

MUNICIPAL NOTES.

Recent by-laws approved by Inspector of Municipalities, Mr. Robert Baird, Victoria, are as follows:—

Penticton District, Irrigation Loan, \$10,000, 30 year, 6%, certificated Dec. 2.

Salmon Arm City, Fire Purposes, \$2,500, 10 year, 6%, certificated Dec. 9.

Summerland District, Irrigation Loan, annual installment, 5 year, 8%, certificated Dec. 10.

The City of Kamloops has approved a by-law to issue \$7,000 in debentures for Park Purchase Purposes.

At the City Council meeting of Port Moody, held Dec. 23, a by-law was submitted to raise the interest of the \$35,000 bond issue from 5 to 6%. These debentures are not yet sold, and Mayor Roe explained that it was thought more expedient to raise the interest than accept a large discount. The bonds were authorized to purchase city sites and erect buildings, but as no satisfactory offer had been made the objects were attained by treasury certificates. These mature in August and September next.

Mayor Baxter of Vancouver recently stated that the tax rate for 1915 would go back to twenty mills as against the 1914 tax rate of twenty-two mills.

He also said that no money by-laws would likely be submitted to the electors in January. This was in line with the city's policy which had already put it on a sound financial basis as indicated by a letter from London financial agents commending the programme of economy. Bond flotations since 1910, he said, had caused the rise in expenditure; for whereas the sinking fund and interest charges borne by the city then were only \$600,000, now they were \$2,200,000.

Vancouver spent \$40 a head out of revenue in the year, which was much lower than the other cities he named. Los Angeles spent \$61, Portland, \$53; Tacoma, \$65; Seattle, \$47, and Spokane, \$49. Of money from capital account, the expenditures for these cities were: Vancouver, \$1.96 per capita; Los Angeles, \$19; Portland, \$12; Tacoma, \$24; Seattle, \$6.50; Spokane, \$16.80.

Vancouver's local improvement bonds had sold at the beginning of this year at 98½ gross, which was higher than the price paid for any other Canadian city bonds and nearly one per cent. better than Winnipeg's. A year before the bonds had sold for 86.

Sufficient funds wherewith to complete the Sooke Lake Waterworks system, of the City of Victoria, have been secured by the city to carry on the operations until the end of May next, when, it is expected, the city will be given its first supply of water from Sooke Lake. Arrangements have been made with the Bank of British North America whereby \$330,000 will be secured. At the last meeting of the Council it was announced that \$130,000 would be available for waterworks purposes. Since then another \$200,000 has been secured, thus assuring ample finances to complete the work.

There is on hand about £158,000 worth of debentures authorized under the second \$1,500,000 Sooke Lake issue. Owing to the present monetary situation it has been found

impossible to sell these bonds, and had the bank not been willing to advance money the city would have found itself in a difficult position in connection with the construction work on the system. The city has recently repaid to the bank about \$1,000,000 borrowed early in the year on the security of the annual taxes, and, in addition, has taken up £20,000 worth of treasury certificates floated in the London market. The bank consented to make the advance of \$330,000 on the understanding that its repayment would be secured by the waterworks debentures now on hand. When the bonds are sold, or such portion of them as will liquidate the amount to be advanced by the bank, that institution will be first paid.

While the \$330,000 will cover the actual cost of the construction work still to be done, the city must yet pay for the water shed lands which are being held by the E. & N. Railway Company. These lands are estimated to cost in the neighborhood of \$300,000, but this sum will not be available until such time as the unsold debentures now on hand have been disposed of.

AGRICULTURAL LAND NORTH OF CLINTON ON THE PACIFIC GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY.

From Clinton to Hanceville, including the country of the Gang Ranch, and from Hanceville through the Springhouse country to 150-Mile House, is a good stretch of open rolling country, suitable for stock-raising and mixed farming. It is served almost throughout its length by the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, and is directly tapped by that road at Clinton.

So far the agricultural operations have been limited by the supply of water available, without much capital expenditure for irrigation, with which is grown winter feed for stock. The dry farming experimental work carried on by the Government at 150-Mile House has been unusually successful, and is demonstrating the reasonable certainty of raising crops in the whole district. In the Springhouse country, Mr. S. T. Sorensen has been practicing dry farming for some years, and averages 30 bushels of wheat and between 60 and 70 bushels of oats per acre. He has found, however, that Marquis wheat is more adaptable than other varieties planted.

Rainfall has averaged 12.5 inches per year, of which nearly one-half usually falls during July and August. Occasionally light frosts have occurred in June.

The main industry of the country has been stock-raising, and it is estimated that in the whole Chilcotin district there are 17,000 cattle and 3,000 horses. From Clinton, about 3,000 head of cattle are shipped annually.

While soil varies much in so large a district, it is generally classed as good with loam surface and sandy or clay sub-soil. Clearing, where necessary, is not heavy; costing in many cases only from \$25 to \$50 per acre. Drainage is seldom necessary. Irrigation is generally very desirable. Quesnel farmers are irrigating for hay, but not for grain as a rule. Labor is high, averaging \$40 to \$50 per month, and board.

The local demand for cattle has been more than the supply, on account of railway construction; but with the completion of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway ready markets, at good prices, will be found at the Coast.

The country is well suited to stock and mixed farming, and the demonstration of successful dry farming should lead to extensive development. When the problem of growing more winter feed is solved there will doubtless be an increase in the number of cattle and horses, and sheep-raising should utilize the sour grass which cattle reject.