

A great deal has been written as to the best means to adopt to effect a reduction of the number of members of county councillors, so that it will be representative. Mr. McEvoy, in his essay on the Ontario township, refers to this question as follows: "In order to bring the observation of county business home to the electors, it would be well to elect a county council independent of the township council. Let the electors of each municipality nominate candidates for county councillors at their township nominations, the county clerk to prepare ballots containing the names of all the candidates nominated throughout the county, and send whatever number of these may be needed to each township clerk before election day." By this means every member would represent, not any particular township, but the whole county. The members would be as likely to do justice between the several townships as those chosen on the present plan. One objection to the present system is that villages are increasing, and that village and town representatives almost outnumber township representatives in some counties. There is also an objection, owing to the fact that many villages which, when incorporated, had attained a sufficient population, would not now fulfil the requirements necessary for incorporation.

The Act makes no provision whereby a village becomes part of the municipality from which it was first taken. The result is that very many village representatives in our county council represent constituencies; half a dozen of which would not furnish the qualification necessary for a deputy-reeve in townships. The proportion as to population, equalized value, or number of voters shows that this is not an equitable arrangement. There is an objection to raising the number of voters necessary for a deputy-reeve in townships above 500; as the inequality of representation would then be greater than at present.

The controlling body must be composed of men of experience if we are to have an economical adjustment of public expenditure; and we can only obtain this by reducing the number of members of the county council. How small they would be we are not prepared to say, but in no county should the county council be composed of more than nine members, and as a plan of election we would suggest the following as being more in accordance with our representative system than the present method: Divide each county into districts, composed of polling subdivisions or of local municipalities; so that each district will contain about the same number of voters; and elect three district councillors for each independent of the local councils; for a term of three years, to retire in rotation. If this plan is adopted we would have an experienced body of men to control county business; they would be independent of the township councils, and would not be influenced by local considerations.

#### Norfolk Clerks' Association—Inaugural Meeting.

The municipal clerks of Norfolk county met at Simcoe on Wednesday, January 20th, for the purpose of forming a county association. The following being all of the clerks in the county, were present: John Phelan, M. D., Walsingham Centre; S. Cunningham, Waterford; John Machon, Charlotteville; Jas. Boyd, Houghton; Jas. Ryan, Port Rowan; R. Chrysler, Delhi; John Burnett, Middleton; F. Bowlby, Woodhouse; Capt. Green, Windham; N. C. Ford, Simcoe. A. McFarlane, president, and W. Fairley, secretary, of Oxford County Association, were also present to assist their brother clerks in completing their organization. Dr. Phelan was appointed chairman and Jas. Ryan secretary. In his opening remarks, the chairman stated that about twenty years ago a similar meeting of clerks was held at Simcoe for the purpose of forming an association, but for various reasons its purpose was not accomplished. Since that time many associations of public officers, including division court clerks, constables, and others, have been formed, and have proved to be an assistance and benefit to their members in the performance of their official duties. He hoped that this meeting would result in the formation of a permanent association of the clerks of Norfolk county, and concluded by reading a letter from the secretary of Oxford County Association, giving a detailed account of the formation and working of that association.

At this juncture a very palpable illustration of the usefulness of these meetings occurred. The several clerks in the county are issuers of auctioneers' and pedlars' licenses, valid throughout the county, and unless a clerk, when he issues a license, will at once notify the county inspector, that officer may be put to needless trouble at times.

The county inspector addressed the meeting, and suggested that some plan be adopted to get over the difficulty mentioned.

After discussion, the meeting decided to ask the county council to instruct the county clerk to keep a register of licenses, each clerk to notify him when he issues a license, the inspector to get information required from the register. If it was not for the clerks' meeting, the inspector would have had a good deal of trouble to secure uniformity in the returns.

President McFarlane, of Oxford, addressed the meeting, and explained the benefits derived from their association.

A motion was carried, thanking the secretary of Oxford association for his letter.

On motion of Mr. Boyd, seconded by Mr. Cunningham, it was resolved to proceed with the formation of an association of the municipal clerks of Norfolk county.

THE MUNICIPAL WORLD then became the subject of discussion. Every clerk

present appeared to be a reader and admirer of that publication. The blank forms supplied are largely used by the clerks in the county. At the conclusion of the discussion a motion was passed, expressing the opinion that all municipal clerks should support THE MUNICIPAL WORLD by becoming subscribers, and by making use of its columns for the exchange of information relating to their duties and office; and that in the purchasing of municipal blanks, when the matter is in the discretion of the clerk, he should patronize THE MUNICIPAL WORLD Publishing House.

On motion of Mr. Bowlby, seconded by Capt. Green, Messrs. Phelan, Cunningham and Boyd were appointed a delegation to wait upon the county council, then in session, to lay before that body the letter from the secretary of Oxford County Association, and ascertain the opinion of council in reference to assisting a similar association for the county of Norfolk.

The delegation, on returning to the meeting, reported that the county council was favorable to the formation of a clerks' association, and had promised to give the question of financial aid their serious consideration.

The following officers of the association were appointed: S. Cunningham, Waterford, president; F. Bowlby, Simcoe, vice-president, and Jas. Ryan, of Port Rowan, secretary.

The association then adjourned, to meet again at Simcoe on Tuesday in the week following the Simcoe Fair, at 10 a. m.

The interest taken in this, the inaugural meeting of the Norfolk Clerks' Association, augurs well for the permanency and future usefulness of that organization, and should the county council do its duty by granting some financial aid towards holding an annual meeting, there is no doubt that the expenditure will be more than repaid by the benefit the municipalities will derive from the existence of the association.

#### One More Trial.

"Josiar," said Mrs. Cornstossel, "with all yer work an' worry and stayin' up o' nights ye didn't carry the country fur our party."

"That's what I didn't," was the melancholy reply.

"Ye didn't carry the state, neither."

"No."

"Ye didn't carry the township."

"I shorely didn't."

"Well, Josiar, a wife's confidence never fails. I still believe in yer."

"Thet's downright kind c' you, Mandy."

"Ye're carryin' capacity may not be whut I thort it was, but I'll take one more chance on it. 'Spose ye git out o' the rockin' chair fur ten minutes an' try yer han' at carryin' a load o' wood."—Washington Star.