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THE WATERWORKS PROPOSAL.

That an explanation on the part of the members of the city council is due to the citizens in connection with the new waterworks policy, adopted at the meeting on the 20th of last month, will be admitted, we think, by the aldermen themselves. During the campaign over the waterworks by-law it was explicitly stated by the mayor and the members of the council that their intention was to put in a thoroughly efficient domestic and fire service for the amount of the appropriation voted. It was on the strength of these representations that the by-law was carried by the substantial majority it obtained. Both prior and subsequent to the passage of this by-law, the aldermen who took an active part in advocating it, made it very clear that they were not favorable to patching up a system which they had condemned as imperfect, and to a very large extent as worthless. Nor did they hesitate to say that to obtain the Stoney creek source of supply was their main object in the purchase of the present system from the old company. This was their attitude till two weeks ago. What has occasioned the change of front and the decision to repair and patch up the existing plant at the expenditure of the large sum which will be required to accomplish it, and which will leave a comparatively small balance for new and absolutely necessary work? Is it that they have obtained new light on the question after a more exhaustive examination? If so, then they should make this clear to the citizens so that there may be no misconception of their action; and to guard themselves yet more against public criticism, they ought to furnish a detailed statement of the estimated cost of the various portions of the work ordered, and show wherein the community will obtain an advantage by such work over putting in what would be very largely a new system.

In a brief consideration of the matter a few days ago, we placed the amount necessary to the repairs which have been decided upon at about \$50,000, and we think that this is by no means above the mark. The work to be covered by this amount may be summarized as follows, with estimates furnished by Mr. Fellows:

First, the raising of the present dam on Stoney creek at least five feet, providing a storage reservoir with a capacity of at least 500,000 gallons. This work will cost

Second, the construction of a new reservoir, capacity 170,000 gallons on the Peters grant, and the purchase of additional ground on which a series of reservoirs, which may be cleaned and repaired in succession as necessary, may be erected. This tank will be the same size as the reservoir on Virginia ground, and will be situated at the middle of the stave pipe line, reducing the pressure on the main. It will cost \$2,000, exclusive of values and fittings.

Third, the covering of the stave pipe line with 18 inches of soil, at a cost of \$3,000. This work will obviate all danger of the water supply being cut off during the winter frosts.

Fourth, the construction of a new ten-inch pipe line from the reservoir to Columbia avenue via Spokane street.

Fifth, the laying of an eight-inch main from the main line of Spokane street along Second avenue, St. Paul street and Columbia avenue.

Sixth, the connection, by means of a six-inch pipe of the reservoir with the Sheep creek flume, at the point of discharge on Le Roi ground.

Let us consider these various parts of the work as they are here set down.

(1) Is it not a fact that the water which is now entering the dam on Stoney creek has very little force by reason of the leakage under the dam, and if the dam were raised five feet, as suggested, the water would not reach it at all as long as this leakage continues? Is it not a fact that the waterworks company put forth most strenuous efforts to stop this leakage and entirely failed? If this is so, will not the work herein proposed be entirely fruitless and the money expended on it wasted?

(2) The construction of the new reservoir is certainly a necessity, but would it not be wiser to erect a permanent structure if we are to have a system of waterworks which will not require extensive repairs every few years. Such a reservoir as now proposed would have a life of from six to eight years only.

(3) To cover the stave pipe line, as suggested, is an undertaking of considerably more magnitude, it seems to us, than the council imagines, and the utility of the work is questionable. In the first place

the pipe is now leaking at many points, and that under circumstances most favorable to its good condition, as there is no pressure upon it. These leakages, too, we understand cannot be prevented owing to the fact that the staves are not as broad at the butt-ends as they are in the middle; that they are manufactured from different classes of woods, and that the rings to tighten them are too weak to be screwed up sufficiently to prevent the leakages. If these are the facts of the case, what would be the result in case the valve at the upper tank were closed, as it would have to be when it was necessary to make repairs? Simply that with the full pressure of water upon the pipe would leak at every seam. Then, again, it is an indisputable fact that the action of the water, thus coming out under pressure, were the staves covered with soil, or at least to bring about a set of conditions, as proposed, would gather the sand, which would eat in and cut the pipe, a result once more to work the low grade lead mines that would be disastrous. In addition to the Kootenays at a profit. With this, too, a considerable portion of the pipe is elevated on trestles over draws of varying extent, and how Mr. Fellows expects to cover the pipe where these occur, he no doubt has explained to the council, but of this explanation the citizens are as yet in ignorance. The trestle work is not strong enough to support a cofier which would contain the earth; and to fill the draws would be ruinously expensive. Before leaving this part of the subject, it must not be forgotten that the pipe is, in places, above the hydraulic grade, though not seriously so.

(4) A 10-inch pipe line from the reservoir to Columbia avenue would not by any means furnish a complete fire service. To give the city adequate service in this respect a pipe line of not less than 18 inches is requisite.

(5) The eight-inch main ought to be laid on Columbia avenue, which is the principal street of the city, and the six-inch main now on Columbia avenue, ought to be taken up. It seems absurd that while Second avenue is to have an eight-inch main, Columbia avenue is to get along with one of six inches. But we suppose the decision arrived at was to avoid tearing up the present main on Columbia avenue. If this is the case, it is not creditable to the good judgment of the council. Nor is there anything in the proposals regarding the taking up of the 1 1/2 to 2 1/2-inch pipes which constitute the largest part of the distribution system, and which are incapable of furnishing anything like a proper fire service. Any engineer will endorse the statement that a four-inch pipe is the least which will give a volume of water adequate for a fire service.

(6) The present Le Roi flume is in a state of disrepair, and a new one will have to be put in if the proposed connection is made; besides, it is an uncovered flume and liable to freeze in winter. It is now, and for some considerable time has been, used as a foot path; it is leaking and has sagged and fallen out of repair. To put in a new one, or even patch up the old one so that it will answer for a short time, will be a very expensive matter in

the world.

Why then are no steps taken to bring about this desirable result? Why is not Canada making a movement in the direction of refining her own lead products? The answer is that the C. P. R. are opposed to the refining of the lead product of Canada under the flag of the country in which it is mined. They have extended their railway into the mining region and they have possession of the smelter at Trail, and their attitude on the question of lead refining in British Columbia is dictated by the desire to obtain the monopoly of the lead supply of the country for themselves.

Their manifesto unfolding the intentions which actuated them in acquiring the smelter was promulgated in the speech delivered at the convention of the associated Boards of Trade of Eastern British Columbia by Mr. W. H. Aldridge, their manager at Trail. This document, bearing every mark of the master hand of Sir William Van Horne, and interesting us rather by the inferences which it inevitably suggests, but which it anxiously labors to conceal, than by the few poor isolated truths which loom dimly out of its mist of special pleading, sets forth, as we might expect, that the railway company, being deeply moved by the spectacle of the struggling mine-owners of the Slocan in a spirit of generosity purchased the smelter—nay, in a spirit of lofty patriotism: for we learn that Mr. Aldridge was engaged for two purposes, "the first, the development of low grade tonnages in British Columbia, and secondly the establishment of smelters in British Columbia, which would prevent the further export of any kind of ores to the United States."

These are the professed objects of the railway company in the purchase of the smelter. But experience of that corporation has long since convinced every thoughtful enquirer that the public interest is not its care; and we are not surprised when we examine Mr. Aldridge's speech at the convention and draw the natural inferences from it, and particularly from the amendment which he submitted to Mr. Buchanan's motion favoring unrestricted reciprocity in lead trades as between the United States and Canada—we are not surprised to find that the C. P. R. Co.'s objects, in entering upon the business of smelting, were really quite different from those by which they profess to have been actuated. In fact, the purchase of the smelter was the first step in a well-concocted plot to secure to themselves the monopoly of the lead trade of Canada, and Mr. Aldridge might have spared himself the unavailing humilation of giving currency, at Sir Wm. Van Horne's dictation, to the incredible statement that the C. P. R.'s object in

producers, as the duties on lead ores and the Kootenays is to develop the low lead bullion were made prohibitive. Prior grade mines of the country. The proportion of Canadian lead ores entering also affecting the Canadian tariff, which the United States had to pay a duty of Mr. Aldridge laid before the convention three-quarters of a cent per pound on and which he stated would have been their lead contents, and lead in bullion seconded even by those C. P. R. magnates who are interested in the lead.

The Dingley tariff increased the mines (had they been present) plainly duty upon lead-bearing ores to 1 1/2 cents per pound of the lead contained, and regards the lead output of this province to that date Canadian lead ores entering also affecting the Canadian tariff, which the United States had to pay a duty of Mr. Aldridge laid before the convention three-quarters of a cent per pound on and which he stated would have been their lead contents, and lead in bullion seconded even by those C. P. R. magnates who are interested in the lead.

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strongest personality in the government, too, and the ablest man in public life in the province, an effort should be made to acquaint him with the exact condition of affairs in this camp and the surrounding district, and thoroughly inform him of the many pressing needs which can only be supplied by the administration. It is the misfortune of cabinet ministers, and the misfortune is shared to an even greater degree by the general community, that their steps are continually dogged by the ward politician and the office seeker, who, by reason of their superior effrontery, interpose themselves between the legislator and those whose interests it is his duty, and in the majority of cases, it is his desire to advance. The member of the government is usually so situated, too, that he is unable to break through the lines of the "interested" crowds who beseech him and reach those with whom he should come into close touch.

Now that Mr. Cotton is here he should be placed in possession of the actual condition of affairs in Rossland, and that by the responsible and representative citizens of the town.

If those who have in charge the interests of the city do not make it their duty to inform him fully of what we need it will not do in future to complain that the government has not done what is right by us. The government can only be guided by the expressed sentiment of the Canadian lead product the last dollar that is in it. It matters not that the Dominion government placed the 15 per cent duty on pig lead for the express purpose of fostering and protecting the industry of lead refining; the existence of such an industry would not suit the railway company. The surplus product of refined lead would inevitably go by way of Vancouver, as it would thus get the benefit of the cheap ocean rates to the world's markets and escape the long haul and the heavy tolls of the C. P. R. company to Montreal and other eastern points. But if the duty on Canadian lead bullion refined in bond, in the United States remains obstinately closed against the lead output of British Columbia.

It is quite possible, and even probable,

that this condition of affairs will continue indefinitely and it is plain that Canadian lead producers must turn their attention to other markets. Such markets exist in Japan, China, India and those countries Canada cannot profitably dispose of her surplus lead.

To enable the Canadian producer, however, to compete on equal terms in the markets of the world and obtain the necessary proportion of profit it is indispensable that refineries should be established in British Columbia and the lead refined in the vicinity of the mines. If we may repose any confidence in the judgment of disinterested experts the lead would inevitably go by way of Vancouver, as it would thus get the benefit of the cheap ocean rates to the world's markets and escape the long haul and the heavy tolls of the C. P. R. company to Montreal and other eastern points. But if the duty on Canadian lead bullion refined in bond, in the United States remains obstinately closed against the lead output of British Columbia.

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