destruction ought to be warmly seconded. An extensive reserve is to be set apart in the northern section of the Province, where the soil is unfitted for agriculture, which will be permanently in timber. This is well and good, but the individual owners of the cleared portion of Ontario ought also to do their duty in the direction of timber preservation and replanting. If a few leading men in each locality will take the matter in hand and set the example, public opinion will soon be developed in the right direction.

The official report of the Ontario Government on Forestry is now issued, and I shall be pleased to send a copy post free to any one sending his name and address.

R. W. PHIPPS,  
251½ Richmond Street West,  
Toronto.

#### Clerks' Salaries.

To the Editor of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD:

SIR—In your last issue "Reeve" has been expatiating on "what he knows" about municipal clerks' duties and remuneration. At the outset he admits that the complaint that such remuneration is too small, etc., "is to some extent true," but he adds, "it is the same with all public offices." Assuming the latter statement to be correct, which we do not by any means admit, in the name of common sense is that any reason why the injustice should be perpetuated? Surely the "Reeve" is not so narrow-minded as to decline to attempt to put right what he admits to be wrong.

The "Reeve" then proceeds to characterize as "unreasonable" and "presumptuous" that the legislature should have any more jurisdiction over clerks' salaries than it now has. Will the "Reeve" be good enough to say if it be more "presumptuous" on the part of the legislature to define clerks' salaries than to prescribe their duties? And he knows that the greater portion of their duties are set forth by the act of parliament; and he also knows that the legislature is continually adding to their duties, session after session, and he further knows that it is very seldom, indeed, that we hear of a local council making a corresponding increase in the salary of the official whose duties are thus enlarged. There is no analogy between the supposed cases of the office clerk and farm laborer, on the one hand, and the municipal officer on the other, hence the "heroics" about "despotism" and "British fair play" are scarcely in order. The "Reeve" still further proceeds to give it as his opinion that we have "too many acts, too many members and sessions," etc., etc., which may be true, and he might have added that there are many who think we have too many reeves also, but the ordinary mind will fail to perceive the con-

nection between that subject and the matter at issue.

ANOTHER CLERK.

Sept. 5, 1892.

To the Editor of the MUNICIPAL WORLD:

SIR,—I think it a perfectly absurd suggestion that clerks' salaries should be based upon the number of names on the assessment roll, as the amount of work in the various municipalities is not in proportion to the number of ratepayers. It seems to me that each correspondent is trying to fit his own coat on everybody else's back, and such a performance is sure to make many a misfit. C. P., in the September number, says 25 cents per head for every name ought to be enough. Surely he is not clerk or he would not go in for starvation rates. The salaries are altogether too low now without proposing to make them lower. Again, although I am a clerk, I agree with "Reeve," in September number, that the legislature should have no more jurisdiction over clerks' salaries than at present.

I am much pleased with THE MUNICIPAL WORLD.

Yours, etc.,

C. E.

To the Editor of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD:

SIR.—The "Reeve's" arguments on clerks and their salaries are sound, and I agree with him on all points. Making a few men rich by Act of Parliament at the expense of the many is about played out. If "Clerk" is not sufficiently paid, let him resign, there is no law compelling him to act if he does not wish. The exorbitant charges that some clerks make for extras shows the estimation they have of what their pay should be. But what about the ratepayers who have to pay them? Where is the protection for them? What protection is the Government going to give them? Those who have to pay should be allowed to say how much they will pay, and what work they want done, and there should be no outside interference in the matter, and councillors should have the same liberty in their business as other people, and be allowed to ask for tenders for their clerkship. Then there would be less grumbling by clerks.

DEPUTY REEVE.

#### Councils and Drainage.

Members of municipal councils should do all in their power to prevent the diversion of all water out of its natural course. There are very few drainage improvements proposed in which some individual is not desirous of having the water taken out of its natural course for his benefit, and while at the time it may appear to be a very small matter, still, when people become better acquainted with the provisions of the drainage law, and suffer damage, which is always greater during the wet season, they are not backward in taking advantage of any claim they may have,

owing to such diversion. The length of time is no barrier, and where a council consents to having a watercourse constructed along the side of a road to pass one man's place, through which it would naturally flow, and connect with a watercourse on other property, the owner of such other property has a claim against the township for any damages that may be occasioned by such diversion, and when any such claims are presented the township engineer should be required to locate the ditch properly, in its natural course, and the best settlement possible made with the person making application for damages.

We know of a case where a ditch was constructed along the side of a road thirty years ago, and maintained partly by statute labor and partly by work of the party for whose benefit the ditch was constructed. On representation being made to the council they ascertained the facts and at once put in a culvert, turning all the water diverted by the ditch on to property that had been highly improved during the thirty years, but through which the water would flow naturally. The owner of this property was at first disposed to close up the culvert and enter an action against the council, and, in fact, did so, but when he secured the advice of an experienced municipal lawyer, he was pleased to consider that he had been saved the trouble of taking care of the water for thirty years, and at once put in large tile to carry the same through his property.

When proceedings are commenced under the Ditches and Watercourses Act, in which the township is a party, the representative of the council should never consent to an agreement, but should insist in all cases on having the engineer decide properly where the water should go and the proportions of the ditch to be constructed by each.

Our reason for suggesting this, is that agreements are seldom drawn up properly or filed with the clerk, and if at any time an engineer is put on to enforce an agreement he finds it next to impossible to make anything like a satisfactory job. More especially is this found to be the case when a ditch has been constructed under an agreement, before the property is improved, and it is often found that the work at first performed has been almost thrown away, owing to circumstances which have been overlooked, but which would have been noticed had a competent engineer been employed to take the level and ascertain the natural course of the water. Trivial actions for damages in after years can always be avoided by following this course.

A subscriber writes: I regard THE WORLD as an ever welcome visitor, and worthy of the best support of the municipal officials of Ontario. It fills to the fullest extent a long felt want. You have my best wishes for future success.