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HAMILTON OFFICE.

No. 5 Arcade, James-street north.

WHOLESALE DEALERS.

P. W. Beale, 381 Spadina-avenue.

George Messer, 707 Yonge-street.

Mrs. Moriarty, 1426 Queen west.

ELECTRIC AND GAS MONOPOLIES.

Here is how the gas monopoly feels

on the public:

We pay the company a clean \$100,000

annually as interest on a capital stock

of \$1,000,000. By profiting from the

great reduction in prices and from new

and simplified inventions and by

eliminating the water from

stock, the company's entire plant

could be duplicated to-day

for less than \$1,000,000. Besides, we

would not have to pay 10 per cent. in-

terest on capital if we had not

our own. The city can borrow money

for 4 per cent. Our annual interest

charge on capital should be \$40,000. It

is \$100,000.

We lose \$100,000 a year on this item

alone. This is equivalent to 25 cents per

thousand on every 1000 feet of gas.

It has been proved conclusively that

gas can be sold at 75 cents and still

allow a dividend of 10 per cent. on capital

invested. This was proved by ex-

perts in Cleveland three years ago, and

sooner than allow the facts of the case

to reach the public the two companies

of that city agreed to reduce the price

of gas to 75 cents.

The Consumers' Gas Company can re-

duce the price of gas to 75 cents and

thousand and still pay its 10 per cent.

dividend.

By continuing the monopoly we permit

the company to tax us another 25 cents

per thousand.

A civic gas plant would cut the price

of gas right in two. Instead of \$1 per

thousand we would be paying \$500,000

Toronto gas monopoly taxes the city

\$250,000 a year.

Our aldermen are making no move to

have the Legislature free us from the

greedy octopus.

What we have said about gas is almost

paralleled in electricity.

The two companies have combined. One

company monopolizes the lighting, the

other incandescent lighting. The two

companies fix rates to suit themselves,

and neither the council nor the people

have redress against any rates the com-

pany may choose to levy.

The only condition that enables the two

electric companies to agree on a combina-

tion is that one of them shall not

hold the contract for street lighting.

This contract now yields the company

that holds it \$40,000 a year profit. The

manager of this company stated before

a civic committee a few months ago

that his company made nothing out of

its contract with the city, that its profits

were derived from what he called the

commercial business of the company.

That was not the fact. The company

got \$108 per light. They acknowledge it

does not cost them more than \$74 a

light.

Suppose we accept their statement that

\$74 is the cost price of one lamp and

that the company gets the contract. What

deduction can we make? Simply this:

The two companies will adjust rates to

suit the changed conditions. They, to-

gether, monopolize the electric business

in Toronto just as effectively as the Con-

sumers' Gas Company monopolizes the gas

business.

Will Mayor Kennedy or Ald. McMur-

rich tell us how we can prevent the price

of electric current for motors and lights

jumping up 20 per cent. immediately

upon this contract coming into force?

Neither has the Mayor nor the aldermen

made any exertion to liberate us from

the gas monopoly. Can we trust them

to fight the electric companies, after we

have allowed the latter to steal from us

our weapons of defence?

The time to strike a blow at the mono-

poly is now. The way to do it is to take

from the companies the contract that is

responsible for the combine.

Let the city light the city streets and

the two companies will compete for pri-

vate business. Let the city renew its

contract with the companies and the

latter will agree upon a new rate of

prices to suit the changed conditions.

They have it in their power to do so.

Will they not do it?

JUSTICE FOR THE SHANTYMEN.

The Bocaboyesque Independent refers to

a subject that is well worthy the at-

tention of Crown Lands Commissioners

Hardy and the Royal Legislature. The In-

dependent states that there are probably

more than 30,000 men engaged in the

woods of Ontario felling trees and saw-

ing logs. As the Independent explains,

points out, the way these shantymen

are treated in the woods is a disgrace to

civilization. If the men were herded to-

gether in the cities in the same way

they are in the woods, the law against

cruelty to animals would certainly be

put into execution. The paper quoted

is published in a backwoods district,

and it ought to know where it speaks.

It describes life in the woods after the

following fashion:

"Frequently fifty men are herded in

a single shanty; they sleep in bunks three

tiers in height, ranged around the shanty,

on which they are fed during the day;

they have no lavatory, one towel sup-

plies the entire herd, there is no con-

venience for washing clothes, and a bath

is simply impossible. The law should

clearly step in to protect them and an

act be passed requiring that a certain

number of cubic feet of air should exist

for each man in the shanty; that a bath,

lavatory, laundry, etc., should be at-

tached to every shanty; that regulations

as to temperature and light should be

made; that cleanliness and order should

be enforced; and that a medical man

should be provided in cases of sickness

or accident."

This is a serious indictment to lay

against the lumbermen who employ these

men. We do not believe the picture is

overdrawn. While our legislators are

busy enacting laws for humane treatment

to animals, children and people in the

city, they would not forget the men

who pass the worst winter months away

from the centres of civilization. The

Government ought to introduce leg-

islation insuring upon shantymen re-

ceiving proper sleeping accommodation, proper

food and other conveniences necessary to

health. Why not send Dr. Peter Bryce

on a secret tour of investigation?

MR. LAURIER'S BAD BREAK.

In his tirade against the National

Policy on Tuesday night, Mr. Laurier

referred to Toronto as a brilliant ex-

ample of how that policy had failed to

bring about the prosperity expected of

it. He compared the Toronto of to-day

with that of 1878, and asked the ques-

tion how it was that so many idle men

were now walking the streets of our city?

Mr. Laurier made the statement that

Toronto was the same as Montreal in

this respect, that hundreds and thou-

sands of men are looking for work they

cannot get in Canada's

prosperity. We think Mr. Laurier might

have adopted a better method of com-

paring the condition of Toronto to-day

with what it was in the year in which

the National Policy originated. The

World will produce some figures which

will have more weight with the unpre-

judiced reader. In 1878 the assess-

ment of property in Toronto was \$48,

000,000. The Dominion census for 1881

gave Toronto a population of 86,415.

The population was about 75,000 in

1878. Toronto's present assessment is

\$150,000,000, and the city's population,

according to the Dominion census of

1881, was 181,220. Mr. Laurier had

better not refer to Toronto if he wishes

to teach a lesson about the failure of

the National Policy. It was just after

the National Policy was inaugurated

that Toronto started on that develop-

ment which so rapidly placed her in the

front rank of the progressive cities of

North America. Toronto owes her

progress more than anything else to the

National Policy. Mr. Laurier's allusion

to the number of working men out of

employment only proves that Toronto

has a big population, and as a nat-

ural result occasionally finds more or

less men unemployed.

Instead of showing that the number of

men who are out of work, Mr. Laurier

would have been better off to show

that the number of men who are em-

ployed in Toronto is now five times

what it was in 1878. The difference

is so great that even Mr. Laurier him-

self would be startled if it were to be

published. Toronto's assessment has

increased about 150 per cent. and

the number of men employed in the city

has increased in the same ratio. In making this esti-

mate we do not refer to Toronto's

burgeoning, but to the fact that she

has increased in population and in

wealth. Mr. Laurier had better

leave Toronto alone. He wishes to ac-

cuse a policy against the National Policy.

ENGINES FOR A CIVIC PLANT.

The following details of a civic

electric lighting plant:

The World.

The Globe.

The Star.

At the last meeting of the Trades

and Labor Council a motion was carried

to have a civic plant. Nine citizens

out of ten also favor it.

Gas at 60 a Thousand.

It is long since there has been pub-

lished a more important paper on com-

mercial electricity than the one pub-

lished by Prof. W. L. Lewis, before the

Society of Arts, on the subject of the

illumination of cities. The paper is

a masterpiece of lucid and practical

writing, and it is a pity that it is not

more widely read. The paper is com-

posed chiefly of methane and

ethane, and which yields much light

for a comparatively little heat. The

author estimates that the cost of elec-

tricity for lighting a city of 250,000

people, at a rate of 10 cents per kilowatt

hour, would be \$100,000. The author

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