

### Municipal Candidates and Politics.

Municipal government is closer to the people than any other. It interferes more in the business and social relations and for the reason that it has more to do, it is more expensive. In all countries the municipal government is the most extravagant, because of the indifference of those who should have an influence and control. It is not only the duty of good citizens to take an interest in municipal politics, but to accept offices when their fellow citizens request them to do so. No man should be adverse to performing the duties he owes to the public of serving them in an official capacity, even, if, by so doing, he has to sacrifice personal feeling and interest. It is sometimes difficult to induce the most desirable men to accept offices. The time was when the office sought the man, and when defeat was almost certain if the candidate solicited votes for himself. There has been a change, and candidates are expected to exert themselves for their own election. It may be as well that such is the case, as it offers a better opportunity for the people to judge of the man they are called upon to support. That the man must exert himself in his own behalf constitutes no good reason why he should not accept or seek an office of which he is worthy. The present method simply involves a question of modesty, and a good and capable citizen will waive that for the public interest. The fact is, the office should be sought for the honor it confers, and honor can only be derived from the excellency of the services rendered.

The business man will apply himself to his private pursuits year in and year out, with unflagging industry, but when he is called upon to give a day to the public he will falter, and retire at the mere shadow of what is not quite in accord with his tastes, while, on the contrary, he should endeavor to secure the greatest possible excellence of government for the public good, because in it his pecuniary interests are involved. It is not enough that an honest citizen should cast his vote on election day; he should begin further back and see to it that the proper men are brought forward as candidates. To obtain this end, party organizations are useful and necessary. This had been much condemned and, perhaps, wrongfully, but in local affairs there is distinctly another side to the question. Good and capable men will not interest themselves in municipal matters, did not the careful and honest discharge of the duties there imposed, open an entrance to provincial and dominion politics. There is no class of capable men who are either willing or financially able to administer the affairs of a municipality for the little honor that attaches to such offices. Men do these things for the reward they promise either directly or indirectly, and there is no greater inducement that we can hold out

than the hope of rising high in the estimation of party and country. In no municipality is it possible to get together a council of competent men unless some of them are men of strong party feelings and convictions. All, of course, cannot rise to great importance, but in the minor and much more numerous positions party enthusiasm calls out talent and ability which would not otherwise be reached.

### Reduction of Members of County Councils.

Copies of the bill introduced by Mr. Rorke at the last session of the legislative assembly to amend the Municipal Act, by increasing the number of votes required in a municipality for a deputy reeve, have been forwarded to the clerks of the different municipalities, no doubt to draw the attention of councils to this method of reducing the number of members of county councils. The amendment would principally effect the representation of township municipalities. A very small percentage of the villages in the province have more than one representative in the county council. The proposed amendment would make no alteration in that, whereas, in almost every township one deputy reeve would be dropped. The complaint at the present time is that the villages are increasing, and that village and town representatives almost outnumber those from townships in some counties. A comparison as to population, equalized value, or number of voters, shows that this is not an equitable arrangement, and, if the qualification for deputy reeve is fixed as proposed, this inequality of representation would be still greater.

Separate existence as a village and separate representation in the county council under our present system go together, so that to make it necessary for a village to have a larger population before it can obtain the right to return a member to the county council is not practicable because this would require these villages to be retained as a part of the township until they had a population beyond all reasonable bounds.

*The Newmarket Era* says, that, if the principle of Mr. Hardy's bill is to obtain, and the county council be created an independent body, having no connection with local councils through Reeves or otherwise, then we should favor the proposition of *THE MUNICIPAL WORLD*, that is, to divide each county into districts, composed of polling sub divisions of local municipalities, so that each district will contain about the same number of votes, and each of these districts to elect a county councillor. In this way the constituency of a member would not be much greater in area than a township and it would give an equitable representation.

Of course a good many people think the creation of another municipal taxing body, independent of the present organizations and without connection with local

councils who have to deal with townline roads, bridges, etc., is a mistake. By this class of thinkers the notion is entertained, that the true principle would be to continue the existing method, but raise the standard of municipality qualification so that only one deputy be sent for every 800 or 1,000 on the roll, instead of one for every 500 as at present, and thereby avoid the disturbing of a system with which the people are familiar, and, apart from the expense increasing numbers entail, has worked reasonably well for about half a century. The whole question calls for serious consideration, especially in view of the fact that upon the knowledge of county councillors depends the equitable equalization of municipal assessments for all county rates. We have our fears that the charge to districts will work disadvantageously to weak municipalities and the more sparsely settled sections of counties; but we present these thoughts in the hope that in some measure we may help in arriving at the wisest conclusion.

*The Whitby Chronicle* referring to the reorganization of county councils and the proposition to give a representative from each municipality votes in the council in proportion to population or assessment, says: Let us have cumulative districts, but never cumulative votes. That would be going back a hundred years. It seems to us that this, (Ontario) county could be split up into five or six divisions and a commissioner elected to represent each one, to attend to the business. The great trouble is, that people have it in their heads that the old county and township lines, which were marked out through the woods a hundred years ago when no person knew what system of government was to prevail during the future, should be preserved as dividing lines for all time.

Narrow-tire vehicles are so destructive to roads that the suggestion has been made that some effort should be put forth in Ontario to encourage the use of broad tires. In Chicago this method of saving the pavements is being adopted. It is proposed to license every wheeled vehicle, and to grade the fees so that the highest figure shall be paid for the use of narrow tires. Waggons carrying four tons are to be assessed \$50 if the tires are  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches or less, \$30 if the tires are  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches, and \$10 if they reach four inches in width. The minimum fee is \$1 for vehicles having tires of  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches. We have plenty of taxation in one shape or another at the present time, but here is an instance in which taxes should tend to reduce the burden of taxation.

A Hamilton bicyclist got a verdict for \$25 damages before Judge Muir, against a gentleman who drove into his wheel on the highway. The wheelman got into a rut and could not get out in time to escape the buggy, the driver of which failed to turn out.