

Affairs in British Columbia

By JACK LOUTET.

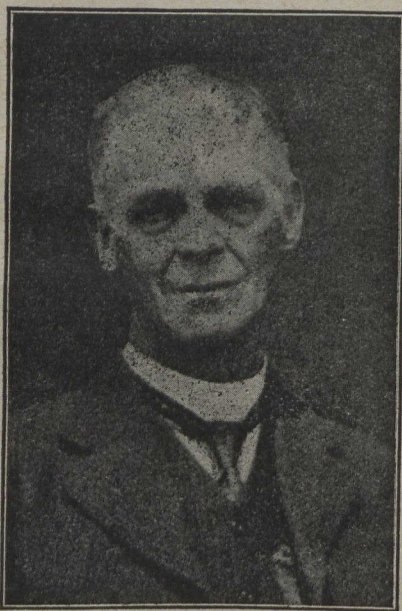
The improvement in general business conditions throughout the Province is reflected in the demands in various municipalities for increased wages for civic workmen. In Vancouver six hundred civic employees threatened to strike if their wages were not immediately increased to \$3 per day. Mayor McBeath informed the delegates making the demand that if they struck work before the regular council meeting they would be permanently replaced.

SOUTH VANCOUVER.

Finances apparently will not permit of the increase but the subject is under consideration and no strike has taken place.

South Vancouver has again been the storm centre of British Columbia municipal politics, trouble having arisen over staff changes, in personnel and salaries. This municipality will submit to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities a resolution favouring a two year term for councillors with provision for recall. This recall system is also being urged by the conservative candidate in South Vancouver.

It is very doubtful whether even a recall system would make matters run more smoothly in South Vancouver and so far there has been no demand for this innovation from any other part of the Province.



EX-CONTROLLER F. S. SPENCE,
Secretary Ontario Municipal Association.

NORTH VANCOUVER.

North Vancouver City recently lost a sum approximating \$10,000 through a burglary at the city hall on the rebate expiry date. Subsequently an enquiry was held and the treasurer and staff of three dismissed, no reasons being given. A careful perusal of the evidence at the enquiry and examination of the circumstances surrounding the robbery fail to show any cause for such drastic action so unless the aldermen are acting on information not given at the enquiry and unknown to the public a grave injustice has been done to the staff. The treasurer has eight years service to his credit and the stenographer and assistants, five, four and one and a half years respectively.

The enquiry demonstrated how undesirable it is for a municipal council to have the power to appoint a book-keeper as auditor instead of a chartered accountant.

The accounts were found in good shape and allegations made by the auditor found to have been made in error

through ignorance of municipal procedure and law, he having been but recently appointed to the position.

VICTORIA.

The City of Victoria is again in trouble through decisions of Judge Lampman in assessment appeals. Astonishing reduction have been allowed and the council being without authority to equalize assessments based on the judge's figures, an unfair advantage is given the appellants. The years being so far advanced the decision could not be appealed without doing great harm to the city.

The tax rate has been struck at 19 mills nett.

This city has revised water rates downwards and gives under the new schedule better rates to industries.

NEW WESTMINSTER.

New Westminster which recently disposed of its waterfront market site for railway purposes is now asked to give up all or part of the new site for an extension of the Vulcan Ironworks. This company proposes to construct a boiler shop, foundry, ship repair yard and floating dry-dock. The Schaaque Machine Works also desire a portion of the new market site, guaranteeing an expenditure on building and plant of \$70,000. In the event of arrangements being made with these concerns, satisfactory to the city, the market will probably be located on Lytton Square. The report of the solicitor to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities is now printed and gives in detail the results accomplished at the last session of the legislature.

It is chiefly interesting from its pointed criticism of the Mayor of North Vancouver for his action in opposing before the municipal committee of the house certain proposals endorsed by the union while appearing as a member of the executive elected to urge their adoption. The Reeve of Point Grey is also censured for introducing matters not considered by the union and allegedly using political influence. These portions of the report will no doubt raise a stormy discussion.

C. P. R. AND RETURNED SOLDIERS.

The houses which the C. P. R. is building in the west for the returned soldiers will cost them about \$1,000 each, with out offices. They will consist of four rooms each—two bedrooms, dining room and kitchen. Each farm will consist of 160 acres and therew ill be 80 additional acres which may be availed of in the course of time, and as the settler concludes that he can work it. The C.P.R. has several designs for homes which will be submitted to the intending settlers. These offer a variety of design to suit different tastes and different pockets, it may be said. The settler can choose a house which will cost him \$2,000, but the payments will be made exceedingly easy. In all there are probably 8,000,000 acres of land held by speculators in the West; but, apart from that, there are literally hundreds of millions of acres of cultivable land lying idle over the West—not close to the tracks, of course, but good land which many have longed for so ardently that they have sat on the steps of the land office all night to be the first tin the morning to get their application in. The C. P. R. is going on on its own account with the colony homes; but it expects that the Government will shortly outline a plan of a comprehensive nature which can be generally applied to the situation.

DAYLIGHT SAVING.

Vicar of country parish, (discussing the Daylight Saving Bill): "But why have you put the small clock on and not the big one?"

Old Man: "Well, it's like this, sir. Grandfeyther's clock have been tellin' th' truath for ninety year, and I can't find i' my 'eart to make a liar o' he now; but li'e clock, 'e be a Garman make, so it be all right for 'e."—Farm and Home, (British).