

POWER COMPANIES PRESSING CLAIMS

COMMITTEE OF HOUSE HEARING EVIDENCE

The Question of Supplying Electricity to Smelters Under Consideration on Amending Bill.

The private bills committee of the legislature met again this morning, and considered the proposed amendment to the West Kootenay Power Company's act of incorporation. Additional evidence was produced before the committee in support of the West Kootenay's application for an extension of the area in which power could be supplied.

Senator Warner Miller, of New York, president of the Dominion Copper Company, whose works are located at Boundary Falls, near Greenwood, testified that he had become interested in this property under the impression that there was an unlimited source of supply for electric power to develop the properties. He also expected conditions were as they were in New York when the power was worked out, given to all power companies to enter into any contracts it saw fit in the state, and there was free competition. Had he known that the conditions were such as they turned out to be he would not have gone into the proposition.

The immediate needs of the company was from 750 horse power to 1,000 horse power. If the power could be sent to a smelter capable of handling 2,000 tons a day would be great, and this would require 2,000 horse power. He said that when the Dominion Copper Company took hold of the Montserrat & Boston Company's properties it acquired the mines at Sunset, Phoenix and elsewhere.

Senator Miller said he was out here to arrange for future development of the property. In attempting to do this he found some difficulty with the Cascade Company. If it were not possible to get the power the works would not be undertaken. He was out here to settle the difficulties. There was abundant low grade ore, but in competition with Utah and other states cheaper power must be provided. At present the price of copper made it possible to run with steam. The present prices could not be expected to continue. They might hold up for six months and good prices might continue for some time longer.

His company had stopped work on the new plant now. He said that he had no contract for power. Offers had been received from the Cascade Company and West Kootenay Power Company. He had no connection with either of these and would close with either one which could give power.

The Cascade Company declined to furnish all the power needed. They offered to furnish power subject to contracts with other companies.

"Would you consider that a contract?" asked Senator Miller. "It was no contract," he added.

In reply to W. J. Bowser, Senator Miller said that the electric machinery and the smelter improvements now proposed in the present smelter would cost about \$75,000. The building of the 20-ton smelter would cost from \$50,000 to \$75,000.

In reply to E. V. Bodwell, Senator Miller said that he did not care where the power came from as long as it was a continuous supply and was given at a reasonable rate.

If the low grade ores of British Columbia was to be developed miners and smelter owners would have to be given an opportunity to get the necessary power. He had been accustomed to competition.

Mr. Bodwell said he would like to assure Senator Miller that the Cascade Company had not in view the preventing of competition. All that his company sought was that the \$500,000 investment should not be rendered useless by another company coming in and putting it out of business.

J. E. McAllister, manager of the B. C. Copper Company, and Greenwood, also gave evidence. He said his company had a capacity of from 650 tons to 700 tons of ore a day. If his company could get the power it would undertake to handle 2,000 tons a day by September.

After operating for several years it had been found that it was impossible to make it pay on the scale on which it was being worked. The works were being put up on the understanding that the ore was richer than it was. It was decided therefore that the only way to make a profit on the investment was to increase the capacity. It was decided that an investment of \$175,000 would be made in machinery, of this \$40,000 would be in electrical outfit and would represent 2,700 horse-power. At present the company used 700 horse-power. This was obtained from the Cascade Company. Part of the 2,700 horse-power would be used in the Mother Lode and Emma mines.

The Cascade Company was not always able to furnish the minimum supply of power. In January and February of last year this was not received. He did not blame the Cascade Company for this. There was a shortage of water in the Kettle river which accounted for this. The shortages forced the company to stop operations at that time. The cost of operating under electric power was about one-third the cost of that by steam. To operate the plant by steam would be prohibitive.

When he entered into a contract with the Cascade company he was not aware that there was any priority of power. He afterwards found that the Cascade company and others had a prior claim on the supply. When his company decided to put in the electric supply the Cascade company would not put in the line, but agreed to do so, and then retain the cost with interest in paying for the supply of power. This he contended was an unprecedented action by a power company.

Mr. Bodwell contended that the company was justified in not agreeing to putting a line where the supply of power was not large, and where no guarantee was put up as to what amount would be required later.

In reply to other questions, Mr. McAllister agreed that it would not be in the best interests of the Boundary country to put out the chance of competition from the Cascade company. He, however, did not think this was likely to follow.

Mr. Bodwell could not see how it could be otherwise if all the smelter companies cancelled their contracts with the Cascade company.

Mr. Campbell, manager of the West Kootenay company, was asked if there was no danger of the West Kootenay increasing the price of power on the completion of the contracts now entered into with the various smelters for four or five years.

Mr. Campbell said it would be impossible to do so, as the companies would still have the chance to utilize the Columbia river for power and prevent an increase in prices.

The committee adjourned until Thursday morning at 10 o'clock.

THE CITY COUNCIL WORKING OVERTIME

MEETING LAST NIGHT AND ANOTHER TO-NIGHT

The Estimates for the Year Amount to \$469,645—Big Increase in School Expenditure.

There was a full attendance at last night's meeting of the city council, which began business at 8 o'clock and adjourned at 10:50. A big variety of topics was discussed and unanimity marked the proceedings.

The minutes of last meeting were read and duly confirmed, after which the city clerk read a number of communications.

From the secretary of the hospital was read a letter asking that a committee be appointed to confer as to proposed sewerage. This was agreed to.

The secretary of the board of school trustees asked that the meeting of the board be deferred until Wednesday next.

Ald. Hall asked that a detailed estimate be asked for from the school trustees.

Ald. Yates thought that the trustees should be in attendance and prepared with their estimates.

Ald. Hall thought that the trustees might have held a special meeting and prepared estimates.

The communication was held over. The secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals suggested that a separate "ward" be provided for dogs suffering from mange or other contagious disease, and that owners of dogs for which veterinary services were required should be held responsible for the cost. Diseased dogs, it was suggested, should be destroyed.

The Mayor asked Ald. Hall if it were probable that dogs with mange could communicate the same to human beings.

Ald. Hall answered in the affirmative.

The Mayor said that under such circumstances all dogs suffering from mange should be promptly destroyed.

Ald. Yates suggested that the matter be referred to the board of health.

Ald. Fullerton advised that diseased dogs be promptly dispatched.

The city solicitor announced that there was a bill now before the legislature which dealt with the matter.

The letter was received and filed. Sayward & Co. asked that the Rock Bay bridge having been completed they be allowed to connect with same.

The matter was referred to the city solicitor and engineer, with power to act.

A communication from Messrs. Symonds & Cocks asked for certain privileges in connection with a building they intended putting up, adjoining Weller Bros.' property on Gordon street.

Referred to city engineer for report.

The secretary of the Victoria Parkers' Institute wrote asking the use of a room in the city hall for monthly meetings.

Ald. Stewart suggested that the farmers be asked to engage one of the rooms in the city market building. The suggestion was adopted.

The city clerk announced the receipt of several petitions during the month. It was proposed that the list be referred to the engineer, but Ald. Stewart asked that the petition from the residents of North Chatham street be read.

It was, after some discussion, agreed to read the petitions.

The clerk proceeded to read some. The petitions were from residents of North Chatham street, Lewis street, Pandora avenue, Pandora street, Belmont avenue, Michigan street, Washington street and other districts, asking for street improvements and lights.

After many minutes reading the communications were referred to the streets, sewers and bridges committee, and the electric light committee.

A letter was read from the city solicitor setting forth that a conference had been had with Mr. Cameron, M. P., with reference to the Municipal Clauses Act, and amendments proposed thereto.

Ald. Yates moved that the matter be referred to the delegates to the municipal council.

Ald. Fullerton moved that the proposed amendments be discussed by the council. It was practically proposed to grant manhood suffrage, he said.

The clerk proceeded to read the bill. Ald. Fullerton asked for an expression of opinion on the principle—manhood suffrage.

Ald. Fullerton contended that the bill was bringing matters back to the old standing, before militiamen and others were excluded. He was a believer in manhood suffrage and hoped that the principle would be adopted.

According to Ald. Stewart, any woman could vote under the act as proposed.

He thought it went too far. People owning property and paying rents should have some little privilege. People stopping at hotels, for instance, and who could clear out at any moment, should not have the same vote in public affairs as permanent residents.

Ald. Fullerton favored women's suffrage, arguing that women with property qualifications should have the same rights as men.

Ald. Douglas pointed out that many by-laws should be voted upon only by property owners.

Ald. Goodhue said that this was the purpose of the bill.

Ald. Yates did not think that the world was far enough advanced for the adoption of manhood suffrage. Some contended that the man who paid the rent was the man who paid the taxes. That was not so in Victoria to-day, for while property was going up, rents were coming down.

Ald. Hall argued that if women were to vote on the same privileges as men they should hold themselves equally responsible as to taxes.

The point was discussed at considerable length, the difficulty being that each alderman accused the other of not understanding the question as individually pronounced.

Ald. Fullerton who is paying the taxes on the Vernon hotel to-day—the man who buys groceries?

Here again a long discussion ensued into which an element of socialism was introduced.

Ald. Fullerton took several objections to proposed amendments to the bill. For instance, a trustee could vote on his own lot, although he might represent several thousand dollars worth of property. He suggested that power to vote be given to a trustee of real estate, as representative of same. This was agreed to. He also moved that payment of water rates be not a qualification for voting. This was also agreed to.

Ald. Fullerton asked for an expression of opinion as to whether one or all parties to a partnership should be entitled to vote.

Here again there was a long discussion, which resulted in favor of a vote for partnerships not exceeding three. The clauses were gone through seriatim.

The city solicitor asked authority to pay a bill of \$103.80 for a copy of the evidence taken in court in the Equi-mal Waterworks case. This would cover the official stenographer's fees. The application was laid on the table.

A "humble petition" was read from the Local Council of Women asking for a variety of improvements in the cause of humanity, including an hospital for tuberculosis, the old naval hospital being suggested.

Ald. Fullerton objected to the establishment of such an institution in Victoria.

Hall recommended that the police commissioners be asked to enforce the law against expectation.

Ald. Yates moved that the ladies be informed that the council are not in favor of such an hospital in Victoria.

Ald. Yates seconded the motion, which carried.

A number of duly verified accounts were submitted and passed.

The fire wardens recommended the placing of fire alarm boxes, which was agreed to.

The library commissioners recommended a schedule of hours for those employed about the library, which would necessitate the appointment of a second assistant at a salary of about \$30 per month.

There was considerable opposition to the extra appointment, and the report allowed to stand over until next meeting.

The Mayor called the attention of the council to an article appearing in the Colonist, which set forth that an official auditor was looking over the books of the corporation. He explained that the services of the gentleman in question were gratuitous. The company Mr. Halliwell represented was a well-known auditing firm, and it was suggested that they might be able to recommend improvements. Before accepting the offer, His Worship said he informed the finance committee of the proposition, and it was with their approval the arrangement was made.

The explanation was accepted as thoroughly satisfactory.

His Worship announced that there would be a special meeting to consider the estimates to-night (Tuesday), and submitted the following particulars as illustrating the progress (in expenses) between 1890 and the estimate for 1896.

City debt	\$118,816.77	\$135,378.15
Municipal Council	5,030.00	5,030.00
Civic Salaries	15,237.06	18,109.00
Waterworks	20,268.00	40,240.00
Cemetery	2,247.81	2,280.00
Pound	983.50	1,580.00
Park	1,916.62	3,520.00
Police	23,294.44	32,717.50
Fire Department	27,909.97	32,854.00
Library	1,229.75	5,000.00
Street Lighting	13,616.66	17,250.00
City Market	988.72	800.00
Home for Aged and Infirm	3,590.08	4,542.00
Streets, Sewers and Bridges	46,844.00	47,250.00
Miscellaneous	27,802.71	28,250.00
Education	42,218.82	78,000.00
Board of Health	11,582.88	15,444.00

Total \$382,979.05 \$469,645.00

School population 2,459 2,807

The latter being an increase of 14 per cent. in scholars and 100 per cent. for maintenance.

The council adjourned at ten minutes to eleven.

NEWSPAPER LAWS.

Publishers of False Rumors Will Be Promptly Punished.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 13.—The council of ministers has decided that the propagation by newspapers of false rumors against the government, individual officials or the army shall be punishable by two to eight months imprisonment and fines not exceeding \$150. In the event of such rumors causing outbreaks of illegal acts or disturbances among the troops the penalty will be increased to sixteen months imprisonment.

A long list of witnesses in the investigation into the wreck of the Valencia appears on the register of the King Edward.

PAID TRIBUTE TO GEORGE H. JESSE

FIREMAN'S TESTIMONY AT VALENCIA INQUIRY

Freight Clerk and Two of Passengers Also Gave Evidence Yesterday Afternoon.

(From Tuesday's Daily.)

When the Valencia inquiry was resumed yesterday afternoon the examination of John McCaffrey, one of the passengers on the wrecked steamer, was continued.

Cross-examined by J. H. Lawson, Jr., counsel for the P. C. S. Co., witness said he was seafarer on the way from San Francisco and was sailing at the time the Valencia struck. He was a second class passenger. Five minutes after putting on his life preserver he reached deck. He saw two small boats in the water.

When he came on deck it was pretty well crowded and the night was dark. No. 1 boat was swinging well out when he saw her, so that he didn't know how she was named, how many got out and how they were given to have her put over the side.

"How can you say that no officers appeared to have control?" asked counsel.

"Because the passengers were jumping into the boats in a disorderly manner and one remarked that he was going to get in as he didn't know what to do, no orders having been issued," he witness replied.

Counsel questioning him further, asked whether he saw No. 3 boat launched. Witness replied in the negative. He had, however, seen No. 1 get away and there was only one officer engaged in assisting in the launch.

In his opinion more than one was necessary to assist in such an operation.

Witness was quite confident that nothing beyond the tossing of lines overboard was done. He remembered the crew thrown from the boats into the water. He aided in doing that and knew of none that escaped. On the other side of the ship a heavy man, about 200 pounds weight, had been washed overboard and told of his having been carried back again to the deck.

Witness reiterated his statement that there was a panic prevailing when he arrived on deck. The members of the crew were in a state of confusion.

Seemed to be running about in just as excited a condition as the passengers.

Speaking of the raft, witness said that it would have been possible for the captain to have gone among the women and taken positions, on her after he had taken his place. It would have been possible for some of those aboard to have made way for the ladies had they expressed a wish to get away.

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he believed the Czar might have "made a better showing than he did." It equipped with a gun the night he fired a line aboard the wreck or she could have gone back to the Queen, secured her rafts, and drifted them to the stranded vessel.

"What did the Queen do?" asked counsel.

"The Queen didn't do anything that I know of," replied witness.

Answering Capt. Newcomb, witness thought that about raft might have drifted to the wreck. "We would have had to take chances on that," added witness. He went on to say that a line might have been used to advantage in hauling the raft, but what ever float was utilized, to the Valencia.