

at all times in causing the law for the government of the municipality to be duly executed and put in force. He is to inspect the conduct of all subordinate officers, to see there is no carelessness or negligence on their part. He is to report to the council and recommend such measures as may tend to improve finances, health, security, cleanliness, comfort and ornament of the municipality. The head of the council is expected to represent the people in showing proper attention and respect to distinguished visitors, and in many other ways he devotes much time and is at considerable personal expense of which the average ratepayer has little knowledge. As head of the council the responsibility thrown upon him is both actual and presumptive, yet, individually, he has not the power that should accompany such responsibility. Those who have given the matter proper attention favor increasing the powers given the head executive officer, so that the citizens could justly look to him for redress of grievances that may exist in the proper conduct of the routine affairs of the municipality.

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We have several times urged upon municipal clerks the advantage of forming an organization to benefit the community and also to benefit themselves. The office of municipal clerk is an important one, giving the occupant a practical knowledge of what changes would be desirable in our local laws that others have no such means of knowing, and therefore suggestions from such a source as an association of clerks would have great weight in determining legislation. An association of this kind could also do much to raise the status of the office to the position which its importance in the community entitles it to. The question of adequate remuneration would also in time prove the wisdom of united action. The public are entirely in the dark as to the actual burdens imposed on these municipal officers by our statutes, and we believe enlightenment would prove a perfect cure, for we do not think that ratepayers and councillors would be so unjust as to knowingly require services at a remuneration much less than allowed per day for a laborer on the streets, which we believe is now the case in many rural municipalities. It would be well if municipal clerks would jot down each day the actual time necessarily given to the public in connection with their office. The time devoted to a study of the law, made necessary by constant changes, should be included, as also the time taken up by ratepayers seeking information and who look upon the clerk as their servant of all work. As a beginning has to be made by some one to form an association, perhaps the initiatory steps could best be taken in each county by the clerk most centrally and conveniently located to invite his brother clerks of the county to meet there at a day to be named by him during next February. A local organization could then be formed, local officers and a county delegate to the Provincial Association appointed. We have no doubt that steps will be taken to invite delegates to meet at Toronto during next summer, probably when the annual exhibition is held in that city.

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Our thanks are due to W. Ptolemy, Esq., clerk of the township of Binbrook, for copy of pamphlet containing the council proceedings, financial statement, etc., for 1891.

We noticed a short paragraph in a local paper stating that a magistrate's conviction for carting without a license contrary to a by-law of the town of Smith's Falls, had been quashed by the Judge of the county of Lanark on appeal, on the ground that no power was given to towns by the Municipal Act to license carters, but to cities only has power been given to issue such licenses. As we are aware that most towns and village councils have always supposed they had authority to pass by-laws to license both livery stable keepers and carters, we quote the words of the section relating to cities, and also the words of the section relating to towns and villages in order that our readers may see the difference and form their own opinions. Section 436 of the Municipal Act empowers cities to "regulate and license the owners of livery stables, and of horses, cabs, carriages, carts, trucks, sleighs, omnibuses and other vehicles used for hire," and section 509 gives power to towns and villages to pass by-laws "for regulating and licensing the owners of livery stables, and of horses, cabs, carriages, omnibuses and other vehicles for hire." The only difference is in the additional words "carts, trucks, sleighs" before the word "omnibuses" in section 436, but as both sections give power to license the owners of "other vehicles used for hire," as well as the vehicles specially mentioned, it would naturally be inferred that carts, waggons, trucks or sleighs used for hire would come under the appellation of "other vehicles" whether they were mentioned specially or not, and it is not to be wondered at that town and village officials have thus interpreted the law.

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We have heard it said that the city of Glasgow, Scotland, derives an income from its street railways, electric lights, waterworks, telephones, licenses of various kinds, and all such sources, more than sufficient to meet the running expenses of the corporation without having to resort to direct taxation. If this is true and we see no reason to doubt it, that city sets a good example of business management that other municipalities might do well to follow. It is stated that all such public works as street railways are built and owned by the city of Glasgow, but afterwards the running of them are let out by tender to the highest bidder, under rules and regulations laid down, and that there is no difficulty experienced in the management by the city to the satisfaction of all parties. It is well known that private corporations make large gains out of the construction and working of street railways and the like through the transference to them of the use of streets and other rights inherent to the people for which no adequate compensation is given. The notion that corporations cannot undertake public works of this nature on terms as favorable as private companies has generally been the cause of bartering away public rights to the loss of the people. In too many cases those elected to represent the people are in the ring with speculators, otherwise why should business principles not prevail at the council board as well as outside of it. Latterly more attention is being directed to improved methods of carrying on municipal business, and a better system may be inaugurated in the near future.