

The Municipal World

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

(In the interests of every department of the Municipal Institutions of Ontario.)

K. W. MCKAY, EDITOR,

A. W. CAMPBELL, C. E.
J. M. GLENN, LL.B.

Associate
Editors

TERMS. \$1.00 per annum. Single copy, 10c.; Six copies, \$5.00, payable in advance.

EXPIRATION OF SUBSCRIPTION. This paper will be discontinued at expiration of term paid for, of which subscribers will receive notice.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Subscribers, who may change their address, should give prompt notice of same, and in doing so, give both old and new address.

COMMUNICATIONS. Contributions of interest to municipal officers are cordially invited.

HOW TO REMIT. Cash should be sent by registered letter. Draft, express or money orders may be sent at our risk.

OFFICES—28 Elgin Street, St. Thomas. Telephone 101

Address all communications to

THE MUNICIPAL WORLD,

Box 1252, - - - St. Thomas, Ont.

ST. THOMAS, MARCH 2, 1896.

The Huron County Council have purchased five cords of stone to give employment for the prisoners at the Goderich gaol. The stones are not to be broken, but are to be carried about the gaol yard.

* * *

A large committee of the County Council of Perth has been visiting some of the county Houses of Industry, preparatory to reporting to the council with plans, etc., for the erection of an institution in that county.

* * *

The town of Port Hope will pay the following salaries to officers for 1896:—Town Clerk, \$600; Chief Constable, \$625; Market Clerk, \$400 with house, fuel and light; Treasurer, \$300; Inspector of streets and bridges, \$400; Tax Collector, \$200.

* * *

The importance of the Bills now before the Local legislature, referring to a change in the constitution of city, town and county councils is not appreciated by the provincial press or the public generally. During the last ten years taxation in townships has increased 25 per cent.; in towns and villages 83 per cent., and in cities 122 per cent., being an average increase for all municipalities of 46 per cent. There may be sufficient reason for this increase, but it appears to us that the high rate of taxation may have led to a dissatisfaction with the councils as at present constituted. Under these circumstances we believe it would be advisable to refer the whole question to a special committee or small commission to report at the next session, and that the bills at present before the

House, be laid over until the report is received.

The question of electing members of councils for a term of years, to retire in rotation, so that a majority of experienced men would always be found at the council board, is of greater importance than many of the recommendations contained in the new legislation as introduced.

* * *

Under the Children's Protection Laws, provision is made for the formation of Aid Societies, to take charge of the work of looking after neglected and dependent children, and procure homes for these when necessary.

The authority conferred upon the society is quite comprehensive and enables them to do everything necessary in the interests of the children.

The provincial superintendent in charge of this work is endeavoring to secure the formation of county societies, to include all the municipalities situated therein. It is rather difficult to form a central organization in any county that will be able to look after the country districts as well as the cities and towns. This will no doubt be provided for in the future by organizations of branch societies. We would like to see an Act passed conferring the authority of Children's Aid Societies on the Boards of Management of county houses of industry in counties where no society has been formed. It is provided by the Act that children are not to be kept in these institutions, but without the authority referred to there is no alternative but to admit and treat them as other inmates. This is very detrimental to the children. The amendment we suggest would not retard the formation of Children's Aid Societies, but would be a good means of introducing the necessity for the organization in all counties, none of which are entirely free of dependent children.

Railways and Drainage Laws.

An act concerning drainage on the property of railway companies now before the Parliament of Canada has been introduced with the object of making all railways at present under the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada subject to the provisions of the Ditches and Watercourses Act as applied to railways, passed by the Legislature of Ontario in the year 1890. The principal objections urged against the bill by Mr. Haggart, minister of railways are: The jurisdiction as to drainage and all other matters concerning dominion railways and their real estate is, and should, remain vested in the dominion parliament, it would introduce dissimilarity of practice if each province was allowed to legislate on the subject and that it would be inconsistent with the dignity of parliament to allow it. It appears to us that there must of necessity be a dissimilarity in the laws of the different provinces in reference to taxation, but that all railways are subject thereto. All of the

railways have been subsidized both by the Province of Ontario and Dominion of Canada and the great majority of them have received bonuses from the municipalities more immediately benefitted by the location of the road. The owners of farm lands adjoining a railway should not be placed in a different position than if his property adjoined that of a private owner. It is proper to maintain the dignity of parliament, but this should not be done at the expense or inconvenience of property owners, who are not responsible for the alienation of their rights through the location of railways.

Another argument against the bill is that it is necessary to leave matters as they are in order to prevent injury to roadbeds by constant openings for drainage. It is provided under the Act, that the work must be done by the railway company, awards would not be so numerous as to be burdensome, and wherever lands adjoining a railway require drainage the road-bed would also be benefitted by the work. The proper continuance of farm drains would be more than compensated by benefit to roadway.

Railway companies should have the same rights and liabilities as private parties under the act.

It has also been held that the railway committee of the privy council give sufficient opportunity to the parties to get justice. A letter will suffice to secure hearing. When before the committee, the railway companies are represented by counsel and justice is done.

Drains constructed under the Ditches and Watercourses Act are comparatively small as their cost is limited to \$1,000, the average is much less and for want of authority to force outlets through railway lands, a practice that would cost a mere trifle and be determined by local authorities, adjoining owners prefer to suffer loss and inconvenience rather than approach the railway committee of the privy council which can only be done properly through a solicitor and at an expense, out of all proportion to the cost of or benefit to be derived from the drain.

In the preamble to the act, chapter 50, of 54 Vic., it is stated, that there is a dispute as to whether all railways, within this province or only certain railways therein are within the legislative authority of this province for the purposes of the act hereinafter mentioned, viz: The Ditches and Watercourses Act as applied to railways passed 1890. This being the case, and if the bill at present before the Dominion House is not passed, the provincial government should be petitioned to take proceedings to have the question decided.

Impossible.

Pokeleigh—I don't think I could ever descend to riding a bicycle.

Jokeleigh—No, you'd have to mount. You might descend later.