

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT

TO MUNICIPAL OFFICERS.

The CONTRACT RECORD is desirous of publishing, as far as possible, advance information regarding projected works of construction in all parts of Canada, such as sewerage and waterworks systems, railways, street pavements, public and private buildings, etc. Municipal officers would confer a favor upon the publisher by placing at our disposal particulars of such undertakings which are likely to be carried out in their vicinity, giving the name of the promoter, character of the work, and probable cost. Any information thus furnished will be greatly appreciated.

IMPROVED ROADS.

It will interest those who are working for the improvement of country roads in Canada, to learn that a member of the New York State Senate, Mr. Guy, has introduced a good roads bill, which, if carried, will virtually carry out a recommendation made by David B. Hill, when Governor. This measure aims to provide for the construction of an improved highway across each county of the State, to follow the line of the principal market highway in the county, and to be built at State expense under the direction of the State Engineer and Surveyor. Governor Hill favored the construction of two highways in each county, running in opposite directions, but one is better than none. These improved highways are to be of macadam, eighteen feet in width and made of good material, that they may serve as object lessons in roadbuilding, and lead the people of the communities traversed by them to improve future cross-roads for themselves. The selection of highways by the supervisors must be approved by the State Engineer and Surveyor. He is to let the contracts to the lowest bidders and supervise the work.

A yearly appropriation of \$500,000 until the work is finished is proposed by the bill. The maximum price fixed is \$3,000 a mile for the new roads. The counties will only be called upon to pay for the surveys and for building and repairing any large bridges that may be necessary. The highways are to be maintained by the counties. No attempt is made to tax the owners of abutting property. Senator Guy assumes that the farmers of New York State cannot be expected to pay taxes for the building of improved roads, which are quite as great an advantage to the cities and market towns where the farmers sell their produce as to the farmers themselves. The senator criticizes the wheelmen who have of late taken the lead in the good roads movement, and who have accomplished nothing because they have insisted on compelling the farmers

to bear too great a share in the expense of roadbuilding. Hence the farmers have defeated the cyclists' bills. It may well be argued, says the Buffalo Courier, in commenting on the proposal, that the wishes of the bicyclists are secondary to the needs of the people who use the roads to take their products to market. But, in the existing agricultural depression, farmers cannot build these roads for themselves. It is as proper for the State to expend a few millions to build good roads for the farmers as it is to spend many millions in improving the canals for the benefit of the cities.

LEGAL.

The definition of what constitutes a reasonable state of repair of roadways, as embodied in the decision just rendered by Chief Justice Armour and Judge Street, in the case of *Foley v. Township of East Flamborough*, will be read with interest by municipal representatives and officials. The decision states that the word "repair," as used in the municipality act, has been held to be a relative term. If the particular road is kept in such a reasonable state of repair that those requiring to use it may, under ordinary care, pass to and fro upon it in safety, the requirement of the law is satisfied. A road need not be kept in such a state of repair as to guard against injury caused by runaway horses, i.e., horses whose riders or drivers have entirely lost control of them, either in spite of ordinary care or by reason of the want of it. But for *Sherwood v. Hamilton*, 37 V. C. R., 410, it should be held that in this case the running away of the horses and their ceasing to be under control was the proximate cause of the injury. In this case, assuming the facts to be that the driver, in spite of ordinary care on his part, lost control of his horses, and that, they running away, the injury was caused by their running the vehicle against the stump in the highway, the plaintiffs cannot recover, because, notwithstanding the stump, the road was in a reasonable state of repair for ordinary travel.

The annual report of the Superintendent of Waterworks, New Westminster, B. C., says: "The extension of the meter system has had a good effect in reducing considerably the careless waste of water in many places. In some cases where meters were placed last summer, the consumption has been reduced by about two-thirds, and in

some cases even more; showing the carelessness with which the water was being handled. The total quantity of water metered for all purposes during the year was 4,222,159 cubic feet. The quantity metered at manufacturers' rates was 2,511,960 cubic feet, the net revenue from the same being \$1,004.78. The same quantity charged at schedule rates would net \$2,709.35, showing a loss to the Water Department of \$1,704.57.

Mr. L. O. David, City Clerk of Montreal, has been offered, and has declined, the position of Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories, rendered vacant by the withdrawal of ex-Lieutenant-Governor Mackintosh. The offer was most flattering to Mr. David, who, it is well known, is a life-long friend of the Premier, and for 30 years rendered yeoman service to the Liberal party.

Road rollers for winter use are employed in northern New England to compact the snow so as to make the highways passable. Working drawings for such an apparatus for ordinary roads, contributed to the "L. A. W. Bulletin" by Mr. J. W. Votey, of Burlington, Vt., show that it consists of a pair of wooden drums each 5 feet long and 5 feet 9 inches in outside diameter, mounted on a wooden frame like that of a horse roller. The heads of the drums are made of two-inch plank, and the rolling surfaces of 2¼-inch beveled staves about 3.5 inches wide, which are spiked to the heads and then encircled by bands of iron over the heads of the spikes. The frame has an iron scraper 3 inches wide at the back, to keep snow off the drums. The heads are provided with cast-iron boxes through which a 2¼-inch iron rod is run for a shaft. Mr. Votey gives the following hints for using this appliance: "To relieve the horses of the weight of the frame on hilly roads, the seat should be well back or a counterweight added in the rear; or a still better arrangement is to add a rear platform supported by a trailing shed, and then hinge the pole or tongue at the front. Four or six horses are needed to handle this roller, depending upon the grade of the road and the depth of snow. It is important that the use of such a roller commence with the first storm of the season and be continued as often as necessary through the winter. In the case of very heavy storms, the roller should be sent over the roads at intervals during the storm."

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