

The Toronto World

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FRIDAY MORNING, AUG. 15.

THE COURT OF REVISION.

Scarcely any institution around the city hall is so misunderstood and so undervalued as the court of revision. It is so to speak, the fiscal and governing arm of the city. It cannot move any faster than the assessment department provides an impetus for, but it equalizes and distributes the forces the department sees fit to set in motion. Sir James Whitney has the opinion that the department does not generate as much steam as it might, and no defence has been entered to this charge. The appellants to the court of revision do not seem to have any clear idea of what they have engaged in as a rule. Very rarely business men have any complaint to make when they understand the law. The assessments are professedly and notoriously under actual values, and except in rare cases of error, it is practically impossible to show over assessment. It is only, therefore, in cases of unequal assessment or apparent discrimination that appeals have much chance of success. Parties who are not disposed to complain about their own assessments occasionally find that their neighbors have a much lower rate, the conditions are exactly similar. In such cases there is no redress. Very few people care to appeal against their neighbors' assessment so as to have it increased. Yet under our stupid law there is no other way of going about the matter.

Some appeals are made, not with the expectation of getting much or anything off the assessment, but in order to head off an increase. In the following year, experience having shown that an appellant in one year is not likely to be disturbed the next.

It is difficult to understand why some people appeal at all, even when they succeed technically in getting a reduction of about \$100 on their property. Some of the less intelligent appellants seem to think that they will escape the payment of the \$100 instead of the \$1.95 which this year's rate would levy. It is certainly not worth the time of some of those who wait around the court for hours to save a few dollars in this way. One case was reported to The World of a gentleman who bought a property for \$8000, its full value, the assessment being placed at \$9000. He refused to appeal, saying that while he spent several hours at the court to save \$20, he would probably lose several times that in his business.

His action, however, might affect other property owners around him. When several appeals come from one locality more attention is paid than to a solitary appellant. The court must take it for granted that those who do not appeal are satisfied.

More careful and expert consideration of the cases before it is probably not to be found anywhere in the city than in the court of revision, the work is accomplished in a quiet and unobtrusive way.

CITIES AND SUBURBAN AREAS.

In the July number of The National Municipal Review, the quarterly published by the National Municipal League of the United States, there is an instructive article on recent interesting developments in Berlin, the capital of Germany. In Prussia no distinction has been made between the capital and the provincial cities, differing in many ways from other European countries and the United States. Capital in these latter nations have been assumed to require special forms of government, but that of Berlin differs in no essential respects from that of other Prussian cities. All are subject to the idea that the government of a city is a business proposition, just as much as is the administration of the greatest private company. Political considerations are excluded, and the task set the city council is simply to find for its executive head the best man that can fill the place of mayor.

But the point immediately in view is not so much the government of the city of Berlin itself as the manner in which it has been correlated with that of the surrounding communities. The urban territory, which these include, comprises a total population of over three millions and a half. They comprise along with the city proper six "city circles" and two "rural circles."

Hitherto the southern states of the neighboring republic had a practical monopoly in cotton production. This has been due to the suitability of soil and climate, and the presence of sufficient available labor. So far, and notwithstanding the success, to a limited extent, of cotton growing in India, Egypt, the Egyptian Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda and other sub-tropical regions, the American monopoly has been unchallenged, but now another factor has been introduced,

nate matters could only be satisfactorily settled by the creation of some central authority, and the same objections were raised to this as were offered to the extension of the city.

The necessity of co-ordination finally led in July, 1911, to the creation by special act of a new corporation empowered to deal with common affairs while protecting the independent status of the communities surrounding Berlin. This involved no new departure in Prussian law, since unions of local corporations for specific purposes had been sanctioned so far back as 1891 in some provinces. The act of 1911, however, applied the precedent on a greater scale, since it created a new public corporation, or union of Berlin, with the sixteen communities, comprising Greater Berlin, and conferred on it full jurisdiction on three classes of matters deemed most essential—streets, ways, building undertakings and open areas for parks, playgrounds and breathing spaces. This new council is composed of one hundred representatives of the constituent corporations under the chairmanship of the first mayor of Berlin, but a special provision ensures against the City of Berlin possessing an actual majority of the membership. The new organization will have extensive powers of supervision in the general interest, and may ultimately lead to complete incorporation of the whole area in one municipality. But whether or not this happens, the new corporation provides a method of providing for future extensions of the central city on lines that will best conduce to the general interest.

BRITAIN AND FOOD IMPORTS.

Senator Borah of Idaho really made the astonishing statement regarding the grain production of Great Britain, he was wildly at sea. He is credited with saying that at the present time England had only 38,000 acres in wheat and 86,000 acres in barley. It really appears incredible that any public man occupying the responsible position of Senator Borah should commit himself to assertions so far removed from actual circumstances.

Great Britain's production of grain is by no means the negligible quantity that would result from the senator's figures. Britain, of course, is a free trade market and the centre of international exchange fixes prices for the world, but her own production has a good deal of weight in the matter of prices. In 1911, the last year for which we have statistics, its acreage under wheat was 1,952,422 acres, yielding 64,313,452 bushels and under barley 1,753,842 acres, yielding 57,938,217 bushels. The acreage under oats for the same year was 4,071,927 acres, representing not less than 162,938,333 bushels of oats, while the yield of wheat and peas was respectively 7,741,537 and 3,705,572 bushels.

It is no doubt true of the United Kingdom that the acreage of arable land has diminished while the acreage of grass and pasture has increased. But that only means that the British farmer finds in some cases that it is more profitable to produce milk and meat than grain. As the United Kingdom does not, as matter of fact, produce enough, indeed cannot produce enough, under existing conditions, either in grain or in meat, to provide for its population, it does appear immaterial which of these bulk commodities it produces. The British farmer, like everyone else, will develop that side of his business which is most profitable.

CARE OF INFANTS.

Dr. Hastings' July health bulletin, which was issued a few days ago, should be in the hands of all who have to do with children in the city's homes. The number is described as a children's number, and tells people what they can do to make a baby comfortable and healthy in the hot weather.

Most of the good advice has to do with simple clothing and not too much of it. Over dressing and over feeding add to the infant mortality. And so many people forget that the baby wants a drink of water sometimes and they can't think of nothing but feeding it, the bulletin calls attention to this oversight. Another simple matter which requires emphasis is the necessity for keeping the baby's mouth clean.

Open spaces to crawl in, sand to play in, fresh air, ventilation and freedom for exercise are all elements of health in the hot weather season. A whole page is devoted to the treatment and care of milk as a diet for babies.

Attention is called to the "Baby Welfare Stations" at 67 Bellevue Place, 84 West Gerrard street, 467 West Adelaide, corner Queen and River streets, 18 Seaton street, corner Gerrard and Rhodes avenue, and corner of Tecumseh and Richmond streets. These are all under the supervision of the department of health. There is still enough hot weather before us to make it worth while for those in charge of infants to secure the bulletin of the department on this subject.

A PERENNIAL COTTON PLANT.

Hitherto the southern states of the neighboring republic had a practical monopoly in cotton production. This has been due to the suitability of soil and climate, and the presence of sufficient available labor. So far, and notwithstanding the success, to a limited extent, of cotton growing in India, Egypt, the Egyptian Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda and other sub-tropical regions, the American monopoly has been unchallenged, but now another factor has been introduced,

which, if it proves to be all that is claimed, will radically alter the whole situation as regards cotton production. Herr Woldemar Schultze of Germany claims to have discovered and patented a process of cultivation which will make the cotton plant perennial and obviate the necessity of sowing and cultivating the plants year by year. Not only this, but he claims that the production of more constant and reliable crops will be assured, and that the price will be thus freed from the injurious effects of extravagant speculation. These are of themselves very considerable gains, but he also maintains that the great reduction in the cost of labor will enable cotton to be grown in districts where its cultivation has been unprofitable.

In this connection it is of interest to note that Herr Schultze attributes the deterioration of the Egyptian cotton to the heightening of the Assouan Dam. The point he makes is one which must have occurred to all those who were aware of Egyptian conditions. The annual overflow of the Nile was of inestimable value, because it annually renewed the soil of Egypt by means of the soil deposit left by the flood. But the dam creates a great settling basin, and its water, when liberated, is no longer charged to the same extent with the fertilizing sediment. But mechanical means may remove that difficulty, while securing for Egypt the valuable boon of freedom from Nile failures.

The sessions of the grand lodge were then commenced. The reports presented were of a most encouraging nature, showing the order was advancing. During the year four new lodges were instituted. The membership at present is 51,500. The grand master, in his address, stated that while the mortality was somewhat greater than in previous years, \$27,404.28 having been paid on this account during the year 1917, yet he was pleased to report that a remaining balance of \$122,207.28 was placed to the credit of the reserve fund, making the total of this fund \$1,122,307.28.

PROMINENT MEN WERE AUTHORS OF OUTRAGE

Drunk at the Time, They Now Offer to Make Restitution.

SARNIA, Aug. 14.—(Special).—The four men who robbed and ransacked the home of Mrs. George at the Sarnia Indian Reservation two days ago are known to be prominent residents of Port Huron, so well known that every precaution is being made to keep their names from the public.

The men, thru their attorney in Port Huron, will make a settlement with Mrs. George for the damage done. The four Port Huronians were under the influence of liquor at the time and ran in at the reservation in their gasoline launch.

TWO PRISONERS ESCAPE FROM JAIL

Working in Yard of Chatham Jail, Make a Clear Get-away.

CHATHAM, Aug. 14.—(Special).—Two prisoners named Steadman and Labadie, the latter a mere youth, escaped from the county jail yesterday afternoon. Altho the search for them has been kept up ever since they are still at large. It is supposed that they are hiding in the outskirts of the city.

Both prisoners were doing time for theft. Steadman having been sentenced from South Buxton and Labadie from Wallaceburg. Warder Davidson had them working in the yard when they ran away. They were followed some distance but eluded their pursuers.

BURNING GASOLINE DID NOT EXPLODE

Box Car Filled With Inflammables Causes Fire at Sarnia.

SARNIA, Aug. 14.—(Special).—Shortly after being shunted outside of the gates of the Imperial Oil Works here early this morning a large box car filled with barrels of gasoline, kerosene and other inflammables burst into flames and was utterly destroyed along with much track and other property in the Pere Marquette yards here.

The firemen were called and fought the fierce flames for four hours before they were subdued. Had the fire happened inside the plant it would be hard to estimate the damage that would have resulted. Fortunately the men fighting the fire the gasoline did not explode.

INDIAN CARRIED A LIFE PRESERVER

SARNIA, Aug. 14.—(Special).—McKay Antonio, an Indian, halting from St. Thomas, is in jail in Port Huron and will stay there until Aug. 20, or until he pays a fine of \$100 which was imposed on him for carrying a heavy black-jack. He was arrested for stealing a watch, but this case was dropped.

EMPLOYEES FIRE PATROL

Ald. Rawlinson regards the activities of firebugs as justifying the chief of police engaging enough men to give a night patrol service that will assure full protection against incendiarism. The alderman has employed men at his own expense to guard his buildings, and he states that other owners of much valuable property have taken similar action.

QUEENSTON BOYS COURTED DEATH

Foolhardy Attempt to Row Up Niagara River Nearly Cost Them Their Lives.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y., Aug. 14.—(Special).—Arved Johnson and Pitt Williams, two Queenston boys, had a narrow escape from drowning in the lower river this afternoon while attempting to make a record for farthest upstream from Queenston bridge in a rowboat. By taking advantage of currents they succeeded in reaching a point about two miles above Lewiston on the American side, and when they rounded a point to land, their boat was caught in a strong current and they were carried out to midstream. At this point the water is very rough and the boat came near upsetting several times. They floated around in eddy currents for half an hour before the boat started down stream. Both were frightened by their experience, but they are satisfied the game was worth the candle, for they succeeded in accomplishing something that no other man so far as is known has done.

OPDFELLOWS' GRAND LODGE ASSEMBLED

Annual Reports Show That Order Has Made Gratifying Increase in Past Year.

FUNDS IN GOOD SHAPE

Reserve Fund for Benefit Account Now Amounts to Over a Million.

BELLEVILLE, Aug. 14.—(Special).—The Grand Lodge of the I. O. O. F. of Ontario opened at 9 o'clock on Thursday morning, at the city hall, which was taxed to its utmost to accommodate the representatives. Cantons from Toronto and Kingston formed a guard of honor and escorted the grand officers to the place of meeting. Previous to the grand lodge going into session an open meeting was held, at which addresses of welcome were given by Mayor Willis on behalf of the city, by Grand Warden-elect L. B. Cooper, on behalf of the subordinate lodges, and by Grenadier Parke on behalf of the Patriarch branch. To these addresses Grand Master Evanston responded in a most appropriate manner.

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WILL MAKE TEST OF HYDRANTS TODAY

Low Pressure at Balmuto St. Fire Subject of Controller's Enquiry.

FIRE CHIEF TESTIFIES

Ald. Burgess Satisfied That Charges of Carelessness Were Proved.

"I am satisfied with the explanations given to all of my charges of inefficiency of fire protection, except that one which claims that the fire alarm system on the lower river cannot be operated in cold weather, as the batteries are housed in sheds," Ald. Burgess declared at the opening of the enquiry yesterday by the board of control.

The chief electrician explained that a new system of batteries has been installed. Commissioner Harris asked permission to state that the pressure at the Balmuto street fire was normal. He said that the trouble must have been at the hydrant, from which three streams were being taken.

"It is a four-way hydrant and there are valves for each opening," said Commissioner Harris. "It is awkward to open the hydrant fully, and in the rush it may not have been opened fully. This would account for duplicating the situation and having a test."

"Do you wish the test?" Mayor Hocken asked Ald. Burgess. "It looks like a fair proposition," the alderman replied.

It was decided to have the test at 11 o'clock this morning. The first alarm of the Balmuto street fire was sent in at 2:11 and the second alarm was sent in at 2:15. The fire was extinguished at 2:50. Controller McCarthy remarked, "And it was a bad fire." Ald. Burgess added,

"At 2:24 there was all the help needed then," Chief Thompson explained. "Soon afterwards one of the officers considered more help might be needed and he sent in the general alarm."

"The delay in sending in the general alarm did not cause a greater loss of property, did it?" Mayor Hocken enquired.

"No," Chief Thompson replied. Controller McCarthy brought out the fact that Deputy Chief Noble had to depend upon a horse and buggy or the fire wagon for going to the fire, altho covering the centre of the city. I have pleaded in vain for two years for a motor automobile for the deputy chief," Chief Thompson stated.

"There should be some channels cut at the island lagoons for short cuts for the fire tug," Controller O'Neill said.

"Give us a prompt report on that," Mayor Hocken said to Commissioner Harris.

Alderman Did His Duty. "We appreciate much your bringing on this enquiry," Mayor Hocken said to Ald. Burgess.

"I have established reason for the charges," Ald. Burgess said, "and am satisfied with the explanations." "Is that all?" Chief Thompson asked.

"Yes," Mayor Hocken answered. That ended the enquiry.

CAPT. GOODWIN'S STATEMENT.

Capt. Goodwin, referring last night to certain statements made during the fire department investigation, said that no one could charge him with ever having failed to answer a call to a fire since he has been entrusted with the handling of the fire tug.

KENT APPLE CROP WILL BE SCARCE

CHATHAM, Aug. 14.—(Special).—Present indications are that the apple crop in Kent county will be about half a yield this year. Storms have done great damage to the fruit. Where spraying has been general the yield will be good.

HARBOR WORK IS BEING HELD UP

SARNIA, Aug. 14.—(Special).—The harbor improvements here are being held up at the present time on account of the town councilors not being favorable to dredging in the bay, which is just above the water works intake pipe. The government set aside \$50,000 last year to start the improvements.

The Philosopher of Folly

HOLIDAY REVERIES.

'Tis sweet to rest by the water's marge, where the air is full of the pine's perfume, where the sky is clean and the world seems large, where you feel for once you have elbow-room—but 'tis sad while stretched 'neath the mistle trees, with the tolling town and its cares afar to have some blithering bumble-bee come anooing round to see who you are. 'Tis sweet to roam thru the forest dim in the mystic charm of the twilight hour when the breezes murmur a vesper hymn and you feel the touch of a healing power—but 'tis sad when taking a twilight stroll in the calm and hush of the stately pines to find the stealers will eat you whole if you don't speed up your summer nines. 'Tis sweet to climb to a rocky height where a splendid vision awaits your eyes of 'virgin lakelands with lakes delight in the golden glow of the August skies—but 'tis sad to find when you journey back from the sun-crowned hills to the lower lands that the path was full of Three-Fingered Jack and the stuff has taken to both your hands. There is sad and sweet in a thousand ways, as I've tried to show in this artless poem, but the saddest thing about holidays is the packing up and the coming home.

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At Osgoode Hall

Single Court.

Before Meredith, C.J.O.

Downey v. Burney—Motion to commit. No one appearing, case struck out.

Russell v. Clarkson—Motion for an injunction. Hart for plaintiff. No one for defendant. Stands until first court day after vacation; injunction granted made.

Niagara Navigation Co. v. Provincial Motors—Motion to continue injunction. Eric Armour for plaintiff. No one for defendants. Injunction continued until trial.

Oxander v. Barnim—Motion to set aside order for receiver; motion has been granted. Judge of this court by local judge at Woodstock. Clapham and W. C. Brown (Tillsonburg) for defendant. C. A. Masten, K.C., for plaintiff. Held, local judge had no power to refer motion and this court no power to entertain, therefore no order made.

Alexander v. Alexander—Motion to continue injunction. A. Ogden for plaintiff. On consent injunction stands sine die pending settlement.

Tucker v. Titus—Motion to set aside notice of sale given under power in mortgage. Eric Armour for plaintiff. A. Abbott (Trenton) for defendant. Defendant undertakes to pay the sale shall take place for ten days. Held that the court had no jurisdiction and no order made.

Titus v. Tucker—Motion to set aside order of local judge and writ of certiorari. A. Ogden for plaintiff. On consent injunction stands sine die pending settlement.

Dukula v. P. R. Co.—Motion to confirm settlement of action agreed to between parties. J. T. White for plaintiff. C. C. Cattnach for official guardian. Livingston (McMurchy &