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MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER 1913

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The annual Convention will be held in Detroit, Mich., September 29th to October 4th, the Exhibition being held in the Wayne Gardens, and the meetings in the Hotel Pontchartrain. The Ontario Good Roads Association will meet in Windsor, Ont., at the same time.

The Third Congress of the Canadian Public Health Association has its rendez-vous at Regina, Saskatchewan, on September 18, 19, 20. The Secretary is Major Lorne Drum, M.D., D.P.H., office of Public Health Journal, Lumsden Bldg., Toronto.

The Credit of Sarnia, Ont.

A despatch recently appeared in the "Globe", Toronto, which was unfortunately spread abroad and repeated with scare headings in papers in other parts of Canada, to the effect that the town of Sarnia, Ont., was insolvent — "Dead Broke" was the slangy way of putting it. The despatch further stated that the Bank of Montreal had refused to give any more credit to the town.

While fully aware that the statement was absolutely false, we wrote to the Mayor of Sarnia, Dr. J. Alex. Bell, M.D., and have had the reply which we expected.

Mayor Bell writes that the article is untrue and without foundation, and encloses a copy of a letter from the manager of the Sarnia Branch of the Bank of Montreal, which we give below.

The town of Sarnia, says Mayor Bell, was never in a more prosperous and healthy state, financially or otherwise. While the local Bank Managers say that towns of about the same size as Sarnia have overdrafts of from \$20,000 to \$40,000, Sarnia has one of only between \$2,000 to \$3,000.

The Mayor points out that as it is illegal for any Bank to loan money for permanent improvements, he advised his Council to stop any new permanent works such as sewers, curbs and pavements pending the sale of debentures. Petitions for new work are therefore not being granted meantime. But the work on a new water-works plant, costing over \$90,000, and a mile of concrete road is being carried on.

"No municipality has any better security of credit and is in any more healthy financial state than Sarnia is today", says Mayor Bell. "Municipal debentures (5 per cent.) in \$5,000 lots are being sought after by local citizens. In fact, I have no doubt that every dollar of our debentures could be subscribed for locally, were we to put them on the market here."

The serious character of the libel is shown from the letter which follows:

Bank of Montreal
Sarnia, Ont.

August 19th, 1913.

His Worship the Mayor,
The Town of Sarnia,
Sarnia, Ont.

Dear Sir:

I enclose a clipping taken from the Toronto "Globe" of a few days ago, which I cannot understand.

The article, dated 13th August, 1913, states that the account of the Corporation of the Town of Sarnia at this office was sadly overdrawn; on which date the exact overdraft was \$7,076.20 and at that time of writing is only \$2,666.

I think you should contradict the article mentioned, as it might materially injure the Town's credit.

You remember what happened was that I wrote to you and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, stating that the Bank could not advance money for Permanent Works or Local Improvements, as the advance now running was made for Current Expenses only, pending the water rates and general taxes.

I might add that the Town has had its account with us for over 12 years, and as far as I can judge, it has always been in the position to hold up its end.

Yours truly,

(Sgd) W. H. Norton-Taylor, Manager.