

The Municipal World

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ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO, JULY 2, 1904.

Mr. James Menzies, treasurer of the County of Halton, died last month.

Mr. W. J. Warner, clerk of the Township of Caistor, died recently, and has been succeeded by Mr. A. Shields.

A by-law authorizing a loan of \$30,000 to T. Aldred, to enable him to extend the capacity of his foundry, was recently carried by the property owners of Glencoe by a vote of 192 for to 12 against.

A by-law guaranteeing the bonds for \$100,000 of the Church & Watt Company for twenty years, and exempting them from taxes, was carried recently in St. Marys with about thirty votes to spare.

Municipal cash books authorized by the Provincial Auditor will not be available for some time. The Brown Bros., Limited, of Toronto, the only firm authorized to make them, had their premises and stock destroyed in the Toronto fire.

The Toronto General Hospital has sent out notices to the different municipalities in the Province that they will receive patients into the Hospital from any municipality, at the rate of fifty cents per day. Chronic cases, cases of senile debility, insane persons, or incurables are not admitted.

In the article on "Municipal Undertakings in Guelph" on page 139 of our issue for June last, an error occurred at the end of the first paragraph under the heading "Electric Railway." It should have read "Regular tickets are sold at the rate of six for 25c.; limited or workmen's tickets, eight for 25c."

We are in receipt of a pamphlet prepared by His Honor Judge Ardagh, County Judge of the County of Simcoe, containing complete instructions as to the preparation and revision of their voters' lists, to all the municipal clerks in the county. The municipal officials within his jurisdiction should, and no doubt will, fully appreciate His Honor's efforts to render the discharge of their duties in this regard less laborious, and ably second his endeavors to accomplish uniformity and perfection in the voters' lists throughout the county.

COUNTY HOUSES OF INDUSTRY AND REFUGE FOR THE POOR.

In 1869 the first County House of Refuge for the poor was instituted by the county council of Waterloo. Two-thirds of the counties now have similar institutions and others are considering the question with a view to complying with the provisions of the Act of 1903, which requires counties or unions of counties, before the first of January, 1906, to erect or establish Houses of Refuge.

The Provincial Government contributes one-fourth of the amount actually expended for land and buildings, but not in any case more than \$4,000. In order to obtain the grant the farms must be of at least forty-five acres in extent, and the building plan must be submitted to the Inspector of Prisons and Public Charities for his approval. Houses of Industry are by statute under control of the county council, but in practice a special committee and an inspector are appointed for the purpose. The immediate supervision is left to a resident keeper and a matron, also appointed by the county council, and a consulting physician, who is retained at an annual salary. The typical House of Industry is a farm of from forty-five to one hundred and twenty-five acres, situated within easy reach of a town. The building is, as a rule, a single structure, two or three stories high, built to accommodate from 80 to 100 inmates. Special attention has latterly been given to the complete classification of the inmates, a step which the low tone of morality among them makes necessary. The expense of maintaining inmates is met in either of three ways: (1) By a general tax to meet all the expenses of the institution; (2) by a general tax to maintain the farm and the buildings and a special assessment on local municipalities for the support of inmates sent from each; (3) by a fixed rate payable by the municipalities sending inmates to the institutions.

A great many inmates of these institutions are local wanderers committed from the municipality in which they become disabled. The Municipal Act, as amended in 1903, makes the municipalities in which an inmate resided during the three years preceding his committal, liable for the cost of his maintenance and support and of the expense of his committal to the House of Refuge. In case of dispute the question of liability may be determined by a Division Court. This is intended to protect counties and prevent local municipalities from shifting their responsibility. The greatest benefit would be derived if all the institutions were under certain safeguards, open to both residents and transients.

The county council of Victoria last year appointed a committee to examine several Houses of Refuge. They visited Whitby, Berlin, Stratford, Sarnia and Chatham, and recommended "that in the preparation of plans and specifications the general features of the House of Refuge of the County of Lambton be followed."

A correspondent says: "I heard a municipal clerk the other day state that he had been in office 44 years. It would be interesting to know who has been in office for that or a longer period. The united height of the treasurer and clerk of West Gwillimbury is 12 feet 8 inches. Are there any taller municipal officers in Ontario?"