

THE NORTH ARM OF THE FRASER

The Thames and the Clyde may be cited as examples of rivers that contribute to industrial development. Small things may sometimes be compared with great, and when one considers the large populations gathering on the north and south banks of the North Arm, Vancouver, that these populations comprise many thousands of industrial workers, skilled craftsmen, men of enterprise and capital, and that behind these is a vast country with unlimited natural resources, it requires no great stretch of the imagination to see that the North Arm might, if properly developed, become a Thames or a Clyde. "in little."

South Vancouver has a frontage on the North Arm of four and a half miles and a population of some forty thousand. South Vancouver is the largest municipality in Canada, its population is mostly industrial. It is, to a great extent, the "dormitory" of Vancouver, its population going into the city to work. If the North Arm were dredged and developed, a vast proportion of this population could be employed in home industries and much time and money saved.

Richmond, Point Grey and Burnaby have also claims for consideration based on area and population, and the industrial character of the populations.

It is hardly necessary to point out that such an artery as the North Arm must be a great factor in the prosperity of Vancouver and New Westminster, which should be better linked together by a stream of industry and commerce.

The necessity and importance of this dredging work has long been recognized and admitted by Government and public works authorities.

In order to develop the North Arm of the Fraser river to its fullest capacity commensurate with its importance as the southern harbor of Greater Vancouver on the fresh water, the Dominion Government created a Harbor Board Commission, giving them large powers to expropriate land, to build docks and railways, etc. The Commission entered upon its duties in November, 1913, and took borings and prepared plans of a very ambitious character. These plans had in view the ultimate development of the Municipalities abutting on the waterway. The war has, of course, made a modification of the original scheme necessary, but although the Municipalities concerned fully recognize that the plans as originally made cannot be carried out at present, the mayors, councils and leading men and the Boards of Trade contend that something should be done

on a more modest but efficient scale to meet the industrial requirements of a large and important part of the Province.

The North Arm of the Fraser runs from the westerly part of Point Grey to New Westminster a length of some 12 miles, and throughout that entire length it is skirted by lands capable of great development. Some of these riverside lands are utilized for agriculture and the holders of these agricultural lands will and the dredging operations by allowing the silt dredged to be deposited on their lands. In some cases the land will be thereby improved and agriculture an industry of greater importance now than ever benefited.

Already, as will be seen from the appendix, in spite of the conditions not being encouraging, many industries of considerable magnitude, employing much labor, have been established on the North Arm.

The size and importance of these industrial enterprises, the size of the pay roll of these undertakings combined, will, we venture to assert, come as a surprise to those who have not kept touch with the growth of the Municipalities abutting on the North Arm.

Hampered as these industries have been by war conditions, they have felt hampered as much, or more, by the physical disability of the lack of depth in the waterway, having, for instance, to get material in small quantities which could be bought in larger and cheaper bulk quantities were there depth enough for the draught of a tanker or large vessel.

As will be seen from the appendix the complaints from existing industries are loud, deep and more than justified, and it is a serious reflection for an industrial community to consider that had there been depth in the waterway, shipyards and other industries of national importance would have located in the Municipalities, adding very much to their advantage and prospects. Let us, with the emphasis which justifies repetition, say that the necessity of the work we ask

has long been recognized. Years ago plans were prepared by Dr. Le Barron and other engineers, but the work only proceeded far enough to look like a promise to the ear to be broken in the hope.

Permit us to point out that South Vancouver, Point Grey and Richmond have already expended jointly a sum of some \$22,500 in plans and preliminary work in carrying out the scheme of the Harbor Board. The Government has expended a very large sum in work which will be largely abortive if not carried through. The channel will be of no use for vessels of heavy draught if such channel