

Rossland Weekly Miner.

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THE BOARD OF TRADE.

The Rossland board of trade seems to have fallen into a state of innocuous desuetude. For the last month or so there have not been enough members present at the regular meetings to constitute a quorum for business. There is no excuse for this deplorable lack of public spirit on the part of the business men of Rossland. How can they expect to accomplish any good for the camp and the surrounding district unless they are ever vigilant and active in stimulating business and safeguarding and promoting by every legitimate means the prosperity of the community? There are, and must always be in a new country like this, many live and important public questions that require thorough discussion, to the end that industry may be promoted and the country made more prosperous. There are also many matters in which it is the duty of a board of trade to advise and assist the various governing bodies of the country. We frequently hear complaints and protests against the indifference of both the Federal and provincial governments in attending to the public wants of the Kootenays. It is not to be expected that local needs hundreds of miles from Victoria and thousands from Ottawa will receive the proper attention unless vigorous and pertinent suggestions are forthcoming from the local board of trade. Rossland business men are not like they used to be a few years ago. They seem to have lost much of their former snap and energy. Unless they wake up and become more public spirited and enterprising they cannot expect to enjoy a full measure of prosperity. If Rossland merchants have cause for complaint against hard times, they are to some extent responsible for their plight by refusing to take a more intelligent and active interest in matters of public concern.

LIBERAL CAMPAIGN FUND.

It is reported that the Liberals have secured a \$50,000 campaign fund with which to debauch the electors of British Columbia next October. The Revelstoke Herald, a thoroughly reliable newspaper, vouches for the truth of this terrible state of affairs. This last move of the Liberals shows only too plainly the desperate straits they are in. Hopelessly beaten on every side by honest, clear-cut Conservatism, the Grits have sold out to the rich corporations which are desirous of continuing their nefarious practice of exploiting the province at the expense of the common people. The public is, however, thoroughly aroused, and it is safe to say that Liberal campaign funds will be spent in vain. The electors are determined to have an honest government after the next elections, and that is why they are going to return the Conservative party with a good working majority.

FUEL AND THE ORE TONNAGE.

A Boundary exchange notes the fact that sixteen mines in Rossland and the Boundary are now shipping ore at the rate of more than 3000 tons daily. Boundary mines and smelters alone could easily handle that much ore per diem with existing equipment, if sufficient coke were available. With three blast furnaces now being added to the Boundary smelter equipment there is a good chance of 4000 tons of ore being handled there each 24 hours before next winter—provided, of course, the Crow's Nest Coal company can supply the coke.

Meanwhile there are idle furnaces at Trail, Northport, Grand Forks, Greenwood and Boundary Falls, simply because the supply of coke is inadequate. The government should lose no time in permitting the opening up of the Flathead coal areas, so that the Crow's Nest coal monopoly may be broken and ample fuel be thereby made available at a cost greatly reduced from the present charges.

NELSON CONSERVATIVE.

The Conservative party is too firmly and too closely wedded to the cause of good government not to require the ablest and most conscientious nominees at the forthcoming elections. The time has passed when men of the stamp of Prior and Martin and McInnes and Houston shall represent the people in the provincial legislature. There must be no mincing of matters in this important crisis through which British Columbia is now passing. The province has declared for party lines, and urgently demands a more responsible and capable representation in the administration of its affairs. There are in both the Conservative and the Liberal party men available to meet the ideals and ideas of the electors of every constituency. We are not bothering about the Liberals, particularly, because they cannot hope to carry the country next October. We are, however, greatly concerned as to the character of every Conservative that is to be nominated on or after next August 15—the day set for nominations by the executive of the Provincial Conservative Association.

In practically every riding, excepting Nelson, the Conservative party may be safely relied upon to nominate men who are able and willing to do their whole duty to the people. In Nelson, however, there is a far from satisfactory, not to say healthy, state of affairs. John Houston—a questionable Conservative at best, albeit he has been accepted, even honored, in the councils of the party—is making an unseemly and mendacious bluff for the Conservative nomination. Houston's political record stinks in the nostrils of every good Conservative and every man, irrespective of party, who has the cause of good government at heart. His party fealty and his general political principles are open to serious question. He is known far and wide as a "practical" politician—a type that has been the curse and damnation of British Columbia for the last fifteen years. He has used and abused his friends solely for his personal advancement in politics. He has succeeded in shocking the political morality of not only Nelson but the entire province. His adherence to the Prior-Dunsmuir regime was simply monstrous. His connection with the C. P. R. has scandalized the district. He has never, to our knowledge, displayed any principle that stood for the genuine welfare of the masses or for constructive statesmanship. For the sake of votes he has pandered to the passions of the illiterate and to the intertemporal notions of the unthinking. He long ago outlived his political usefulness, and the Kootenays outgrew long ago any desire to act with him or for him in all matters of a public nature. Nelson has passed its Houstonesque stage. John Houston was a very considerable toad in Nelson's political puddle before it justly earned the title of Queen City of the Kootenays. At a period when Nelson was a scattered hamlet like Kuskonook and Cascade City are today, Houston might have been some pumpkins politically. Now, however, his environment has completely outgrown him, and in doing so is heartily sick of his chameleon-like nature may place him.

Houston may yet get the Conservative nomination in Nelson because of his bluffing and hoodwinking propensities; but the party should see to it that he is not so honored and that it is not so disgraced. The Miner is giving a conscientious support to the Conservative party and its leader, Hon. Richard McBride. It will continue to do so just as long as both are worthy of public confidence; but it strongly protests against the nomination or election of any man of Houston's stamp, and will continue in that course until the thirty-first day of next October.

We could, in this connection, give at this writing dozens of additional reasons why the Conservatives and the country do not need Houston's assistance in politics and statesmanship. We could refer to the parade that Houston has made of Dunsmuir's support through the editorial columns of the Colonist. We could show how Houston's attitude at the last session of the legislature, when he might have done justice to the local smelting industry and scores of East Kootenay coal prospectors by forcing ex-Premier Prior to open the East Kootenay reserves in a statesman-like manner, did the very opposite. We feel, however, that it is unnecessary to go to such lengths now because we cannot imagine that Nelson Conservatives will be so indiscreet and so hopelessly lost to the welfare of the party and the country as to recognize Houston's political ambitions when the day of nomination arrives.

BLAIR AND THE G. T. P.

According to Mr. Blair, ex-minister of railways in the Liberal government at Ottawa, the Grand Trunk Pacific is, at best, a hybrid scheme, involving the compromise of two antagonistic principles, and will be followed, as is usual with compromises of that kind, by unsatisfactory results. It will be difficult to explain why the government

should build the lean section of the railway and provide a company with government credit to enable it to build the fat section.

To the argument used with him and again employed by Sir Wilfrid in his speech in parliament the other day, that the road east of Winnipeg would become a national highway, Mr. Blair replied:

"It is wholly impracticable that this line could be so used by different railway companies. There must be some authorized body to work, not the trains, but the freight cars of the different railways, and generally to look after and operate the line. . . . The Grand Trunk Pacific will employ the men who will handle the traffic. The officers of the line will also be employed by the G. T. P., and the G. T. P. company will be in the field as a keen and active competitor for western traffic with the other companies which it is promised will desire to connect with the terminals at the end of the government-owned section. I will not go into the reasons, which are conclusive, but under these circumstances other companies, if they can find other means of reaching eastern points, will not utilize this road. For any present purpose it will suffice to say that in this opinion I believe I am absolutely correct."

It is not, then, because he adheres to the theory of a government line that he opposes the G. T. P. scheme, but because he regards that scheme as an impracticable compromise. The government is to build the "lean section" and to assist the company to build the "fat section," which it will then own as its private property, and the section the government builds cannot become even a national highway, because the G. T. P. will control it for fifty years and would have in its hands the traffic any of its competitors might decide to send over the line.

Two other objections Mr. Blair urged strongly. One was to the duplication of the Intercolonial, which he said was inexcusable and was not even asked for by the people of New Brunswick. And the other was to the "undue haste" with which the government was proceeding. "The project," he said, "is one of very great magnitude and should be dealt with only after the maturest deliberations." No road should be built which would cause "the destruction and depreciation" of the Intercolonial "until the need of such railway becomes apparent and proper surveys and an estimate of its cost are first made and thoroughly considered." And no road should be authorized to be built from Quebec to Winnipeg until parliament had been "asked for an amount to enable a thorough exploration of the country to judge whether or not a suitable traffic producing route could be found through this district, and its cost and the character and conditions of the country through which it is to pass ascertained." This is the simplest business provision, and the only explanation of the reckless haste of the government can be found, as the good old Liberal Witness says, "in the urgency of persons anxious to carry through the great scheme while their political friends are in power."

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

The Imperial Pacific cable seems to be pursued by a malignant fate. At its inception the idea of a state-owned cable joining the Empire by electric bonds was laughed to scorn. During its parliamentary steps the project had to fight its way against the fiercest antagonism on the part of the Eastern and Western Extension Cable companies, Sir John Pender's monopolies that held Australia under the heel. Influences of all kinds were set to work in the interested states of Great Britain, Canada and Australia to cause mischief and bring the project to a speedy if not very peaceful death. Even when it triumphed at last over the difficulties and obstacles raised against its construction, the cable was pursued by relentless and merciless antagonism. The previously existing line to Australia was duplicated, which it otherwise would not have been, so that if one cable gave out under the pressure of submarine conditions the other might be expected to keep up communication. Terminal and overland privileges were given to the company by the Australian state governments that seriously handicapped the Imperial enterprise of which the Commonwealth government was one of the owners. Then the Atlantic connection absorbed so large a part of the receipts as toll for messages passing over its section of wires that a serious inroad was made into any possible profits. Now there comes the announcement, made at the meeting of the Eastern Cable company this week, that it had undertaken, with its affiliated connection, the Eastern Extension company, to complete an entirely new cable between Great Britain and Australia via the Cape. There is already a cable connecting the Cape with Great Britain and Australia, and it is more than sufficient for the business done, it is quite likely that this latest attempt to damage the Pacific cable will recoil upon the promoters. The route that is proposed has been advocated before, through the

Indian ocean, touching Mauritius, Keesey Islands and Perth. It does not hold out the prospect of much new business that cannot be handled effectively by the already existing cables of the world. It will annoy rather than seriously injure the Imperial project, which is pretty sure to emerge victorious from all the ordeals it has to pass through. In its difficulties may be seen something of an analogy to human life which, after being crushed for a time under evil influences and persons, arises above them to find the scope and rewards that are justly due to superior powers and high endeavor. When Shelly's Prometheus, chained upon the mountain of suffering for three thousand years, forgives the officers that tortured him, the furies are loosed for one last struggle to dominate him. It is to be hoped that, like Prometheus, the Pacific cable will escape the clutches of the furies, rise above the power that would conquer it, and achieve complete success.

SHIFTING GROUND.

The Vancouver World, the leading Grit organ at Vancouver, has abandoned its demand upon Mr. McBride for surrender of the people's timber and land to foreign speculators. It must, however, as the New Westminster Columbian wisely remarks, remain on record as an advocate of this unpatriotic policy, only abandoned when it became plain that the great mass of the electors commended the firm stand taken by the McBride administration.

Now the World says that it meant to have the ban on the exportation of logs lifted only for a special case—that is, so soon as the gentlemen petitioning should have served their customers on the other side of the line, the export door would have been shut against contemporaries not able to get their export rafts ready so quickly. A pretty scandal this would have made against the lands and works department—to give one set of loggers who came to market in July the privilege of export not available to their neighbors who had marketed in June or to others intending to offer in August or September. With a government of that kind in power, there would be no safety in business except for persons with a "pull," and we are confident that the present administration will never deserve reproach of that character. Their aim is to give stable government, and it is just as essential that there should be stability in the timber export law as that any other regulations affecting commercial affairs should be maintained. There probably is not an opposition candidate who would dare take up the World's advocacy of playing fast and loose with the timber regulations and in fact the cry in some quarters is against the premier for even taking time to consider the application.

BRITAIN'S SELF-APPOINTED GUARDIAN.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie seems to consider himself as a sort of guardian angel, who is to watch over the relations between Great Britain and the United States, although his warnings all seem to be directed to poor Britain, who, in his opinion, most frequently seems likely to go astray. His latest move is to take a hand in the Chamberlain tariff discussion and he writes to the London Times predicting that it will be found impossible for Britain to discriminate in favor of Canadian products against those of the United States without inaugurating a tariff war, wherein she will suffer defeat. The Times declares editorially that it thinks more highly of American instincts of fair play than to believe that an honest attempt to improve Britain's position without injuring the United States will call for the indignation Mr. Carnegie threatens. It further says that it is just possible Mr. Carnegie does not know quite everything about his countrymen, and this statement is borne out by the report coming from London, which says that "The Americans in London, as well as the best thinking people in the States, are justly indignant at the apparent presumption of Andrew Carnegie in attacking Canada, and pretending to speak for the People of the United States." Mr. Carnegie seems to be having a good deal of trouble in keeping Britain in her proper place, which apparently is that of a worthy and dignified but retired old lady, who is to keep herself discreetly in the background of the world's affairs, and content herself with harmless and gossip self-praise concerning her former greatness, or about the wonderful cleverness of her daughter Columbia, who has risen to take the place she formerly held, and to dominate the world.

LOCAL FIRE INSURANCE.

The city engineer has made a comprehensive and pertinent report to the mayor with regard to recent improvements that have been made in the city's water supply. The report has had publicity in these columns. With commendable promptitude His Worship has placed the report and some additional information concerning improved fire fighting facilities before the board

of fire insurance underwriters, in the hope that that organization may be induced to lower the insurance rate in Rossland.

There can be no doubt but that the present rate is unnecessarily high. It is not too much to say that it verges upon the exorbitant. Compared with any other town of its size in Canada or the United States, Rossland has no superior in the maintenance of fire protection. This city has a thoroughly up to date paid fire department. It is equipped with practically everything that the insurance companies have suggested. The town not only has an ample supply of water for fire emergencies, but it is stored in such a position as to give an exceptionally effective pressure in the congested districts. Besides this there is the able fire department maintained by the War Eagle and Centre Star mines at their private expense.

The city is burdened by a heavy debt contracted in the cause of fire protection. Added to this is the costly maintenance of a paid department. Yet, in spite of the excellent spirit manifested by the municipality, the board of fire underwriters treats property owners here with little or no consideration. Rossland has paid the insurance companies an enormous sum in premiums in the aggregate, and they are away ahead of the game. They would be out little or nothing if the whole town were destroyed by fire tomorrow.

Surely, in view of all this, Rossland is entitled to some substantial reductions. With all due deference to the insurance people, we see little use in maintaining such an efficient fire protection system if the town is not to derive a proportionate reduction in the insurance rates.

THE STAR CHAMBER AGAIN.

The Miner has frequently had occasion to voice public sentiment with regard to the propensity of the present city council to hold star chamber proceedings with a view to disguising or entirely withholding certain facts and information that are and should be public property.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found a statement relative to civic affairs that should have come up for public discussion at the last meeting of the council. But it did not and the Miner was, of course, unable to furnish its readers with the particulars in the ordinary course of events. It therefore has been put to much unnecessary trouble, in order to glean the necessary information. These star chamber practices are both foolish and pernicious, are viewed with general disapproval and should and must be abandoned without further delay.

The present council is composed of two factions. One, headed by the mayor, constitutes a majority party of four, which is a unit on every question advocated by his worship. The minority three are a solid phalanx led by Alderman Daniel. There is much rivalry and bitterness between the two elements and an unconscionable amount of contemptible pettiness to boot. We explain these unsavory details only to show our readers the disabilities under which we labor in our endeavor to publish an accurate and unbiased account of events of public interest that originate in the city hall. Hence our objection to star chamber proceedings.

There is altogether too much trimming and untoward and stupid secrecy in the deliberations of the city council. It is not to be supposed for a moment that either The Miner or the general public desires to see or know of a discussion that could be construed as inimical to public policy. All that is desired is an upright and outspoken attitude on all matters of public interest. The ratepayers generally insist upon it, and the popular supposition is that the mayor and aldermen were elected to comply with the wishes of a majority of the community.

THE CITY COUNCIL.

There is a defective sewer in Opera House alley. He who runs may smell. The stench is unbearable. At this season of the year it is a serious menace to the public health. The annual reports of Sanitary Inspector Long have dealt repeatedly with the nuisance. Yet nothing has been done by the authorities to remedy the defect. Dozens of people have made complaint about this matter to the editor of The Miner, who, in turn, has referred them to the proper authorities. Yesterday a brief inspection fully bore out the contention of all complainants and the matter was brought directly to the attention of Chairman Armstrong of the public works. Mr. Armstrong assured The Miner that prompt and satisfactory attention will be paid to the complaint.

It seems that thorough and permanent repair of the sewer in question will entail the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. This is the real reason why the sewer was not put in good order long ago. The chief excuse has been that the city could not afford to make the necessary outlay. No; the city cannot afford to expend money on necessary sanitary improvements. The money is needed for more

important purposes. The mayor, city solicitor and six aldermen must first draw preposterous salaries for their well-meant, but often doubtful, services. The aldermen must get their \$5 or more for each weekly (also weekly) attempt to run some things. The mayor must have his \$1000 per annum for attempting to run everybody and everything. The city solicitor is to be promptly paid the munificent sum of \$840 a year to appear at rare intervals in some trifling police court proceedings of a fleeting nature.

The city council, as constituted at present, is woefully deficient in its ability to do the right thing at the right time. The members were elected on a ticket with reform and economy as its cardinal principles. Their reforms have been of questionable nature; their economies have proved a delusion and a snare. There has been more bungling and less benefits during 1903 than in any year since the days of the Scott regime. The present city solicitorship is a glaring instance of this. It is safe to say that the \$500 that would have been saved in this single instance, if the council had acted in accordance with The Miner's suggestions, would almost have paid for the much needed sewer in Opera House alley. The \$2800 paid to the mayor and aldermen would have gone a long way towards making up an inevitable deficit this year. Then, too, there is the colossal mismanagement of this year's assessment roll. But, for the present, why enumerate more shortcomings? These we now recite are enough to condemn any city council in times like the present.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

According to recent London dispatches, Chamberlainite journals admit that the Canadian trade returns for the last fiscal year, published the other day, tell powerfully for preferential trade. They especially note the advance of 20 per cent in Canada's imports from Britain, whereas similar imports from the United States have only increased 14 per cent. Moreover, the dutiable imports from the Motherland have more than doubled since the establishment of the preferential tariff, the increase being \$20,000,000 during the six years of its operation, whereas during the immediately preceding six years they decreased \$11,000,000.

Sir Edmond Barton having cabled to Mr. Chamberlain that he has no objection to the publication of the minutes of the preferential trade discussion at the colonial conference, for which Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is pressing, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's answer to Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion regarding their publication is awaited with interest. It is understood that it was the peculiarity of the French-Canadian position, which at that time was somewhat acute, owing to the war, and the difficulties of Canadian manufacturers under the preferential tariff that induced the Canadian ministers to put an embargo upon the publication of the details. Anti-Chamberlainites are making a great point of Canada's state bounties as being of the character which Mr. Chamberlain's policy is designed to abolish. Sir William Vernon Harcourt has addressed a special question on the subject to Mr. Chamberlain, who gives details of the bounties, and adds that the question of bounties was not discussed at the colonial conference.

THE MILITIA.

According to Samuel Gompers, the well known American labor leader, "a man who is a wage earner and honorably working at his trade or calling to support himself and those dependent upon him, has not only the right to become a citizen soldier, but that right must be unquestioned."

The militia, i. e., the citizen soldiery of this country, supplies what otherwise might take its place—a large standing army.

The difference between the citizen soldiery of Canada and the large standing armies of several European countries is the difference between freedom and despotism—it is the difference between the conceptions of liberty and tyranny.

While some labor organizations may stand against the arbitrament of international or internal disputes by force of arms, yet they must realize we have not reached the millenium; that in the age in which we live we have not the choice between armed force and absolute disarmament, but the alternative of a large standing army and a small one supplemented by a volunteer citizen soldiery.

We must have law and order, and this can best be assured by a reserve force of militia. After all has been said in defence of the Trail and Nelson smelters, the simple confession has to be made that they are not in a position to treat ore at a figure so low as the American smelters. This cannot be disputed. It is a fact that both sides accept. But it does not explain why the home smelters do not make an effort to improve their facilities for handling the ore output more reasonably.—New Denver Ledger.

POPLAR CREEK

There is a growing discovery in the Poplar Creek, Lardeauings of a big free gold ore discovered in and very few of the veins, while not formed and traceable distances along the surrounding country geological disturbances considered as detrimental. The camp is developed, except for holes, but enough rich posed to justify extension without further delay. That Poplar Creek was in the present season, several months of good of prospectors in that winter sets in, so that an exploratory nature year. By next November have a very fair idea of the new camp.

The new Lardeau mine none too soon. Passing close proximity to Poplar Creek, a great quantity in supplies and material is every indication at the road will be kept on with Poplar Creek. It is reasonable to expect recent discoveries will be a factor in the revival of the Kootenays, and that such will be the better prospecting over than right here in ish Columbia. The Ministry believes that this contains many undiscovered as rich as Rossland, the dary Creek, Ymir and All that is needed to produce is systematic and exploration.

STAY BY THE

If you desire to find prospector or miner, go to other camp and search of believes in staying by the have a prospect for sale cre, the placing of the not be difficult. But if you man that you believe with nelling or crosscutting you he will tell you to go ahead strate your theory, and then he will step in an Mining men who are ml to be shown. The prospect afford to leave his ore, of the property's wealth. Stay by the stuff! men. Competent mining companies have they have succeeded. should succeed. It is to Stay by the stuff!

A PERNICIOUS P

There is bitter competition Rossland, as in other province, against the pert which so largely obtains eastern department sto that can be secured local or greater advantage. who closely analyses this must confess to a feeling that it should prevail as who do their shopping in receiving themselves if gain anything by it in nine cases out of ten a better way for their mozing the merchants of the other few cases, where a cents is to be made by se east, there is an indirect to the town that far more balances the small amount even putting the matter ground, the person who merchants the go-by to some eastern "sweatsh playing a very poor game. But the desire to save a purchase is not always motive. In a great many sort to the eastern es needs follow because e shows the way. There utility in attempting people who have been so d the gift of intellig cannot see where to go w There is also the old a circumstance that "far green." Incredible th seem, many people pre foods-for no other reason come from a distance. W is followed to the exte higher price for an quality—as is very frequ becomes a rather exp Even if there were a s to be reaped from patro ern house, the man or with local pride and p proper degree would cho and make the small sac cents for the sake of b down. The financial s community is affected phase that is made elc such purchases amount season the aggregate