

# The Municipal World

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A. W. CAMPBELL, C. E.      K. W. MCKAY, EDITOR  
J. M. GLENN, K. C., LL. B.      HORACE F. JELL  
Associate Editors.

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OFFICES—334 Talbot Street, St. Thomas. Phone 189.

ADDRESS all communications to THE MUNICIPAL WORLD, LIMITED,  
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At a meeting of the Executive of the Ontario Municipal Association in February, the federation of Provincial Associations of the Dominion was considered. The conclusions arrived at were that a federation was desirable, and that the presidents and vice-presidents of the Provincial Associations should form the Executive of the Federation. It was thought that a well organized Provincial Association was better able to look after its interests at Ottawa, as occasion might require, and that an independent organization such as the Union of Canadian Municipalities was now unnecessary. President ELLIS was delegated to present these views at a meeting held on the 14th March at Ottawa. Among those present were Mayor COATSWORTH, Toronto, president, and W. D. LIGHTHALL, secretary of the Canadian Union; Mayor McILRAITH, Halifax, president for Nova Scotia, and President ELLIS of the Ontario Association. This meeting, we understand, favored the formation of an association in which the Provincial Associations and the larger cities of Canada would be entitled to representation; the Provincial Associations to contribute 25% of their annual revenue to the Central organization, thus providing for the continuance of the Union of Canadian Municipalities and the *Canadian Municipal Journal* which has been supported in part by that organization.

The *Western Municipal News*, published at Winnipeg, says: "The question of membership in the Canadian Union of Municipalities is not altogether settled in the minds of municipal men. The Provincial Unions fill requirements, and it would seem that there is very little call for a Dominion Association. Funds that are spent in supporting the Union of Canadian Municipalities could be used to better advantage provincially and in the isolated cases where Dominion legislation affects the municipalities the heads of the several Provincial Unions could be delegated to Ottawa."

The whole question will have to be considered at the annual meetings of the various Provincial Associations and the Union of Canadian Municipalities which meets at Fort William this year.

Some of the amendments to the municipal law introduced by the Provincial Association were considered by the Municipal Committee of the Legislature on the 19th March. Among the members of the Executive present to support their views were President ELLIS, of Ottawa; D. M. McINTYRE, of Kingston; W. C. MIKEL, of Belleville; Mayor BOWLBY, Brantford; Solicitor CHISHOLM and Controller HUBBARD, Toronto, and Secretary MCKAY.

The principal discussion was in reference to section 606. Some members were opposed to any change, but a large majority of the committee favored the addition of a proviso in the following words: "Provided that the corporation shall not be civilly responsible for such damages unless, before such damages were sustained, express notice, verbal or written, of the default causing such damages has been given to the mayor, warden, reeve or other head of the corporation or to the clerk thereof or to a member of the municipal council of the corporation or to the engineer, overseer of highways, road surveyor, commissioner or other highway officer of the corporation having jurisdiction over the road, street, bridge or highway upon or in respect of which such default occurred." This will be reported to the Legislature.

Another amendment of general interest was one to enable councils to change the date of municipal elections. It was thought that the Province was hardly ready for this, and that the matter should be held over until the next session. The consensus of opinion was that nominations should be on the first Monday and elections the second Monday of December. Mr. PRESTON, of Brantford, who had charge of the Bill, explained that he had investigated the practice in other Provinces and found that nowhere except in Ontario were the municipal elections allowed to interfere with the Christmas holiday season. In England the election of councillors takes place on November 1st, and for mayor and aldermen on the 9th; in New Brunswick, the last Tuesday in October, in Nova Scotia the third Tuesday in November, Manitoba the third Tuesday in November, in British Columbia the council fixes the date, and in the new Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta elections are held on the first Monday in December. This is a live question every year. Pressure of business is the excuse usually offered by those who would make desirable municipal candidates.

The *Newmarket Era*, in referring to the matter, summed up the situation a short time ago as follows.

"It is contended that a municipal campaign, for two or three weeks before Christmas, interferes with the demands and pleasures of the holiday season, resulting in apathy in regard to municipal affairs. By changing the date to third week in January, no particular interests would suffer, and the new councils could enter upon their duties one week later. But people have varied notions on this subject—Toronto, for instance, asked the Legislature to make New Year's day its date for polling. Possibly a majority in that city may like that day, but it must sadly interfere with the festive pleasures of many who take advantage of the holiday to visit friends in other places, but who dislike to be deprived of taking part in the municipal election all the same. If a change is to be made at all, we would favor nomination on the first Monday in December and polling one week later, the elections would then be all over before making preparations for Christmas. Then let the new councillors take office the second week in January."