

The Municipal World

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ST. THOMAS, AUGUST 2, 1897.

The appointment of a Provincial Auditor has already had an effect. Treasurers may receive an unexpected visit from him at any time.

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The National Conference of Charities and Correction, held in Toronto during July, was largely attended. It is to be hoped that enough enthusiasm has been awakened in the Province to bring about the formation of a Provincial Society.

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At the January session of the Bruce County Council, County Clerk Gould reported on an index of County Council minutes, as follows:

"The council as a whole is frequently compelled to refer to the minutes of the past sessions, in the matter of securing information regarding past resolutions, grants, assuming roads and bridges, etc., although knowing such resolutions, etc., are engrossed in the minutes, but cannot be found. This is a great inconvenience, and at times possibly a loss to the county. To overcome this, I have been considering the advisability of compiling an alphabetical index arranged in such a manner as to show all motions, resolutions, subsidies, assuming control, and all matter pertaining to schools, societies, township, town or village, and to embrace all the minutes and proceedings of the county council, dating from the date of incorporation down to the present time.

In this way it would greatly facilitate the finding of any motion of a preceding council during the past thirty years.

The index to be printed in neat book form. You will readily see that there would be a great amount of tedious labor and research in order to prepare and complete such a work in a satisfactory and easy to be understood manner.

If the council would consider the advisability in a favorable manner, I would be prepared to undertake it for a reasonable consideration; the work to be satisfactory to the council."

The County Council recognized the value of this Clerk's suggestion and he was authorized to get up a municipal index, at a cost not to exceed \$200. Such an undertaking involves an immense amount of labor, but when completed it will be a work of great value. Without an index, the minutes of council, as books of reference, are almost without value.

Municipal Clerks Association County of Huron.

The annual meeting of the Municipal Clerks Association of the County of Huron, was held at Clinton on the 29th June last.

President William Lane, county clerk in the chair. Present: Messrs. Prouty, Campbell, Mitchell, Smillie, Sturdy, Morley, Morrison, Hess and secretary W. Coats.

Mr. Hess read the following interesting paper on "The ideal clerks office."

The office of a municipal clerk, whether it is in a private dwelling or place of business, or in a town hall or courthouse, should not be used for anything else or by anybody else than the clerk and his assistants.

It should be a well lighted, ventilated, heated and cheery room, large enough to accommodate the following furnishings:

1. A modern and convenient writing desk.

2. A table and some chairs.

3. A cupboard with the necessary shelving, drawers and pigeon holes, these drawers and pigeon holes should be so constructed and of such dimensions, as the different sizes of books, papers, blank forms and binding cases will require.

4. A rack or stand for keeping the assessment and collector's roll on should be provided, this rack should be so constructed that each roll can be kept by itself, the rack should also be labelled, or the year of every roll should be marked upon it.

5. A fire proof vault or safe should also be provided for the safe keeping of the most valuable documents entrusted to municipal clerks. This is very essential.

6. A number of indexed paper files should be in every clerk's office, one for accounts and communications, one for pathmasters' lists, one for school papers and documents pertaining to schools, one for the registration slips and papers and one for miscellaneous papers. In connection with these paper files there should be a corresponding number of binding cases, for the reception at the end of the year of all the papers which have accumulated during the year. These papers can all be arranged in alphabetical order, so that he can find any document required without any loss of time.

7. In these days of progress a typewriter should be in the office of every municipal clerk.

8. On the walls of the clerks office there should be the following maps: (a) Dominion of Canada, (b) Province of Ontario; (c) one of the respective county; (d) one of the respective city, town, village or township.

9. A few pictures should also adorn the walls of the office, the pictures might be photographs of Reeves and councillors, present and past, in groups or single; of township officers, brother clerks, members of parliament, statesmen, etc.

Mr. Morrison gave an address on "The preparation of the collector's roll"

Messrs. Campbell, Lane and Coats were appointed a committee to prepare a programme for the next annual meeting.

The secretary was instructed to write to each municipal council in the county, calling attention to the benefits to be derived from an annual meeting of the several municipalities, and asking each council to agree to defray the actual expenses incurred by their clerk in attending a two days' session of the association once each year at Clinton.

The Chatham Clerkship.

Mr. Tissiman, city clerk of Chatham, has resigned owing to ill health. He was appointed thirty five years ago and has discharged his duties with an ability seldom surpassed among city officials. The council have appointed Mr. W. G. Merritt, clerk of Chatham township, as his successor.

Mr. Merritt was born in Chatham township on the old Merritt homestead, near Louisville, in 1856. The son of a farmer, until he was thirty years of age he followed the occupation of his father. In the year 1886 S. J. Arnold, then clerk of Chatham township, resigned his position to assume the position of county treasurer. Mr. Merritt was appointed to succeed him. He assumed the duties of new office at once and has since discharged them with marked ability, giving satisfaction to the councillors and winning the respect and esteem of those who found it necessary to transact business with him.

In the fall of 1889 he moved to Chatham and has since resided here. His municipal experience during his nearly twelve years of service with Chatham township has fitted him for the work of city clerkship, and there is no doubt that he will give as much satisfaction to the city as he has to the township.

The county of Brant and city of Brantford are disputing over an amount for sidewalks, sewers, etc., around the county buildings. It appears to us that the county is in no way liable, but that the city might properly object to the use of the sewers by the county without compensation. Several years ago the question of payment of local improvement rates by county court house properties was considered by the Municipal Committee of the Legislature. No action was taken, the general opinion being that these properties should be exempt from all taxes, as at present.

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The Good Roads Machinery Company after a competitive test, secured an order from the Dufferin County Council for seven steel Champion road machines. Each township in this county is now supplied. Municipalities in which a road machine had been purchased previous to the action taken by the county council received a grant equivalent to the price paid for the machines by the county.