

I reckon that my fellow-citizens, whatever may be their race or religion, will acknowledge that I thus assisted in a large measure a most progressive and patriotic achievement.

Should you honor me with your confidence by calling upon me to preside over the City's administration, on the first of next February, I shall devote my entire energy and the experience I acquired in twelve years of public service to work towards improving our streets and beautifying Montreal generally.

I shall do my utmost for the adoption of a by-law, by virtue of the Act I secured from the Legislature, with the object of preparing a General Plan of all the streets to be opened on Montreal Island, thus avoiding expropriation costs for our successors.

Another vital question to which I may call your attention is the borrowing power of the City.

The last Legislation Committee, to which I belonged, carried, on my suggestion, a draft amendment to the Charter for reducing the City's borrowing power from 15 p.c., as it now is, to 12 p. c. with a sinking fund. Not only was that project approved unanimously by the Council and Board of Control, but it was particularly recommended by the esteemed and experienced man of whose valuable services we were recently deprived, Mr. William Robb, the Ex-City Treasurer.

It is my inmost conviction that, considering the present state of the City's finances, such a reduction of the borrowing power commands the most serious consideration of all who feel an interest in its progress and development.

Business men of all classes, as well as the tax-payers having the City's prosperity at heart, must easily realize that it is high time to check the ever-growing tide of our consolidated debt.

As the interest on the loans is paid out of the revenue, and, moreover, there is no sinking fund to most of the loans floated so far, our yearly revenue will soon be totally absorbed by the interest.

My remedy of such a state of things consists in reducing the borrowing power from 15 to 12 p. c. with the constitution of a sinking fund.

We shall in this way keep our revenue for the management of the various civic departments as well as lighting and street cleaning, and the ever ascending movement of the debt will come to an end.

According to the present Charter, the City is authorized to borrow every year, for permanent work, a sum representing 15 p. c. of the increase on the assessable real estate; but there is not any proviso constituting a sinking fund for these loans. So that, instead of being paid at maturity, they are necessarily renewed.

It is urgent to stop a system so defective, not to say absurd. We must provide for the repayment of our loans whilst affecting our revenue as little as possible.

But what would happened if, instead of reducing our borrowing power, we should increase the same by 25 p. c. with a sinking fund? Our consolidated debt which is fifty odd millions to-day, would all at once rise to \$100,000,000, and our revenue would not be sufficient for paying the interest and the sinking fund.

In spite of it being the main plank of my opponent's platform, I sincerely believe that my fellow-citizens, desiring to maintain their own reputation as business men and having the City's progress at heart, shall never consent to the adoption of the 25 p. c. increase on the City's borrowing power.

As to the other parts of Mr. Marcil's program, they are for the most so extraordinary that they carry with them their own condemnation.

What is the use, for instance, to promise ten tickets for twenty-five cents, when the City and the Company are both bound by a contract which only expires in 1922? Since when have we seen a party, be he a millionaire or the humblest rate-payer, changing the clauses of a contract without the consent of the other party? Once more I say that this promise of my opponent cannot be considered seriously.

Mr. Marcil promises that, should he be the next Mayor, he will cause an immense bridge to be constructed, within his two years of office, from Sherbrooke Street across the St. Lawrence river to the South shore. Can electoral pledges be more extravagant?

As to his so-called proportional taxation, it would consist in paying for the sewers and the construction and winter-cleaning of permanent sidewalks, not by a special tax apportioned upon the land alone in proportion to its frontage, as at present, but upon the whole property, land, houses and all. Far from being equitable such an apportionment would cause a most crying injustice, as it would work to the single benefit of the proprietors of vacant lots and to the detriment of those who own buildings.

I shall not dwell upon the abolition of the real estate qualification. Everyone knows that, for the past few years, a measure to that effect was approved by one City Council after another, but the Legislative Council refused to sanction the same.

Now, I have been nearly twelve years in the City Council. My opponent sat there for eighteen months only. I have behind me a record of labor and devotedness for the City's welfare. Mr. Marcil did nothing during his short stay in the Council. I greatly assisted in making Greater Montreal whilst my opponent objected to the annexation of Notre-Dame de Grâce and suggested the union with Westmount rather than the metropolis.

I make no promises; but I submit actions and accomplished facts.

If you believe that I deserve the honor of being the first magistrate of our beautiful City, then vote for me on the first of next February.

If, on the contrary, you are of the opinion that my opponent is better able to safeguard the interests of the City, then vote for Mr. Marcil.

I have faith in your judgment, and whatever may be your verdict, I shall accept it graciously.

L. A. Lavallee.