

KETTLE RIVER VALLEY RAILWAY.

REPORT OF A MEETING

OF THE

British Columbia Board of Trade,

HELD AT VICTORIA,

ON THE 22ND AND 23RD MARCH, 1899.

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Sixty-five members of the British Columbia Board of Trade—an unusually large percentage—attended the special meeting of that body held yesterday under the chairmanship of President G. A. Kirk to discuss the advisability or otherwise of the board supporting the Corbin application for a Dominion charter for a railway from the United States side of the boundary line into the Kettle River valley, and tapping the wonderfully rich mining district known generally as the Boundary Creek country. This charter, it will be remembered, was sought last year and refused, the board at that time expressing disapproval of the project, as not in the best interests of Canada or of British Columbia. Yesterday's business crystallized into a resolution in the direction of negating the action of 1898, with an amendment affirming the stand taken last year, and citing in the preamble numerous reasons for the course then adopted. The case of the charter applicants was very fully and effectively presented by Mr. E. V. Bodwell, who has long acted as solicitor for Mr. Corbin, and is therefore closely in touch with all the facts bearing upon the question. While Messrs. D. R. Ker, Joshua Davies and C. H. Lugin spoke with force and directness in opposition to the charter application and in support of the amendment. It was all but six o'clock when

Mr. Lugin resumed his seat, and as the list of speakers was even then far from exhausted, it was deemed wise to adjourn the debate until to-day at three o'clock. The motion for the continuation was made by Mr. W. H. Ellis, seconded by Mr. J. H. Todd, and generally approved as affording opportunity for those present to digest the arguments pro and con adduced by the four speakers of the afternoon.

In introducing the business of the day, President Kirk traced the history of the Kettle River railway project from its origin, which was promptly transmitted to board, reading from the minute book as to the action recorded. The council of the board, after hearing the request of the railway promoters for an endorsement of their application, had referred the matter to the special committee on railways, of which Hon. B. W. Pearce was chairman, and this committee in their report at a subsequent council meeting, had said:

"Your committee beg to report that in their opinion the granting of a charter to Mr. Corbin to run a railway into the Kettle River country, from near Fort Sheppard, would, by diverting trade to the south of the boundary, be highly detrimental to the interests of the province, and that this should also be at once brought under the notice of the chairman of the railway committee of the house."