## NEWS OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE

**St. John Budget Over $1,000,000—Winnipeg Capital Expenditure for 1920 Totals Nearly $2,000,000—Vancouver to Take Advantage of Exchange Rate**

**St. John, N.B.**—The city council has finally passed the estimates for 1920. The total budget is $1,186,974, as compared with a total of $909,603 for last year.

**Edmonton, Alta.**—The following expenditures have been outlined by mayor Clarke, totalling $1,150,000: Power house, $500,000 ;telephone department, $400,000; exhibition grandstand, $150,000; city incinerator, $100,000.

**Moose Jaw, Sask.**—Tax assessment exemptions under the city assessment for 1920, amount to $2,204,976, according to the statement given out by city assessor W. J. Moffat, government buildings and schools being the most favored.

**Winnipeg, Man.**—Capital expenditures totalling $1,676,062 will be required to be made by the three civic departments during 1920 as follows: Light and power, $1,275,000; waterworks, $47,010; and engineer's department, $354,052.

**Charlottetown, P.E.I.**—A statement of the city's receipts and expenditures for the year of 1919, shows a surplus of $149. The amount balance at the credit in the bank on December 31st, was $6,866. The debenture debt of the city now amounts to $730,299.

**New Westminster, B.C.**—The net taxable assessment of the city is a little more than $10,000,000, which is more than $2,500,000 less than the assessment of 1919. Assuming that the city council continues to tax land values only, it will take a forty-mill rate to yield the same revenue as was obtained last on a rate of thirty-two mills.

**Vancouver, B.C.**—The city has taken advantage of the exchange rate in paying the interest on the sterling bonds. The sum the city had to send to England was £85,265, being the half-yearly interest on the bonds of the city outstanding in England. The sum of $341,485 was sent. Had the exchange situation not existed, the city would have been under the necessity of sending approximately $415,000.

**Simcoe County, Ont.**—A statement of the receipts and expenditures for the year 1919, shows a balance of $31,185 in favor of the receipts. The county now has a total debenture debt of $61,495, but the surplus is $79,331, sufficient to provide for all the debentures and still leave a margin. The $79,331 is the total of three surpluses. In 1917, $23,737; 1918, $24,352; and the 1919 surplus.

**West Vancouver, B.C.**—The financial statement of the municipality shows 1919 assessment of $3,662,081, and statutory borrowing power of $732,416. The general debentures debt totals $642,000, including bonds issued $582,175, and authorized issues awaiting sale, $59,825. The local improvement debt is $100,000, and the school debenture debt $38,200. The excess of assets over liabilities is $296,263. Total sinking fund amounts to $52,873, which is short of requirements by $38,750, which amount is still to be deposited from arrears of taxes.

Total taxes collected during the year amounted to $106,123, including arrears and interest amounting to $46,697. Loans from the bank to the amount of $100,700. including $25,700 for 1918, were repaid during the year.

**Saskatoon, Sask.**—As in the case of other western cities, the question of paying interest on the civic debentures held by English investors, is causing considerable trouble. The matter is not a pressing one in Saskatoon, as it is in the other western cities at the present time. City bonds are not due to yield interest until April 1st, when the question may possibly come up for consideration. The amount involved is not a large one, and although the question has not yet been decided, it is open for argument, whether or not the city is compelled to pay the interest at the same rate at which the bonds were sold. Locally, however, it is felt that it would not be good business to seek to take advantage of the exchange rate even though it were technically possible. The city officials are aware that many of the Saskatoon bonds have been sent over to Canada and the interest will be payable in this city instead of in London on April 1st. In Saskatoon it has been the policy to pay the interest charges at the normal rate of exchange, and so far no opinion has been expressed that any departure will be made from this rule.

**Toronto, Ont.**—Another report has been made by Finance Commissioner Bradshaw regarding the city's debt, in which he points out the necessity of making drastic changes in the method of financing various works and undertakings. In the past, he said, it had been the practice, an indefensible one, of issuing debentures for the longest period possible, to raise funds to pay for various works and improvements. This was done in order to make posterity pay some share of the cost of permanent improvements and to keep the present tax rate down. The result of this policy has been to pile up the annual debt charges until they reach a formidable amount, and, what is worse, to increase the original cost of the works, which in many cases have had to be renewed before the original debt was liquidated. In future, he said, payments for improvements must be made within the probable life of those works. In the present unsettltd condition of the world's financial markets, having in mind the very large amount of capital which it will be necessary for the city to raise in connection with the taking over of the street railway and for extensions to the system, Mr. Bradshaw does not want to be obliged to raise moneys for other undertakings, except such as are of absolute necessity.

## INVESTMENTS AND THE MARKET

**Algoma Steel to Build $7,000,000 Mill at Sault Ste. Marie—Toronto Railway Had Good Year—Winnipeg Electric Case in the Courts**

**Quebec Street Railway.**—The Quebec city council has approved the motion that instructions be given to the city attorneys to take immediate steps to annul the contract between the city of Quebec and the Street Railway Co. by which the company is authorized to charge increased fares. The reason given for the action is that the company has failed to fulfil its contract with regard to the operation of its service on Beauport Road.

**Dominion Steel Corporation.**—The announcement was made last week of the listing on the Montreal Stock Exchange of $7,000,000 6 per cent. preferred stock and $5,902,300 new common shares. The preferred stock is the original issue made many years ago which was never listed. So far as the new common stock listed is concerned, $902,300 of this issue remains in the treasury, the balance of $5,000,000 having been issued to the British interests in connection with their recent deal.

**Algoma Steel Corporation.**—Arrangements have now been completed for the immediate commencement of construction of a new structural steel mill by the corporation at Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., at the cost of about $7,000,000. The product of this new mill is expected to replace the greater part of the present imports of this material. About 90 per cent. of the consumption in Canada of structural steel is now imported, and it is the hope to supply that, or the greater part of it, from the Sault mills. Work will begin at once, and the construction is expected to take a little over a year. The corporation already has four blast furnaces, which will furnish much of the steel necessary for the new mill. It is expected that 500 men will be required for the construction work this winter, to be increased to 1,000 in the summer, and when the mill is completed it will require 600 operatives. The immediate financing of the venture is provided by the possession of ready cash and other liquid funds of the corporation. The last annual report shows current assets of $13,834,842, while the current liabilities were only $2,449,790.

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