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MONTREAL, FRIDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 15, 1911

THE CITY COUNCIL AND CONTROLLERS TO BLAME.

Their Failure to Meet Street Railway Open
to Censure.

PRESIDENT Robert of the Street Railway Company blames the city for the present condition of affairs in regard to the street car service. Controller Wanklyn and other city officials blame the Street Railway Company. In the meantime, the citizens are suffering through the failure of the two parties to get together and negotiate regarding new lines and other needed reforms.

The old saying that it "takes two to make a quarrel" is probably true in this case and undoubtedly there is some blame to be attached to each side. We think, however, that the great bulk of the blame rests upon the Board of Control and the City Council. The Street Railway Company made a number of overtures to the City Council but were not given any encouragement. In addition the City Council opposed the Street Railway before the Public Utilities Commission and in other ways endeavored to thwart it in its scheme for reorganization. In these matters the Street Railway won out but in other matters the City Council controls the situation. The Street Railway cannot build new lines or extend their system without permission from the City Council, and until this permission is given the present congested state of affairs will continue. We cannot for the life of us see how Controller Wanklyn can contend that the present Street Railway lines are sufficient for the city's needs. There have been no new additions in the past ten years, while during that time the population of the city and its suburbs has more than doubled and now contains over 600,000 people. This means that more than twice the number of people have to be carried today as were carried ten years ago, and that with the growth of the

city and the growing tendency to reside in the suburbs, more people are required to take the cars than was the case a few years ago, when the residential districts were within walking distance of the business centre of the city. In addition, all kinds of vehicular traffic is more congested than it was a few years ago.

Controller Wanklyn contends that the Street Railway Company could operate more cars on their present lines, sufficient to provide ample accommodation for all the people. He claims that he has been investigating this question for A WHOLE WEEK and has had the experience of waiting at a busy corner several minutes for a car. He should see that if there were more lines there would be less danger of congestion and of car blockades. It is largely due to vehicular traffic and accidents happening on lines, that the cars are delayed. If there were alternate routes, people could make use of them and reach their destination. Despite Controller Wanklyn's talk and protests, there is no doubt but that additional car lines are required in the city. These are needed to relieve the over crowding and congestion from down-town to the northern suburbs. In addition, more car lines are required east and west. It is absurd to claim that the car lines which accommodated the citizens ten years ago, are sufficient for their accommodation today. It would be just as reasonable for Mr. Wanklyn to say that the C.P.R. or Grand Trunk should operate their lines today with the same equipment they had ten years ago. It is this spirit of stagnation and "Let well enough alone" that has made Montreal a by-word and reproach among the cities on this continent. In almost every department of our civic affairs, the city is from ten to twenty years behind other cities of a similar size. In the case of the Street Railway this is shown by the desire of the City Fathers to make the car lines of ten years ago accommodate the population of today. Some settlement must be arrived at. The Street Railway Company and City Council must be brought together and an end put to this long drawn out dispute. If we had real business men at the City Hall, the question could be settled in twenty-four hours.

REAL ESTATE VALUES IN MONTREAL.

MONTREALERS and others who have been investing in real estate in this city will no doubt derive considerable satisfaction from the remarks of Mr. R. B. Angus at the annual meeting of the Bank of Montreal. In the course of his remarks, the President of the Bank of Montreal made some pertinent remarks in regard to real estate values in Montreal and other large eastern cities. After first speaking of the activity in building operations, he said, "this leads me to remark on the real estate transactions which in some districts savor too much of speculation. In Montreal and other large eastern cities prices have long been in a measure dormant, until recently the public realized the necessity of providing homes and commercial buildings for the vastly increased population. Hence the rise in values, which is not without justification."

Mr. Angus, as President of the Bank of Montreal, is in a position to speak authoritatively regarding real estate values as of all other branches of business. The bank has a great

many branches scattered throughout the Dominion which enables it to keep in close touch with the development of the country. That the value of real estate in Montreal and other eastern cities has been dormant for many years is undoubtedly true. Montreal in a popular sense has never had a boom and today her down-town business property is selling at a lower valuation than corresponding property in Toronto, Winnipeg or Vancouver. In the past ten years Montreal has increased her population by 85 per cent, or including her suburbs, by over 100 per cent. During the same time enormous developments have taken place in connection with all branches of industry and in transportation affairs. Railroads have shown their confidence in the future of Montreal by investing millions and millions of dollars here and are planning to expend millions more in the near future. The Dominion Government, through the Harbour Commissioners, has expended millions of dollars on the port of Montreal and in deepening and improving the St. Lawrence River. Scores of big manufacturing plants have been established in Montreal during recent years and the influx shows no abatement. Everything which tends to make a City great and prosperous, has been contributing to the growth of Montreal. The city is not only the largest in Canada but from its position and start it seems destined always to remain Canada's greatest city. It is at the head of ocean navigation; is the headquarters for two transcontinental railways; the greatest wholesale and distributing centre; and is also the most important manufacturing city in Canada.

For many years Montreal was hemmed in between the mountain and the river and for a time her growth was slow. During recent years, however, Montreal has been coming into her own. The installation of good transportation facilities enabled her citizens to move farther out from the centre. The establishment of new factories and various industries also forced people to reside near their work. The result is that during the last few years real estate values in residential property has shown a decided advance, but as Mr. Angus points out, this advance has been quite justified. The increasing business done in the financial, wholesale and shopping districts has also stimulated real estate values in these districts. The results briefly summarized are, that Montreal's real estate within the past two or three years has shown a decided increase in value. It is estimated that the city will double its population within the next ten years. If that be the case, and everything points to such a growth, the present value of Montreal's real estate will seem ridiculously low ten years hence.

There has, however, been a lot of foolish speculation in real estate in Montreal. Some real estate promoters have been selling lots miles and miles away from the centre of the city. In some cases farms have been bought on the South shore, broken up into lots and offered to the credulous public as good investments, owing to the fact that a tunnel would eventually be constructed under the St. Lawrence. These tactics will do more to injure real estate in the city of Montreal than anything else. There is no tunnel under the St.