

WARM DEBATE ON NEW PARK QUESTION

AT REGULAR MEETING OF CIVIC FATHERS

Committee Recommends Purchase of North Ward Property For Recreation Grounds.

All chairs were occupied at the regular weekly business gathering of the city council held Tuesday. The proceedings were opened by an exceedingly lively interview with Mrs. Drowsditch and her son, Abner, regarding the proposed destruction of old sheds upon their property fronting on Pandora street. A full account appears in another column. A report was received from the city assessor upon the contemplated redistribution of wards, while the park committee recommended the purchase of a site in the North Ward for recreation grounds for the benefit of that locality.

On motion of Ald. Hall the matter was laid on the table for a week in order to give the aldermen an opportunity to look into the details of the scheme. Richard Hall and thirty-two other residents of Dunedin street and vicinity asked that it be opened clear through to Burnside road. They argued that as the lower part of the thoroughfare was well built up it was entitled to some consideration. Referred to the streets, bridges and sewers committee.

W. A. Beckwith drew attention to the need of a light at the corner of Prior street and Hillside avenue. Referred to the light committee.

Duncan McMillan and other property owners on the west side of Quadra street between certain points protested against the laying of cement sidewalks in that locality. They claimed ignorance of the council's intention until quite lately, having had no official notification receiving the information through the medium of the newspaper.

Ald. Vincent moved, seconded by Ald. Stewart that the by-law remain intact, the work being carried out as originally planned.

In this connection Mayor Morley spoke of the prevalence of encroachment upon city property by private homesteads. He thought some method of notification should be given the citizens concerned to move their fences back. In Seattle, he believed, there was a law enforced which provided that a house standing upon corporation land for ten years or more could not be removed. Of course there was no such legislation in vogue on the Canadian side of the line, but it went to show the possibilities.

Ald. Fell was of the opinion that some person should be given the duty of attending to this question. He did not think it would be a very difficult matter to keep property owners within their own domain now that the permanent sidewalks were becoming so common. He added that an attempt had been made by the municipality to obtain legislation to enable it to take action in extreme cases, but the effort had failed. With the assistance of the municipalities better success might be achieved were another endeavor decided upon.

The finance committee, among other recommendations, asked that \$100 be granted to clear liabilities in connection with the Victoria Day celebrations. They are asked that accounts amounting to \$8,789.94 be paid. The report was adopted.

Ald. Davey drew attention to the proposed expenditure of an additional \$750 for the completion of the road embankment work. This sum, he said, had been saved from the improvement of Rock Bay bridge, and was contemplated to turn it over to another undertaking. In view of the fact that the auditor's report showed that the council was \$17,000 in arrears, he believed that it was poor policy to thus dispose of any possible savings, however small.

Ald. Vincent moved that the recommendation be adopted. He pointed out that the work had already practically been completed, and would have to be paid for.

After some further discussion, in which Ald. Davey protested against having such an expenditure forced on the council, the motion carried.

Another recommendation was taken up, outlining some rather intricate financing. Its object was the diversion of funds from various previous proposed undertakings in order to make up the sum necessary to pay for the street sprinkler.

While the debate on this question was underway, Ald. Douglas asked: "Will we have any money for band concerts?" The tone of the inquiry was anxious and somewhat apprehensive and created considerable amusement among the civic solons.

Going back to the subject at issue, Ald. Fell did not agree with the divisions recommended. He protested vigorously against that relating to the Old Quadra street cemetery. He didn't think that the failure of the government to aid in the purchase of the corporation lessened in the least the responsibility in respect to keeping it in proper order.

Upon motion of Ald. Davey it was decided to lay over the latter part of the report.

The Home for the Aged and Infirm committee reported having investigated the claims of Wm. Black for admission and recommended that it be granted. John E. Salt, another applicant, had also been found entitled to the protection of the institution. Permission was asked for the expenditure of \$90 for an improved water supply.

Carried.

The park committee reported in part as follows:

Gentlemen—Your park committee having considered the undermentioned subjects, beg to present the following amended report:

Re Park for North Ward—Your committee, in company with the city assessor, having inspected the properties which have been offered for sale to the city as suitable sites for the North Ward park, are of opinion that blocks 2 and 7, Finlayson estate, containing 9.96-100 acres, price \$21,000, form the most suitable piece for the required purpose, provided that Princess avenue, between the said two blocks were closed so as to throw the two blocks together, and in recommending the acquisition of them, your committee would suggest that it be made a condition precedent to any agreement for their purchase that all steps necessary to close Princess avenue may be taken by and at the cost of the owners of said two blocks.

With reference to financing the purchase of said two blocks, your committee have taken into consideration the fact that to-day the city owns several pieces of property that are totally unproductive of any revenue or benefit to it, and which, if sold, would become subject to city taxation.

The following is a list of the property which your committee are of opinion might with advantage be disposed of by the city: lots, Niagara street, value \$1,000; lots, Spring Ridge, value \$250; lots, James Bay, value \$17,400.

Your committee are therefore of opinion, and would recommend that a by-law should be submitted to the ratepayers as soon as possible for their sanction to sell

Map, painted to show the various wards, accompanies this report.

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such of the above properties as may require the authority of a by-law to enable the council to dispose of them, and it should be provided in such by-law that the proceeds of the above property should, as and when the same were sold, be applied in and towards the reduction of the purchase price of the said two blocks.

Section 57 of the Municipal Clauses Act gives power to the council by resolution to purchase real property. We would therefore recommend that a further option of purchase of blocks 2 and 7 be obtained from the owners, and that the property be acquired and paid for out of the current revenue. Further, that the provincial government be requested to sanction the application of any money realized by the sale of the lots in James Bay held for park purposes, from time to time, to reimburse the city for the money advanced for the purchase of the said blocks 2 and 7.

It was taken up seriatim. On the recommendation providing for the disposal of a portion of the Old Men's Home property to raise funds, Ald. Hall opposed it strenuously. He mentioned the possibility of necessary additions to the Home for the accommodation of a larger number of inmates. Also he was of the opinion that the old men should be allowed ground for the cultivation of a garden. He moved that the clause be struck out.

Ald. Yates claimed that there would be plenty of room for a garden even after the proposed area had been disposed of. He said that the present inmates couldn't work.

Ald. Hall's motion carried, there being three dissenting voices, those of Ald. Davey, Yates and Douglas.

There was some discussion over the last two clauses. Ald. Stewart spoke rather strongly. He favored the purchase of a park in North Ward. But he did not think it would be a very difficult matter to keep property owners within their own domain now that the permanent sidewalks were becoming so common. He added that an attempt had been made by the municipality to obtain legislation to enable it to take action in extreme cases, but the effort had failed. With the assistance of the municipalities better success might be achieved were another endeavor decided upon.

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Shipping

Capt. Schonwandt, representing the owners of the German steamer Mariechen, still has that vessel to dispose of. The auction at which the steamer was offered for sale Tuesday afternoon attracted probably a score of marine men to Esquimalt, where the ship lies in drydock, and it failed completely to arouse any spirited competition. Only one bid was made, namely, by J. H. Greer, who offered \$18,000. This offer was declined. Capt. Schonwandt remarking that he would rather keep the ship than part with her for such a sum.

The auction is the third attempt which the owners have made to make some disposition of the steamer. They first called for tenders for the making of repairs. These were regarded as too high. Then she was offered for sale by private tender, with no result, and Tuesday's effort met with the same disappointment. The Mariechen is owned by M. Jensen, of Hamburg, having acquired her from C. Irving & Co. of London, England, some time ago. Originally she was known as the Clan Matheson, and was then operated in the Chinese trade. She was built at Glasgow in 1883, her tonnage being 2,531 register.

In making disposition of the steamer there are two parties concerned—the owner and underwriters—and between these has arisen a dispute which involves a large sum of money. In the law it is held that as the steamer was insured for a total loss, the owner cannot recover if she sells for more than it has cost to raise her and tow her to Esquimalt. Into the dispute enters a question also as to freight charges, so that in all the ship represents a rather knotty problem.

In the meanwhile the steamer is in drydock and expenses are piling up on somebody. Eventually she must be repaired here by some one, for she is not in a condition to leave Esquimalt without temporary repairs being made at Esquimalt. It is also stated that the owner of the ship the result of yesterday's auction, and he is to-day awaiting instructions.

Northern advices say that the freight at White Horse has been cleared up and all freight which is being handled by the White Pass and Yukon route is shipped down river without delay.

SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR

FINANCE MINISTER ESTIMATES REVENUE Thirty Thousand Dollars at Least in Provincial Treasury at the End of June.

The city solicitor's resolution, which is as follows, was read:

Whereas lots 4 and 5, block 3, Beckley Farm (Niagara street), lot 1, block 60, Spring Ridge (Pembroke street), lot 30, block 68, part 73, Ridge road, Victoria, and the real property of the corporation are not required for corporate purposes;

And whereas lots 1451 to 1466, being the whole of block 60, and lots 1556 to 1567, inclusive, block 66, James Bay, Victoria city, are held by the corporation for park purposes; and under the provisions of the Act, 1895 (chap. 45 of 1895) may be sold with the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor in council and the proceeds applied to the acquisition and improvement of the city for park purposes;

And whereas the council of the corporation purpose to purchase blocks 2 and 7, Finlayson estate, Victoria city (containing 9.96 acres) for park purposes;

And whereas it is proposed forthwith to apply the proceeds of the sale of the said lots in James Bay;

And whereas time is required for the advantageous sale of the said lands, and it is deemed expedient that the council in this regard may not realize, and we will have somewhere about the same surplus as at the end of 1904-5, which was about \$43,000.

"In only one item has the revenue fallen below the estimate, that of the Chinese opium tax. In 1904-5 the province was expected from this, but I do not think there will be anything left after expenses have been paid. This deficit, however, is a cause for congratulation. The enormous increase in the lumber industry has been mainly responsible for our bettered financial position. The estimated revenue from this source, \$400,000, will be exceeded by about \$100,000, or twenty per cent. This surplus alone will more than cover the estimated deficit. Mining receipts have also been larger than expected. As an instance of this I may say the Vancouver office had an excess of thirty per cent., and many other agencies, including that at Victoria, have also brought added revenues.

"The principal deficit in revenue that had to be met was, of course, the deficit on the opium tax. The province is now estimated \$258,050 from this source, which is now entirely wiped out. But there is in prospect for next year a reduction of fixed charges that will go a long way to meet this. The loans of \$77 and \$97 will mature then. These at present take \$140,000 each year from the revenue, but this drain will cease in 1907. This will leave a large sum available for public improvements that it is at present impossible to undertake.

"I think the people of the province can look with confidence, therefore, to the betterment of many lines of government service, and to the prosperity in the near future. It is probable also, that taxation may be reduced, as the continued prosperous conditions, we have every right to expect, warrant the assertion that revenue will increase largely.

"With the opening up of new districts the revenue from real property taxes may become greater, but I do not look for much of an increase in this direction. As settlement becomes more general there will be new municipalities spring up and local bodies take charge of community improvements. That being the case, there should be no difficulty in going ahead on life lines and bringing, as far as the power of the province lies, all districts available within direct communication of some method of transportation."

—R. M. Palmer, secretary to the bureau of information, left Tuesday for Douglas Lake and Nicola. He will be absent a couple of weeks.

SCHOOL STUDIES UNDER DISCUSSION

INTERESTING DEBATE AT INSTITUTE MEETING

The High School Entrance Examinations and Department Instruction Among Subjects Considered.

At one of the sessions of section A of the Provincial Teachers' Institute, held last week, an exceedingly interesting discussion took part on a number of interesting educational matters which owing to the lack of space the Times was unable to publish.

There was a large attendance and one of the first matters introduced was the nature studies now included in the curriculum of the public schools.

W. C. Coatham, of New Westminster, characterized the nature study examination papers as "too narrow," and recommended a wider range and variety of choice in the questions. The problems in drawing were unstable and not explicit.

S. Moore objected to four-story fractions; to the difficulty of the grammar; to the extent of the geography, and to the drawing in toto.

L. Tait expressed his dissatisfaction with the present over-crowded curriculum. Teachers were compelled to " cram," and were, in doing this, frequently blamed for what was the fault of the department. He would like the amount required in literature and nature study lessened, and suggested that in history a particular study of one period, to vary each term, be assigned, rather than, as now, a general knowledge of the whole being demanded.

R. Landells, of Golden, agreed with the former speaker as to the burden-omeness of the history, and thought that in some degrees this might be relieved by combining the study with that of literature. He further protested that the time allowed for each examination was too short.

Miss W. Williams, of Victoria, thought recent papers showed a decided improvement, but considered the nature study too extensive.

The uniformity of standard for high school entrance occasioned little remark, other than that no reason could be given for the disturbance of existing conditions.

The meeting unanimously decided that there was no practicable substitute for the entrance examination, but was divided as to whether pupils who failed by a few marks in one or two subjects should be allowed a supplemental examination, or pass by recommendation of their respective teachers.

In reply to the question as to the desirability of permitting an election of subjects, Mr. Coatham and Mr. King, Surrey, registered a decided "no." The latter said that this became but a means of dodging difficult subjects and cited extreme instances of students supposedly advanced in high school work who were ignorant of even the parts of speech.

On the other hand, J. M. Campbell said that alternative studies, geometry and latin, instead of history, had been tried in the Boys' Central school, and had proved, from the pupils' standpoint, highly beneficial. It entailed, however, much extra work for the principal.

S. Moore stated that many trustees and parents had requested him to recommend that book-keeping be taught in the boys as more valuable than the mechanical drawing now in vogue, and to the girls' theory of music.

Mr. Tait also favored an election of subjects, particularly with regard to the aim of the course. He stated that the requirements and best interests of the scholars, "We may make mistakes," he said; "a department even is not infallible, but we do our best. A good old-fashioned paper is in reality an intricate problem, and when in this way I shall at length succeed in pleasing every teacher we shall surely have achieved the millennium."

The session then proceeded to consider the introduction of departmental teaching in Common schools. Many arguments pro and con were advanced, but one school, it appeared, had actually made the experiment.

City Superintendent Argue, of Vancouver, in opening the debate, stated that this method of instruction was intended to relieve those students who desired to specialize in certain subjects. Further advantage was the contact it afforded with the personalities of the several teachers. He recognized, however, that there might result a tendency to over study; pressure might be probably would be brought to bear upon the pupils by each teacher in favor of his particular subject. This could be obviated by the principals specifying the maximum amount of home work to be exacted in each branch of study.

"A more serious objection would be the lack of correlation of studies. In some measure this might be supplied by harmony of the different teachers and frequent consultation.

D. M. Robertson, of Vancouver, opposed any such innovation. He averred that the work would then be done by specialists, the "cranks" who would lay undue emphasis upon their own particular study.

Mr. Tait had proved the scheme a success in North Ward school. "The ideal of a teacher," he said, "will teach every subject equally well, and with equal enthusiasm. But the ideal teacher does not exist." He pointed out that it would be a decided advantage to the pupils to receive instruction in special subjects from those most competent to impart it. By this means greater breadth, and also more continuity of teaching would be obtained than by the "one-teacher" system.

Mr. Caspell, of Victoria, and Mr. Bennett, of Cumberland, also approved the benefit derived from contact with various minds.

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Notice is hereby given that, 60 days after date, we, the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay, known as the Hudson's Bay Company, intend to apply to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works for permission to purchase for pasture purposes the following described land situated in Coast District, B. C., about four miles north-easterly from the east end of Stuart's Landing, viz.: Situated from a post marked H. B. C. S. E. corner, thence astronomically east 40 chains, thence astronomically west 80 chains, thence astronomically south 40 chains, thence astronomically north 40 chains to point of commencement, containing three hundred and twenty acres more or less.

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Notice is hereby given that, 60 days after date, we, the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading into Hudson's Bay, known as the Hudson's Bay Company, intend to apply to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works for permission to purchase for pasture purposes the following described land situated in Coast District, B. C., about four miles north-easterly from the east end of Stuart's Landing, viz.: Situated from a post marked H. B. C. S. E. corner, thence astronomically east 40 chains, thence astronomically west 80 chains, thence astronomically south 40 chains, thence astronomically north 40 chains to point of commencement, containing three hundred and twenty acres more or less.

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