

### Wards Abolished in Townships, Villages and Towns Under 5,000 Population.

The amendments to the Municipal Act passed at last session, sections 3 and 4 of chapter 23, 61 Vic., refer to election of township and village councils. These sections contain but few words, and their importance cannot be understood until sections 72 and 73 of chap. 223, R. S. O., are referred to and read with the amendments. Section 73 reads as follows:

#### TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGES.

The council of every township shall consist of one reeve, who shall be the head thereof, and four councillors who shall be elected by a general vote.

And precisely the same words apply to villages under section 72:

Every village is to have its reeve, and the election of its four councillors is to be by "a general vote"—which means no wards.

#### TOWNS.

The council of every town having a population of not more than 5000 by the last Canadian census, shall consist of a mayor, who shall be the head thereof, and of six councillors to be elected by a general vote. 61 Vic., chap. 23, section 2.

The council of any town having a population of more than 5,000, and of any city having a population of 15,000 or less, may by a by-law provide that the council of such town or city shall be composed of a mayor and of one alderman for each 1,000 of population, to be elected by general vote; but such by-law must be submitted to a vote of the electors before it can come into force. 61 Vic., chap. 23, section 2.

In Peterboro and Chatham the rate-payers have already decided to abolish the ward system, and other towns and cities are considering the matter. This system has been the great bane of municipal government in the past. There is no inducement to the ward member to interest himself in the general affairs of his municipality. The idea of a council elected irrespective of ward divisions is the correct one. It enlarges the constituency of the councillor and calls for a wider application of his influence.

The *Citizen and Country*, published in Toronto, in a recent issue refers to this question and states:

Whilst the abolition of the wards is a large step towards a reasonable and proper system of voting, yet it is only a step. Those who earnestly desire really good municipal government will be bitterly disappointed if they rely on the mere abolition of the wards to bring about that result.

The article then recommends the Hare system of voting as a desirable improvement. We may have occasion to refer to this in some future issue if a change in our present voting laws is found to be desirable.

In abolishing wards the Legislature have taken a wise course, and the result will be better municipal government. A

further improvement would be to extend the term for which municipal councillors are elected. Under the present system councillors do not have an opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with their duties as municipal officers, which is necessary to the proper performance of the same in an economical manner. This could easily be remedied by election for a term of years. School trustees are kept in office for three years, and retire in rotation, the result being that experienced men always form the majority. In townships and villages if a reeve and one councillor were elected each year, the councillors retiring in rotation, experienced men would always be found at the council board. Municipal office would then be accepted by some of our most capable citizens who object to the necessity for annual re-election. A new member would have men of experience to advise him, and an economical management of every department of the municipal service would be the result.

Street pavements need to be something more than hard and durable. They should be smooth, noiseless and easily cleaned and repaired.

Water should not be allowed to stand along the roadside. Ditches should be kept clear and open in order to carry it off quickly, as it is liable otherwise to find its way under the roadbed.

#### He Was a Heavyweight.

A certain official of a Georgia county interviewed one of his colored constituents and solicited his vote and influence.

"Well, boss," said the voter, "you knows enough ter know dat wotes mean money, en I can't get dem niggers ter vote fer you, des so dry."

"I recognize that fact," replied the official, "and am willing to come to time. I have only \$9 to my name, but here's the money."

The voter took it, rattled the silver in his pocket, but still seemed to hesitate.

"What's the matter now?" inquired the official.

"Well, boss, ter tell de truth, I doan think I kin 'lect you fer dis much. Hit'll take \$9 75 ter 'lect a man like you.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

#### Looking into the Future.

"Yes," said the man who had been looking at some apartments in the big building, "it's very nice, but I don't see how I can take the place."

"What's the matter?" asked the janitor.

"I observe by your printed rules that you don't keep the elevator running all night, and I must say I don't like the idea of walking up and down five or six flights of stairs every time my wife wants to know whether a burglar is trying to get into the cellar."—*Washington Star.*

#### Good Old Times.

"Going to County Council is not what it used to be," sorrowfully remarked one of the members who returned from the June session on Saturday.

"How is that?" remarked *The Dominion.*

"Why there is only fourteen of us there now and half of them go home every night. Those that remain are divided between the hotels, and Chatham is a pretty dull place in the evenings. In the old days when the members numbered from thirty to thirty-six we used to divide up principally between two hotels, and in the evenings the reading-rooms and the corridors were always filled with councillors, friends and visitors discussing council matters, county and general politics. Many old hot political arguments occurred, interrupted only when we adjourned to the bar for a cigar or a little something else.

"Yes, most of the old timers took a glass, but scarcely ever too much. They drank or took a smoke merely to be sociable, but were always ready for business either at the council board or on committee. The new men as a rule are quieter and more retiring—the old-timers had more of the 'hail fellow,' jovial style about them, ready with joke, song or story, as to the occasion seemed fit. How we did enjoy the occasional tilts between one and another, especially about election time. Kent County Council has contained a great deal of good timber, many of its members fit to take a place either at Toronto or Ottawa. The present men are clever enough and do the business all right, but somehow, they are not like the old fellows who used to meet three times a year at Chatham, before the change in the law."—*Ridgetown Dominion.*

#### A Lady's Vote.

There is generally a little humor to be got out of an election, wherever held, and the London county council election recently was no exception. At a West End polling-station a lady voter entered and requested to be instructed how to vote. "Make a cross opposite the names you wish to vote for," said the polling clerk; "but you must not vote for more than two." "Which two shall I vote for?" she inquired. "Ah," replied the clerk, "as to that I must not advise you." "Well, then, I shall vote for the first two names." So she gave one vote to a Progressive and another to a Moderate, and went away satisfied.—*Glasgow Herald.*

#### Publications Received.

*Voters' List, 1898, Village of Exeter.*

*Voters' List, 1898, Village of Woodville.*

*Voters' List, 1898, Village of Port Colborne.*

*Voters' List, 1898, Village of Streetsville.*

*Voters' List, 1898, Township of Bruce.*

*Voters' List, 1898, Township of Woolwich.*