

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1904.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH.

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 10 a.m. in advance, by The Telegraph Publishing Company, of St. John, a company incorporated by act of the Legislature of New Brunswick.

E. W. McCREADY, Editor.

ADVERTISING RATES.

Ordinary commercial advertisements taking the rate of the paper, each insertion, \$1.00 per line.

Advertisements of Wants, For Sale, etc., 50 cents for insertion of six lines or less. Notices of Births, Marriages and Deaths 25 cents for each insertion.

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 10, 1904.

SOME RAYS OF LIGHT.

The discussion in the city council Friday on the proposed C. P. R. agreement was largely a clearing away of cobwebs from the aldermanic mind. In the course of the debate these facts appear to have been made clear:

1.—That under the agreement of 1893 the C. P. R. was only bound to provide additional improvements on the property formerly owned by the Carleton Branch railway.

2.—That the only additional wharves that could be built were along that strip, which the harbor master declared to be impracticable.

3.—That they once offered to construct a steamship berth there, but it was thought impracticable.

4.—That to construct berths along there at right angles to the harbor front they must, as the strip is only 200 feet wide, get more land from the city.

5.—That to construct such berths there, owing to the difficult nature of the work, would take two or three years.

6.—That regardless of the C. P. R. company favored extension in that direction rather than to build wharves on the South Rodney side.

7.—That the city chose the South Rodney side, because of the easier dredging and the possibility of having some of the wharves ready for next winter's business.

8.—That the civic committee went to Montreal to press this proposal, and persuaded the company to agree to that rather than the former plan of extension south of the present wharves.

9.—That very little was said about the water lots when the committee were in Montreal; but that the C. P. R. officials pointed out that to serve the new berths they must have more yard room; and when Mr. McCreedy came to St. John and looked over the situation with the aldermen he suggested the water lots as a suitable place to be filled in to provide yard room.

10.—That if now the city decides not to go on with the South Rodney wharf proposition it will be nullifying itself and going straight back on all it has been urging for the last year or so as the proper course.

11.—That if the South Rodney site is abandoned there will be no new berths on the west side for several years to come.

Of course this does not touch the question of the city itself building the wharves, but only one alderman expressed himself yesterday in favor of the city undertaking the work.

One could do all the work themselves. Aside from the question of the water lots, and C. P. R. control of berthing vessels at the new wharves, the rest of the aldermen would probably have voted in favor of the rest of the agreement. These two questions are to be threshed out on Monday.

Several of the aldermen thought it necessary to protest against any harsh criticism of the C. P. R. This, in view of all the circumstances, appears to be reasonable. A civic committee went to the company, discussed the whole matter as a business proposition, and came before the council with the result. If the C. P. R. gets the water lots it must spend a very large amount of money on them, and on its railway facilities to handle freight for the additional berths. And every dollar it spends here anchors it more securely to this winter port. There is also the possibility that the city may get back again the 1,000 feet along the Beacon bar. It may be that an arrangement can be made by which the company will agree to get along with less than forty acres. One alderman says he does not think the company will modify the agreement, others believe it will. It is now established that granting these water lots would not necessarily shut another company out from going in and building other yards right in front of them, with room for wharves beyond that again. It might be that the C. P. R. would agree to an arrangement whereby another company could use its tracks.

The whole question is worthy of the most careful consideration by the council and the citizens at large. Those citizens who have been waiting to hear what the aldermen had to say should now express their own views, so that a decision satisfactory at least to the majority may be arrived at. The city wants the berths, the

THE VERGE OF WAR.

The withdrawal of the respective embassies from St. Petersburg and Tokyo doubtless means war. Russia as usual endeavors to attach the blame to her rival, but whatever professions of peaceful intent may have emanated from St. Petersburg during the past few months it is apparent that in this struggle Russia is the aggressor; and the war, if it is now to break out, is a result of her dogged and unscrupulous pursuit of an age-long policy, to absorb piece by piece, as opportunity offered, the territories of northern and eastern Asia.

The position of Japan is perfectly clear. With her it is a life or death struggle, and she doubtless feels that she cannot afford to wait.

If hostilities are begun one of the earliest events may be the great sea-fight of modern times, for Russia has a fleet near Port Arthur, and Japan has a fleet near

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