

BOARD OF TRADE.

Interesting Proceedings at the First Quarterly Meeting in the New Building.

The Marine Hospital—The Approaching Banquet—Buying the Channel—Pilotage and Towage Charges.

The first quarterly meeting of the B. C. Board of Trade in the new Board of Trade buildings was held yesterday afternoon. The members in attendance were: Messrs. H. E. Heisterman, C. E. Renouf, W. Morris, H. E. Cormon, J. E. Cowper, D. R. Parrie, Robert Ward, W. R. Wilson, L. E. Northey, L. H. Webber, J. H. Todd, S. Leiser, D. R. Ker, W. Seymour, H. J. Scott, A. C. Flumet, F. B. Gregory, M. Strauss, R. H. Swinerton, B. J. Segal and G. Leiser.

Mr. Flumet reported verbally as to the proposed banquet. A substantial sum had been guaranteed; if the amount guaranteed would be sufficient, they could proceed with the banquet. The committee had been re-elected but the committee did not think it advisable to award a contract without first consulting the board.

A long discussion ensued, resulting in the adoption of a motion by Mr. Ward, that the banquet committee be given authority to complete arrangements for the banquet at a suitable date for the holding of the banquet, a suggestion which was carried.

THE MARINE HOSPITAL.

The following letter was read by the secretary:

TO THE BOARD OF TRADE, VICTORIA, CANADA.

SIR: Referring to your letter of the 10th of January last, and to the Honorable the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the same.

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Including a marine hospital at Victoria, will be strongly resisted.

Mr. Ker seconded the resolution, and in doing so expressed the hope that the matter would be taken up most vigorously by the council. The Dominion Government should not be allowed to get in the way of the project, as appeared to be the intention.

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THE SONGHES NATION.

Superintendent Vowell Explains to Them the Position of the Government.

The Tribe Has Increased and Not Diminished Since the Census Seven Years Ago.

Indian Agent Lomas, who came down from Duncan's on Thursday, spent the greater part of yesterday on the Songhes reserve, where he was busily employed in preparing a census of the Songhes population. This work he completed last evening, with the somewhat surprising result that the population, instead of having decreased since the last census in 1886, is found to have gained 33 souls. In 1886 there were 33 male and 42 female, adults and 83 children, a total population of 158. At present the Songhes tribe is made up of 39 male and 44 female adults, with 84 children, the latter including a number of half-bloods, whose Songhes mothers are residents upon the reservation.

Last evening there was a representative meeting of the tribe in the schoolhouse, Indian Agent Lomas having informed the Indians that Superintendent Vowell would meet them and have a talk with them in regard to their position which has been frequently "revolved" away from them of late.

Chief Charlie Freese and all the head men of the tribe were on hand to meet the Superintendent, and listened intently to his remarks. The communication which he recently received from Ottawa was read and with it the Indians could scarcely be other than satisfied. It simply assured them that no coercive measures would be employed to induce the Songhes to remove from their present home.

The superintendent further explained that the report had reached him that the Indians were afraid to put in their crops, as they had been told that they would be summarily moved off the land. This report, Mr. Vowell hastened to contradict, assuring the meeting that the department would see that no injustice should be done to any Indians, and that any reasonable relief would be afforded to the old and decrepit.

Chief Charlie did not make a speech in reply, but a number of the big councillors did take advantage of the opportunity to speak their minds. George Chastain, Spotted and Joe Etienne, among others, expressed pleasure at "the words of the chief," and promised to "pay no more attention to the talk outside." They were satisfied, and would not put in their crops without fear.

"I am an old Indian," concluded Spotted, "and the words that have been spoken to us have given me gladness. Governor Douglas has said that the government would look after us and our rights. I am glad that the Indian department is continuing to do the same."

Before the meeting came to an end, Superintendent Vowell stated to the Indians that whenever the tribe felt that they could better their condition by selling their land and looking for another place near the coast, they would be free to do so.

BRITISH PACIFIC RAILWAY.

TO THE EDITOR:—The request of the capitalists who have taken hold of the British Pacific, for a guarantee of a portion of the interest on the loan to be invested, seems to me to be in the nature of a request for a guarantee of good faith on the part of the Province and nothing more. British Columbia, speaking through the Legislature, has a charge on the land of the world, 20,000 acres of the land available as a subsidy for the railway in security for a bonded indebtedness of \$20,000. This is the only money that the capitalists can rely on for a guarantee of good faith on the part of the Province and nothing more.

On the Indian reserve question, Colonel Prior expressed his desire to have the lands now held by the Songhes turned over to the Province as soon as this is done, and the Province, "the lands will revert to the Province. Of course some arrangements will have to be made, the Indians will be moved over to-night to try and make arrangements with them."

The letters on Darcy Island will be looked after by the Province, as the Province, "the lands will revert to the Province. Of course some arrangements will have to be made, the Indians will be moved over to-night to try and make arrangements with them."

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