

RIVERDALE DISTRICT.

Since our reference to the formation of a business men's association for the portion of Toronto east of the River Don we have received a letter, dated April 7th, from the secretary of that body. He states that the committee has the by-laws for a Board of Trade drafted, and the nominations are ready. A general meeting is to be held on the 19th inst. to complete organization.

The committee this week escorted the Mayor and Controllers through Ashbridge's Bay district to look over the ground and recommend a route for the proposed spur line, referred to in your report of our first meeting. Our committee had already recommended as the best route the 150-foot reservation for roadway along the north shore of Ashbridge's Bay, and we understand that the Engineer has advised the Board of Control that this should be the route. If, in the future, wharves are built along this water-front (and this we are looking forward to), it is necessary that the railway, to be of much value to the industries in that district, should be in close proximity to the shipping. I am inclined to think that all the Controllers and Aldermen who have looked carefully into the matter are agreed as to the wisdom of this selection. And everything seems to point to the fact that the railway spur will be built in the near future. At our meeting yesterday Alderman Fleming handed us this memo from the Engineer:

The Board of Control have requested me to report to your committee upon the cost of constructing a railway track upon the marsh from a connection with the Grand Trunk Railway tracks at Cherry Street to Leslie Street. The approximate cost, including rails, ties, piles, trestle-work and the necessary filling will be \$46,000.

"We are also given to understand that all this work could be completed in three months from the time it is commenced. Our committee is to go before the Board of Works at the next meeting to urge them to undertake the building of this spur line as soon as possible, and to carry it through without delay. With this railway an accomplished fact, think of the inducements which could be offered to manufacturers to locate in this district! Our provisional committee has also taken up other matters, such as local express delivery and collection. There is an express office at the G.T.R. depot, it is true, but no delivery as yet. We are besides asking the Grand Trunk Railway to change the name of their station from "Queen Street East" to "Riverdale." A petition will likely be prepared before long asking the Post-office Department to build a branch office here. Other minor matters—matters of purely local interest—are also being taken up. The building of a bridge connecting Wilton Avenue and Elliott Street is also in hand."

—We have referred before to the good scheme being inaugurated in various towns and cities of British Columbia to form Population Clubs. Now another idea of the same nature is being promulgated; or, in other words, a Million Club for the whole of the Pacific Province. The idea is for each citizen of the Province to send the facts about British Columbia to at least one person in other parts of the world, and invite correspondence with a local committee, that will tell the truth about the land and the opportunities for success offered by each part of the Province. Everybody will be invited to join and pay a dollar a year to defray the expense of literature, correspondence and advertising the country. Already leading citizens of Slocan City, Nakusp, Nelson, Midway, Rossland, Trail, Vancouver, Revelstoke, Greenwood, Grand Forks, etc., have signed for membership. The probability is that an effort will be made to have the facts about the Province go out to the world on every piece of mail that is sent by any local citizen, either on the envelope or on the stationery. Some hotel-men are going to have envelopes printed with facts about British Columbia on the back and facts about their section on the front. It may be said of the enterprising people of our Far West that they not only deserve success; they command it.

HIGHER GRADES OF UNITED STATES CONSULS

The time will apparently soon be gone by when the travelling American will, as has often been the case in the past, seek the advice or assistance of the British consul in a foreign port or city, rather than submit his case to the doubtful knowledge and experience of the American consul. There is now also good reason to hope that the American consul of comic opera and drama will within a measurable time be far less representative of actual conditions than is the case at present. In other words, as reported in our news columns this week, the bill for the reform of the consular service has become a law through the signature of President Roosevelt.

The main provisions of this law are stated in another column, and show that the law is a fairly comprehensive one. Much improvement in the character of our consuls is to be looked for from the reclassifying of the service and the changing of the consul's remuneration to the form of a straight and adequate salary, instead of having his income, as in the past, based largely upon fees. The provision for the systematic inspection and supervision of consuls and consulates should also be productive of good results.

There is no question that the dignity of this country abroad will be enhanced and its reputation increased by the employment of a higher grade of men to represent our mercantile interests abroad, and the consular reform law, though by no means final, is a long step in this direction.

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