

The Fernie Free Press

J. R. Wallace & Co., Publishers

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J. R. WALLACE, Manager.
Geo. L. PEDLAR, Editor.



The City Council of 1910.

The City Council of 1910 held their last meeting for the year on Thursday night. Their term was shorter than the regular term of the municipal governing body, but in the nine months during which they held office many things have happened. Revelations in the accounting department of the city office turned the lime light on civic affairs as never before in the history of the city. The council stood in the white glare of public scrutiny and stood it well.

The council of 1910 gave their time unstintedly to the service of the city. They have accomplished a great deal that must be recorded in the history of the progress of this municipality. They have had to endure considerable unjust censure through misplacing their confidence. They worked without hope of reward and in the certainty of unfavorable criticism from those who could not see eye to eye with them. They finish their labors with nobody's thanks and no satisfaction but the consciousness of having performed an arduous public duty.

They stepped into the breach when no one else would assume the responsibilities of municipal directorship, to the detriment of their private business and at the expense of many hours which they might have employed with much greater satisfaction to themselves.

The writer has attended practically every meeting of the Council of 1910. With the exception of a few closed meetings of committees, closed so far as discussion only was concerned, he had had opportunity to familiarize himself intimately with the work of the municipal council and offers no apology for assuming to speak of the work of that body as one informed. If regular attendance, painstaking consideration and free-spoken discussion of public affairs, and energetic executive action constitute part of the duties of a city council, the retiring Mayor and Aldermen are entitled to all praise for the way they have performed their duties. If mistakes have been made it was not because the council were careless or incompetent, but because they were only human.

The Free Press wishes to congratulate the Mayor and Council of 1910 on the creditable conclusion of a particularly arduous and trying year's work.

The management of the Nelson Daily News on Tuesday last presented its readers with its annual review of progress in the field which this enterprising daily covers. The various articles are entertainingly written and cover the ground well. This issue will be filled by hundreds of readers of the News who are interested in the progress of the district and desirous of preserving information in that regard in concise and popular form.

Yes, the Old Year has departed, never to return. Not in peace and silence did he pass away, but racked with unforeseen disaster and tortured by revolution Poor old 1910. He laid down his grey head in sorrow and dropped into the Great Silence with a groan.

He was a good old year, was 1910. On the whole he brought with him and distributed more happiness than sorrow, more

prosperity than failure. If he showed some partiality in his favors he lavished them bountifully. Here's to the memory of the old sport. Peace be to his ashes!

Having written this much stuff we now rise to say that there "ain't no dead 1910." There wasn't never no such critter, perse. He was a creature of the imagination of those who would rather think of phantoms than of realities. Getting down to brass tacks, the only mourning I have to do on that score is over the ashes of a dead year in my own life. The year is gone, the record is made, the account is balanced and the entry has been made in profit and loss. There is no "1910" to accept the reward or shoulder the penalty. It comes to me, "whatever."

The enormous loss of life in coal mine disasters in the United States, averaging 3,135 every year, representing at a money value of \$10,000 per life, an annual loss of \$31,250,000, has caused Dr. Joseph Holmes, chief of the technological branch of the United States Geological Survey, to take steps to see if this prodigious human and economic waste cannot be materially lessened. The United States government has made appropriations for the establishment of experimental stations, where demonstrations of life saving devices, and of the safety or non-safety of various explosives used in mining may be witnessed. The first of these stations has been established on the Arsenal grounds at Pittsburg, Pa.

At this station mining scientists will seek to prove to mine operators that they are wasteful of their men and that the loss of life might with due care be reduced to one out of every thousand each year. It will then further show them that they kill because mines are not kept free from fire damp, though proper precautions would rid the mines of that deadly gas, that rescue parties, if equipped with oxygen helmets could safely enter mine chambers wherein the fatal gas was smothering their unconscious comrades and drag them to safety that so many so-called safety explosives were, in fact, most dangerous, and that, contrary to the stubbornly maintained beliefs of many mine owners, coal dust under certain conditions is as explosive as dynamite.

That many so-called safety explosives are really very dangerous was amply proved at the first demonstration at Pittsburg. One of the principal features of the Pittsburg experimental station is the so-called explosive tube -- a boiler plate cylinder 100 feet in length and six feet in diameter. Along the top of the contrivance, which to all intents is a mine tunnel, are a set of safety valves or hinged doors. The force of any explosion in the cylinder forces these up so that the violence of the detonation loses itself in the outer air. In one end of the tube a cannon has been installed and from it charges of various explosives can be fired directly into the great tube; the firing being done by an electrical device operated from the observation house, 60 feet away. On the day of the first demonstration a quantity of anthracite coal dust was pumped into the cylinder and the assembled mine operators who had maintained that it was non-explosive smiled sardonically when no explosion followed the firing of a charge of dynamite into it. Then bituminous dust was used. An instant after the cannon had been fired that portion of Pittsburg fairly rocked with the force of the roaring disturbance. The safety doors flew back and pounded on the cylinder; sheets of flame and clouds of smoke followed and from all directions came the tinkling of breaking glass, for windows nine hundred feet distant, were shattered.

Following came tests of various explosives now widely sold and in well nigh general use. Many advertised as non-inflammable and non-explosive were shown to be exceedingly dangerous. Already good results have followed from those first explosive tests. Many mine operators and mine superintendents have since given orders that only certain specified explosives shall be used and that before a "shot" is fired, the coal dust in the neighborhood of the prospective discharge shall be wet for a radius of a number of rods.

Realizing, however, that prevention is but a percentage of his task, Dr. Holmes planned

other work of a more spectacular nature. His rescue demonstrations are worthy of stage presentation for they are melodramatic to a startling extent. In his demonstration room one may see fac simile reproductions of shattered and sunken mine levels with unconscious miners lying senseless in the wreck and ruin, with clouds of well nigh impenetrable smoke swirling about them and with shattered timbers blocking the paths of safety. Then will be seen the arrival of other miners with heads covered with huge oxygen helmets as large and hideous as those worn by submarine divers. Into the smoke, over shattered timbers and through narrow tunnels, these helmeted heroes make their way to the side of their unconscious co-workers; place them on stretchers or toss them over brawny shoulders and bear them out. There is dash, danger and heroism in the demonstrations, and they form a series of startling pictures when seen through a plate glass wall, for they all take place in an enormous glass room, from the outside of which the operators and scientists may observe the rescue crews at their startling studies.

Into this room by powerful pumps poisonous gases, smoke or fire damp can be forced; or the air can be withdrawn and a vacuum created. At a recent demonstration some interesting scenes were witnessed from the outer observation chamber. With great care a section of a crushed-in mine filled with fire damp was constructed. Into this scene of wreckage a rescue crew equipped with the helmets went. Scattered in various portions of the miniature mine dummy figures representing unconscious miners had been placed, all being life size and averaging 160 pounds in weight. The efficiency of the life giving helmets was well established, for some of the men remained in this polluted atmosphere for an hour and worked as well as though in the fresh outer air. They carried the dummies around and around the room on their backs and finally clambered up narrow ladders with them and dragged them to places of safety through dark narrow passages scarcely high enough for them to wiggle through on hands and knees.

While these dramatic scenes were taking place mine owners and miners, two of the latter with their helmets on their heads in case they might have to dash in and rescue the demonstrators, watched the work. All conceded that if such men, so equipped, had been on hand at mine catastrophes the mortuary records would not form such a startling condemnation of United States mining methods as they do today.

It is the hope of Dr. Holmes that all mine operators will co-operate to the extent of detailing men to take these lessons and, when they have become expert, to hold them as rescue squads at the mines. If that is done beneficial results will follow, for the statistics of other lands prove that deaths in coal mines are largely preventable. In fact, in every country but the United States the number of fatalities have been reduced materially in the past few years. When one learns that in the seventeen years from 1890 to 1908, 25,965 men were killed in the United States mines it is apparent that the time for the conservation of miners has arrived. In the past few years European countries have made material gains in this humanitarian work. The standardization of the safest explosives was first taken up and in every country it quickly reduced the death rate to an appreciable extent. Belgium worked slowly, but accomplished much, for the statistics of that frugal little land show the following:

Miners killed per 1000 in 1831: 3.10.
Miners killed per 1000 in 1906: 0.94.
In Great Britain the death rate in 1801 was 1.50, but it had been reduced to 1.28 in 1908.
In Prussia it was 2.66 in 1861 and but 1.30 in 1904.
The best showing of all is made by France. In 1901 the rate was low at 1.03, but in 1905 it had been lowered still further to 0.84.

The records of the United States are not so flattering. In 1895 coal miners were being killed at the rate of 2.67 per 1000. In 1905 the rate had increased to 3.53 and in 1907 it stood at the startling rate of 4.86.

All these things the skilful men of the U. S. Technologic Branch now know, and it is through an amplification and a wider dissemination of their knowledge of preventive measures, that they hope to lessen the enormous wastage of human life.

"Coal Mines Regulation Act."

Coal Creek Colliery.

Notice is hereby given that the following constitute the Board of Examiners for the Coal Creek Colliery during the year 1911:

Appointed by the Owners — David Martin.

Alternates — William Wilson, Bernard Caufield.

Appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council—James M. Stewart.

Elected by the Miners — John William Gray.

Alternates — Thomas Uphill, Evan Thomas.

Note—Alternates act as Members of the Board in the absence of those regularly appointed or elected to act thereon.

All persons interested may obtain full information by applying to the Secretary of the Board, Mr. James M. Stewart, Fernie, B.C.

Dated this 24th day of December, 1910.

Richard McBride,
Minister of Mines.

FORT GEORGE

at the junction of the Fraser and Nechaco Rivers, will be the largest city on the Grand Trunk Pacific Transcontinental Railway west of Winnipeg.

Fort George is the geographical and strategic commercial centre of British Columbia—the natural supply point for a splendid mixed farming, mineral, timber and coal area of millions of acres made accessible by 1100 miles of navigable waterways.

Splendid openings for business and investment.

Let us send you a free copy of "British Columbia Bulletin of Information," containing up-to-date news of the great Inland Empire of Canada.

Write or call at once.

Natural Resources Security Co., Limited.

Paid Up Capital, \$250,000.

Joint Owners and Sole Agents Fort George Townsite.

Head Office, 697 Bower Building Vancouver, B.C.

CURLING

the

ROARIN' GAME

Get into the Club and "play the game." Then go to Duthie's and get the pick of his stanes. He has a lot of beauties — Kay's Red Hone "Excelsior Brand" direct from the Haughs of Mavehlan. You can smell the heather off them still.

Skates and Hockey Sticks.

Electric Lamps, in all Sizes.

THE DUTHIE CO. HARDWARE.

The Home Bank of Canada

Quarterly Dividend Notice

Notice is hereby given that a dividend at the rate of Six per cent. per annum has been declared upon the paid-up capital stock of the Home Bank of Canada for the three months ending the 30th day of November, 1910, and the same will be payable at the Head Office or any branches of the Home Bank on and after Thursday, the First day of December next.

The transfer books will be closed from the 16th to the 30th of November, 1910, both days inclusive.

By order of the Board.
Toronto, Oct., 26th.

JAMES MASON,
General Manager.

John Adair, Manager Fernie, B. C.

The Fernie Auction Room
2nd Hand & Variety Store.

Has removed from the Todd Block to larger and more central quarters in the K. P. Building, opposite the Fernie Livery, and is now open for business with a larger and better stock of goods than ever before.

You are cordially invited to call and look over the stock. Come before buying elsewhere. You will not regret it.

T. B. Struthers, Prop.
K. P. Block, Fernie, B. C.

You'll Smile As You Smoke

one of the cigars we are anxious to have you try. It will put you in such good humor that you simply can't help it.

Smokers Of Our Cigars

never get tired of our brands. The tobacco in them has been so carefully selected that a perfect flavor and fragrance are assured. Try a few for a starter. If you don't become a regular caller here we miss our guess.

F. C. ARMSTRONG

They Are Going Fast!

Those desirable Home-sites in West Fernie. Why don't you get in on a good thing?

Buy a Lot and be a landed proprietor. Prices range from \$50 to \$125.

Prices will Rise in the near future. It is for you to decide who will get the profit.

\$10 Secures One Now. Make the other payments to suit yourself. For particulars see

FRED G. WATERS

START THE NEW YEAR

in the right direction by securing one of our fire insurance policies. You are gambling with fate unless you have

SUFFICIENT INSURANCE

to protect you from loss should you be visited unexpectedly by a destructive fire.

M. A. KASTNER,
Alex Beck Block, Fernie, B. C.