

This expression of opinion was concurred in by the council on the 25th of February, 1898, and a telegram was sent to Ottawa, opposing the application for charter. On February 26 this telegram was supplemented by a letter to Hon. A. G. Blair, minister of railways, to the following effect:

"The attention of this board has been directed to the application now before the Dominion parliament for a charter for a railway, being a continuation of the Red Mountain line, running west, parallel with and a few miles north of the boundary. This board is of opinion that the granting of such a charter will be highly detrimental to British Columbia and Canada generally, for such a line would simply tap a country very rich in minerals, making the natural outlet for the same the United States, where it is probable the smelting would be done. The smelting industry is only next in importance to the mining, and should be conserved to Canada. This board has therefore telegraphed to you, urging that the charter be refused. The exact wording of the board's telegram is as follows: 'This board resolved granting of charter Corbin's extension Red Mountain railway highly detrimental to British Columbia interests simply outlet for our ores to be smelted in the United States.'"

And again, on March 2, a second letter was sent Hon. Mr. Blair, as follows:

"When writing to you on the 26th ult., with reference to the application for a charter for the extension of the Red Mountain railway, I omitted to state that this board had placed before it letters from residents of the Boundary country strongly advocating the granting of the charter which this board opposes. The letters in general were from real estate men, and the only reason advanced for the granting of the charter was that the building of the proposed railway would create a boom in the country and enable the writers to dispose of property, which 's becoming a serious burden to the holders; no other reason was cited, and this board decided that the object of a railway should be something more than the above, and instructed me to telegraph you its resolution opposing the granting of a charter to Mr. Corbin."

The Vancouver Board of Trade at about the same time discussed the question of the Corbin charter in all its bearings, the result of their deliberations being incorporated in the following resolution, which was promptly transmitted to Ottawa:

"Whereas a bill has been introduced into the house by Hewitt Bostock, M.P., for a railway from Marcus to run into the Kettle River country of the district of Yale, and while this board deems it of the first importance that a railway should be constructed at the earliest possible time into

that district, it would strongly urge on the federal government the desirability of granting a charter and assistance to a line running east and west through Canada in preference to one running to the American boundary, provided that there is no delay in proceeding with construction."

Here the matter had rested, the application having been refused by the Dominion, until the Victoria members were on the eve of departure for Ottawa to discharge their sessional duties, when they asked for instructions as to the course they should pursue on the application being renewed this year. The present meeting was for the purpose of ascertaining the feeling of the board in order that Messrs. Prior and Earle might proceed in accordance with the opinion of the majority of the city's business men.

"To open the ball," as he expressed it, Mr. A. G. McCandless moved that the resolution of the council passed on February 25 last be rescinded, this resolution finding a seconder in Mr. C. E. Renouf. Neither the mover nor the seconder thought fit to elaborate the matter of the resolution, and the first speaker was therefore

#### MR. E. V. BODWELL.

As he had had occasion, both professionally and as a citizen of Victoria, to consider this matter very thoroughly, and to gather all possible information in connection with it, and feeling it to be a subject deeply and directly concerning the entire province of British Columbia, and the city of Victoria particularly, Mr. Bodwell felt that it was his duty, as well as a privilege, to attend the present meeting and lay before it all the information bearing on the case, with such reasons as appeared to him sound authority for the adoption of such a resolution as had been proposed. Of course, he quite anticipated that all that he might say or do would be characterized as done or said in the capacity of paid solicitor for Mr. Corbin. He was Mr. Corbin's solicitor, it was quite true; but at the same time he hoped that this meeting would give him credit also for some little sincerity in the matter. It was, as he had said, true that he had supported the application for the charter last year, as Mr. Corbin's solicitor, and that he had appeared before the railway committee at Ottawa and done all in his power to advance the application that had been placed in his professional charge, but he would not have done so had there been no other reason than that of a retainer; he would not have advocated the granting of the charter in question as he had, if he had not conscientiously believed that the carrying out of the project in the manner proposed would be of