

# THAT BOARD OF MUDDLERS,

Known as the Board of Control, Does Not Know Where It is At on the Fire Chief Question.

## MAYOR SHAW IS NON-COMMITTAL,

As He Generally is at This Time of the Year—A Subway at Lansdowne-Avenue.

The members of the Board of Control are apparently afraid to handle openly or express any decided opinions regarding the appointment of a successor to ex-Chief Graham. They met yesterday afternoon, and for about two hours talked the matter over in a desultory fashion. All the applications for the position that have so far been sent in were laid on the table, but for reasons best known to themselves the controllers seemed to be rather diffident about proposing any names or enlarging upon the qualifications and general fitness of any particular candidate for the office. Every little while during the meeting an embarrassing silence would occur, and the gentlemen composing that august body would suddenly glance at each other with a questioning look, and as much as to say, "Why don't you break the ice and announce the name of the man that you know very well you are going to support? But the controllers all maintained an ominous silence. They looked as if an unseen influence or fear of the consequences were the reasons that restrained them from blurring on the name of the man. They all appeared, however, with the exception perhaps of the Mayor, who said he thought the right man had not yet applied, to be willing to settle the matter there and then. A compromise was finally arrived at, and on motion of Ald. Burns, the following candidates will be invited to present themselves personally: Mayor P. E. Mainly, George Gray, James Thompson, Acting Chief Thompson, Donald Guthrie (chief Rossland Fire Brigade), Fireman Gibson (Montreal) and Fireman Gilbert (Hamilton). In the cases of the last three mentioned their expenses to Toronto will be paid.

**Has He Any Chance?**

The board had been talking for some time and had just fallen into a brown study, when Ald. Burns, who had been gazing upon the photograph of Donald Guthrie, discovered that he appeared to be an excellent man for the job. He was just the

right age, and physically he was almost perfect. To Ald. Burns' mind he was also a man who possessed a considerable amount of executive ability.

The Mayor remarked that Rossland was a long distance to bring him from.

Ald. Burns: This matter must be settled as soon as possible. We must get a chief right away, as I understand the Fire and Light Committee refuse to reorganize the brigade until a new head is appointed.

**The Aldermen Interfere.**

The Mayor then took the opportunity of expressing his views on the question of running the brigade. He contended that the officers and men should be appointed by the chief and the system of firm running after the manner of the London Fire Brigade, when they got into trouble should be done away with. "As it now is," he said, "the chief is only nominally the head, and what he would like is to give the chief, when appointed, absolute power and then hold him responsible. The difficulty now is that when the men are punished they appeal to the aldermen, and knowing that they are friends of theirs they are liable to become less diligent in their duty."

**A Nonsensical Idea.**

To offset this the Mayor suggested that when a man is accused of breaking the rules in any way his case should be referred to the Police Commissioners for consideration. The men, on the other hand, could, if they thought they were being unfairly treated, appeal to the aldermen, and this would be a good body to refer them to.

**Ald. Lynd's Perilous Inquiry.**

Ald. Lynd: That is an argument in favor of placing the brigade under a commission. The Mayor: No, it is not, except as far as the appeal is concerned. The commissioners are accustomed to deal with matters of this kind, and they would be a good body to refer them to.

**Ald. Lynd:** Would you agree to place the brigade in the Police Commissioners' hands?

**Mayor Shaw:** Not by a long chalk. But we must have somebody to sit in judgment on the men and that body must not be composed of aldermen.

**Lynd:** I am not prepared to appoint a chief. His Worship said it was very important that a good man should be secured, and at present he is not prepared to recommend any one above the other.

**Ald. Burns:** Willing to deal with the applications sent in so far, but thought that the men should first be brought to the city and be put through some sort of test to satisfy all that they were fit for the position.

**Woods Wants Toronto Man.**

**Mayor Shaw:** All right, go along and make some suggestion.

**Ald. Woods:** who had so far taken very little part in the discussion, brightened up at the call for suggestions, and volunteered the information that he was not prepared to ask any man from an outside place. He was sure that the board felt that a city man would be the best for the job. He would have the advantage of knowing the city and the layout of the large public buildings.

**Ald. Burns:** Now, Mr. Mayor, what steps are you going to take? The time is option.

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tune and the circumstances are such that a new chief is an immediate necessity. I agree that if we can get a suitable man from Toronto it would be the best, but we must first size him up and compare him with others, but I would give him the preference.

**Get an Outsider.**

Ald. Lynd thought the wisest course to pursue would be to get an outsider man, who is unknown to the brigade, and, therefore, free from influence.

**Ald. Woods:** was in favor of limiting the selection to the four city candidates, and moved a resolution to that effect, which he afterwards withdrew.

**Does Your Worship think it advisable to appoint a man from the brigade?"** enquired Ald. Lynd.

**He Always is at Election Time.**

The Mayor, in reply, just smiled sweetly. "I have not expressed an opinion yet, either way," he said; "I am non-committal."

**Ald. Sheppard Kicks.**

Ald. Sheppard waited on the board with the request that they send on to Council what they desired the Fire and Light Committee to do in the way of re-organization. He said that it had been stated that the committee and not done its duty.

A further discussion over the selection of a chief followed, in which Ald. Lynd expressed his willingness to vote on the matter there and then. The other controllers, however, were in no hurry to make the appointment, and the whole question was finally dropped and the City Clerk was instructed to communicate with those mentioned in Ald. Burns' resolution, inviting them to come to the city.

The next business taken up was the complaint raised by some against the erection of a gas plant on the Island on the grounds that it would be a nuisance to the residents there and detract from the place as a summer resort.

The City Clerk was instructed to send cards out to each person residing on the Island, asking for their opinion on the subject. If a majority desire it, the work will be ordered to go on.

**Wants to Know the Cost.**

Ald. Burns, who some time ago refused to sign Architect Lennox's pay roll until he submitted a full list of those employed in the new City Hall, enquired if any of the employees had been paid yet. He was assured they had not, and then he moved that the City Commissioner bring in a report as to what it will cost to run and control the building.

The motion carried.

**Subway for Lansdowne-Avenue.**

The report of the Board of Works, recommending that a vote be taken on the construction of a 34-foot subway and two feet sidewalk, under the Lansdowne-Avenue crossing, to be paid for on the local improvement plan, was concurred in. The cost will be in the neighborhood of \$50,000, exclusive of land damages.

**Board of Works Meet.**

The Board of Works, which also met yesterday afternoon, took a decided stand in the Metropolitan Railway trouble. According to the agreement between the city and the company the former can compel the latter to run horse cars on their tracks within the city limits, and unless they agree to the city's contention in the whole matter this will be enforced.

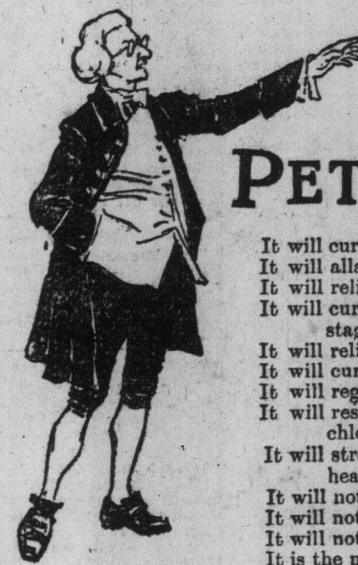
The Corporation Counsel gave it as his opinion that the agreement is valid, and that the arguments of the company's solicitor before the Privy Council were absurd. He advised the city to take a strong stand.

Forty recruits for the Royal Grenadiers were drilled at the Armouries last night by Sergt. Noble. A like number of G.O.R. recruits were also given their initial military manoeuvres.

The City Clerk was instructed to send

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