

CORRESPONDENCE.

This paper is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents.

All communications must be accompanied by the name of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but so that the publishers will know from whom they are received.

Clerks' Salaries.

To the Editor of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD:

I see in the May number a municipal clerk complains of the small remuneration clerks receive, and that an effort should be made to secure the passing of an act whereby clerks would receive a salary in proportion to the number of names on the Assessment Roll. The writer does not approve of paying clerks in the manner stated, but would say that not only clerks but all municipal officers should be paid by a set salary, and not by percentage of job work. To pass an Act fixing their remuneration is entirely out of the question. The taxpayer has a right to have all these things to deal with, and I think there are more Acts passed now than are beneficial to poor taxpayers in rural municipalities.

REEVE.

ED.—Write again.

Dangerous Well Water.

To the Editor of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD:

Sir.—Thru the medium of your valuable paper I wish to draw attention to the danger lurking in the drinking water of our wells.

In this township, Aldborough, Elgin Co., the water used for drinking purposes is largely supplied from wells, the water in which is surface water filtered through some five or six feet of sand and held in a reservoir of hard blue clay.

In the spring of the year these wells are invariably flooded with an overflow of surface water, pregnant with organic matter, the decomposition of which furnishes abundant disease germs, and I would suggest for the benefit of those using water from wells, especially wells supplied by surface water, that such wells be pumped out, and thoroughly cleaned, on or before the last of May in each year. By doing this (other obvious precautions being observed, such as locality of well, etc.) I am satisfied that typhoid fever and kindred diseases would be of much less frequency than now.

S. M. DORLAND,

Medical Health Officer,
Aldborough.

Clerks' Salaries.

To the Editor of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD:

I notice in your last number that a correspondent takes up the question of clerks' salaries. I am of his opinion as to the remuneration at present paid to township, town and village clerks, and through a mistaken idea of economy. Councils generally are not even just, let alone generous, in the amount paid to their clerks, and even go so far as to say that the allowance for recording births, marriages and deaths, and salary as secretary of the Board of Health, and all other fees, shall be

paid into the town treasury, and the legislature itself says that the fees for acting as clerk of the Police Court shall be paid into the town treasury, as your correspondent states, the legislature keeps adding work, session after session, to the duties of the clerk without considering any compensation therefor, and I know of clerks who are compelled to remain in their office from six to ten hours per day, and kept busy all the time, whose salaries do not exceed \$400 per year. It is time the clerks took this matter in hand and acted together, and bring the subject before the legislature and show the exact position they occupy, and I believe that the men now at the head of affairs in Ontario will give the matter just consideration, and so arrange that the salaries to be paid in different municipalities shall not be in the hands of the council. Salary or fees are fixed in almost every other profession by the legislature, and why should not this be fixed by them also? The rate proposed by your correspondent seems to me to be fair and the council should have no power to interfere with it.

TOWN CLERK.

Boards of Health.

So far as the well being of the citizens is concerned, perhaps the most important office is that of sanitary inspector, acting under the direction of Boards of Health, which have only become recognized as important in the last half-dozen years or so. To allow any considerations to prevail that will put in this place an inferior man is a grave mistake, and, possibly, under certain conditions, productive of serious results to a municipality.

Sanitary science includes in its scope many more things than fumigating an infected house or testing a sewer pipe: heat and light, ventilation, construction of dwellings, dealing with refuse and noxious matter, overcrowding and many other factors, bearing on, and affecting the public health. In such matters, too, prevention is more important than cure. It is in the power of an efficient inspector to do much that will benefit a municipality though the citizens may never perceive it. On the other hand, an inefficient officer may, without the responsibility being traced, overlook evils that may seriously injure the community.

As sanitary inspectors are now making house to house inspection would it not be well for them to consider whether it is right to allow poultry to be kept in yards hardly large enough for domestic purposes? In the hot summer months places of this sort are a nuisance. In the interests of health the inspector should prevent fowl from being kept in yards that are not suitable. If the premises will not permit the fowl being kept at least fifty or sixty feet from the back door, the inspector should prohibit the keeping of fowl in all such places, and after prohibiting, see that his order is enforced.

It is to be regretted that in this enlightened age the common laws governing hygiene are all but disregarded by the mass of the people. It has been suggested that a competent person be appointed by the Provincial Board of Health to deliver from time to time popular lectures on hygiene, that the same be printed in leaflet form and disseminated over the length and breadth of the province. This method has been pursued in Edinburgh, Scotland, for the past decade, and yielded practical fruit. Vaccination is not practiced as it should be, there are many who have never been vaccinated and will remain so until it is made compulsory, as it is in most countries in Europe.

Assessment Amendment Act, 1892.

Sub-section 23 of section 7 is amended by striking out all the words after the word "earnings" and substituting "to the amount of \$700." Section 24 is amended to read "the annual income of any person to the amount of \$400, derived from any source other than personal earnings. Proviso, that no person shall be exempted for a greater sum than \$700."

Sub-sections are added relating to the assessment of farm lands in cities, and exemptions in towns, cities and villages for certain improvements.

Section 14 is amended by requiring the assessor to set down in column 2, the name (surname first) and post office address of taxable party.

Section 75 is amended by requiring a copy of assessment roll to be transmitted to county clerk within ninety days, under a penalty.

Section 141 is amended by requiring clerk to furnish county treasurer as soon as received from assessor, occupy returns, certified under seal of corporation.

Section 151 is amended by providing that the county treasurer may charge twenty cents for a search and statement of each separate lot or parcel not exceeding four.

I welcomed the Miscellany last year, feeling it was a harbinger of something better, and from your sample of THE MUNICIPAL WORLD, I may safely say that something has come.

A. S., Clerk, Sutherland.

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If as good as the Miscellany of last year I would not be without it for five times the amount. I hope the municipal officers will give you every assistance.

E. C.

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Am well pleased with the January number. The other Miscellany was good, but yours is better. I trust you will meet with every success, as I know such a paper will be of the greatest use to town clerks and municipal officers,

C. H. R., Town Clerk, Walkerville.