

## STEEL PLANT PROPOSITION.

Submitted to Council Last Evening by J. P. Withrow—What He Asks For.

Council Fail to Agree on Election of a Water Commissioner—Endless Talk.

There was a special meeting of the city council last night, with the full board present. There was a good deal of general discussion, but very little work was accomplished.

Harrison & Wakely wrote saying that they had only received \$100 for work done on the McClure street sewer and asking that the balance due be paid. The letter was referred to the sewerage committee and city engineer to investigate.

The following letter from James Withrow was then read:

Victoria, B. C., Sept. 10, 1894.

To the Mayor and Aldermen of the Municipal Council, Victoria.

Gentlemen:—Following up the interview that you were pleased to extend me some few days ago relative to my proposal to secure the establishment of a plant for the manufacture of iron and steel in your midst, I beg to submit for your consideration the following matters and facts:

It has been definitely ascertained beyond any doubt that Vancouver Island is possessed of large deposits of iron ore of the very best quality for manufacturing purposes. Eminent experts both in the United States and England have pronounced samples of Vancouver Island ore submitted to them by me to be unsurpassed by any ore in the world for the manufacture of iron and steel billets, the percentage of phosphorus, the objectionable element of many iron ores, being shown to be infinitesimally small.

Vancouver Island has also, as it is needless for me to remark, plenty of good cooking coal, so that the raw materials for the manufacture of iron and steel can be brought together at comparatively little cost.

The success of a properly constructed and equipped iron and steel plant established at a convenient point in British Columbia would be assured if a reasonable amount of encouragement and assistance were given, both by reason of the presence of the raw materials under singularly favorable conditions, as already pointed out, and by reason of the bounty offered by the Canadian government of \$2 per ton on the pig iron and pig steel, as well as on account of the lowering by the United States of the tariff on pig iron and steel, and of the large market just opening up in Japan and the Australian colonies.

In an interview which I have recently had with the Japanese representative at San Francisco, I was assured that the Japanese government would give orders for half the output of the proposed plant, there being a rapidly growing demand for iron and steel in that country, and almost an entire absence of the requisite ore for its production.

There is also a certainty of a very large exclusive market available to the business on the Pacific slope, the distance and freight rates between the coast and iron centres of the east forming a perpetual barrier to any formidable competition from these sources. The states and territories of this coast are, as you know, in the early stage of development, and will in the near future consume vast quantities of structural iron and steel.

I propose, in the event of obtaining a substantial expression of approval and encouragement of the project from your honorable body, to organize a company in London with a capital of \$3,000,000 for the purpose of establishing an iron and steel plant in or near Victoria, said plant to cost about \$2,000,000, to employ about two thousand hands and to have a producing capacity of at least 50,000 tons of iron and steel per annum.

I beg leave accordingly to submit to your honorable body the following proposition: That in the event of your honorable body being organized in London with the capital being mentioned and of half of such capital being subscribed for, and in the event of the company having bona fide expended say \$50,000 to the satisfaction of three responsible persons to be named by the council, the mayor to be one, that the council will cause a by-law to be submitted to the ratepayers to authorize the city to guarantee the interest on the bonds of the company at the rate of 5 per cent per annum to the extent of \$1,000,000, payable in twenty years, such guaranteed bonds to be issued from time to time as the work progresses, and such guarantee to be secured by a charge upon the assets of the company and upon the bounties available from the Canadian government, or otherwise to the satisfaction of the council and city councillors.

In conclusion, I may say that I have had 25 years' experience in building and equipping iron and steel plants at various points in the east, and also as superintendent of such plants when in operation, and can assure you that an undertaking of the character I have outlined, if supported by the citizens of Victoria, will greatly increase the commercial importance of the city.

Any further information that the council may desire in my absence may be obtained from Mr. Tom Kaine, surveyor-general, who holds my power of attorney.

Awaiting the action of your honorable body, I remain, Yours very truly,

J. P. WITHROW.

Ald. Vigilius said that inasmuch as the question was one of vital importance and it had been up for so short a time he would move that the letter be tabled for a week.

Ald. Munn seconded, and it was carried.

S. Perry Mills, solicitor for Mrs. Caroline Archibald, wrote asking that the purchase by the city of a certain lot in School street be completed. The letter was referred to the finance committee.

The provincial government applied for admission to the old men's home of David Murray at Comox. The application stated that it was desired to keep him there only until the Kamloops home is opened and that the government would make the usual allowance. Referred to the home committee.

Drake, Jackson & Helmecken, solicitors for George Lindsay and J. Griffiths of Lake district, wrote asking that the city restore Colquhoun stream, near Beaver lake, to the condition it was in before the new main was put in. Received and filed.

City Engineer Wilmot presented an estimate of the cost of the extension of the Douglas street sewer to the north ward school. He placed it at \$2800.

Ald. Humphrey raised a peculiar point as to the proposition to do the work by day labor. He regarded it as a dangerous proposition. The property owners were going to pay the bills, and if the cost averaged up 20 or 30 per cent higher than the work done by contract there would be a complaint against paying.

Ald. Wilson said the point was well taken, and Ald. Dwyer and the mayor agreed. They were both in favor of having a small section of the work done as an experiment.

Ald. Harris moved that they reconsider their vote of last week and call for ten

ders for the work. Ald. Baker seconded the motion.

Ald. Ledingham believed they could so regulate the work and wages as to get as good results as the contractors. The motion of Ald. Harris was defeated, with the understanding that if the work was found to be costing too much it would be stopped.

E. D. Wilmot submitted estimates on the cost of some minor street improvements. They were referred to the street committee.

Ald. Wilson's motion authorizing E. C. Smith to act in the absence of City Treasurer Charles Kent was passed.

Ald. Wilson's motion for the expropriation of lands around Elk and Beaver lakes and naming Cornelius Booth as arbitrator was then read. In support of it Ald. Wilson said he had no doubt of the ability of the man named in the resolution.

Ald. Baker wanted to know if the city assessor would not do, and Ald. Humphrey said he regarded the motion as necessary. The latter said the act fully authorized the water commissioner to do all that.

Ald. Ledingham said they were hardly going ahead properly. Should it not be first decided how much land they were going to expropriate?

Ald. Munn thought they should first get pure water, and he wanted to see what the filters were going to cost.

The mayor said he too wanted to know what the filters were going to cost. Ald. Munn said the amount of cost depended on the scheme of improvement. Some people believed only from 50 to 200 yards was needed.

Ald. Wilson said that the city engineer had made a survey of the water shed and told what was wanted, and he had a record of it. There were a number of streams feeding the lake which should be secured. They would have to act quickly, as on the five acre tracts people were building houses. He believed the scheme outlined by the engineer in March should be followed very closely.

The act was produced and showed that the course was clearly marked out, and the motion was laid on the table, saying, "We will comply with the act."

Ald. Dwyer's motion to invite applications for the position of caretaker was read, and several wanted to know why a carpenter was wanted particularly.

Ald. Dwyer said that was easily explained. There were fences to be built, doors hung, pipes boxed, boats painted and all manner of jobs done. They wanted a "handy" man. It was agreed that the man did not need to be a carpenter, and the motion was carried.

Ald. Humphrey's motion naming James L. Raymur as water commissioner was then read. The alderman explained that Mr. Raymur could attend to the inside business and Mr. Preece to the outside. As to salary, he wanted to hear from the board.

Ald. Styles said he wanted to see an expert on water appointed.

Ald. Wilson said he heartily approved of the motion. The gentleman proposed was a capable man, who would put the department on a good basis. The engineer was capable as well and could still be called on for expert work in his line. He would support the salary mentioned, and did not see how they could reasonably cut the engineer's salary.

Ald. Vigilius differed from Ald. Wilson on the matter of wages. He said Mr. Leach had done his work faithfully for years for \$125. The city would pay a certain work taken from him and a reduction in proportion should be made. He believed \$160 a month enough, and moved in that direction. He said he believed he was simply carrying out the wishes of the ratepayers.

Ald. Harris disagreed with Ald. Vigilius and supported Ald. Wilson.

Ald. Baker believed that \$160 was enough for the city engineer, was opposed to raising Mr. Raymur's salary, and opposed to making Mr. Raymur commissioner.

Ald. Munn said if they made Mr. Raymur water commissioner they would very likely have to have a second independent audit of his books, but Ald. Dwyer said that the money would all pass through the treasury. He believed Mr. Raymur would place the department on a good basis. He would certainly give the financial part of the work to him.

Ald. Baker proposed to make Mr. Preece water commissioner and have Mr. Raymur look after the clerical work.

Ald. Munn said he believed Mr. Wilmot suffered from the neglect of his assistants and he believed Mr. Raymur would place himself in the same way. He believed the council should have given Mr. Wilmot clearer instructions and left him in his place.

The mayor said it might be well to leave Mr. Wilmot in charge and have Mr. Raymur do the clerical work.

That brought Ald. Baker up with a protest. He renewed his former arguments against returning the engineer to power.

After some discussion as to the people behind in their water payments, Ald. Ledingham moved, seconded by Ald. Baker, that Mr. Preece be made water commissioner and Mr. Raymur assistant commissioner to look after all clerical work, including the fixing of rates, and that the latter's salary be fixed at \$130.

Ald. Humphrey said that he did not want to carry his motion, as he could, by one vote, and the amendment would satisfy him.

Ald. Wilson said that he should stand by his motion.

Ald. Baker said he did not desire to embarrass Ald. Humphrey, and suggested that the whole matter be dropped for a time.

Ald. Styles was out for an expert who could design the work to be done and prepare a whole scheme.

Finally it was agreed to withdraw both the amendment and the motion.

Ald. Humphrey called attention to the ballots used in the recent election. The paper was so thin that the pencil marks could be seen when the paper was folded.

The city clerk was authorized to call for tenders for repainting and painting the roof of the market building.

The people quickly recognize merit, and this is the reason the sales of Hood's Sarsaparilla are continually increasing. Hood's is "on top."

How to Get a "Sunlight" Picture. Send 25 "Sunlight" Soap wrappers (wrappers bearing the words "Why does a Woman Look Older Sooner than a Man") to Lever Brothers, Limited, 45 Scott street, Toronto. Out and you will receive by mail a pretty picture, free from advertising and well worth framing. This is an easy way to get a picture of your own. It is the best in the market, and will only cost 1c. postage to send in wrappers. If you do not send in wrappers, you will not get the picture. Write your address carefully.

## THE DANGERS OF THE SEA

Strange Accidents of a Similar Nature Which Befell the Libbie's Boat.

Floating of an Oar Which Told of a Death—Home After a Rough Cruise.

The sealing schooner Libbie, Captain Fred Hackett, arrived home at nine o'clock last evening from a voyage replete with accidents of a serious and strange nature. Two of her crew were drowned on the Japanese coast by the smashing of their boat by a "killer," a third had a narrow escape from drowning. Three of the crew met with a similar accident off the Copper Islands, and but for a combination of fortunate circumstances would have been lost. The schooner was at different times roughly handled by gales of wind and on the way home a boat was smashed on her decks.

The story of the accident off the Japanese coast, in which boatman J. C. Bodine and Harry Georgeson were drowned and Hunter Collinson, of Plummer's Pass, nearly lost his life, has already been told, but not with full particulars. The affair happened early in March. It was between 12 and 1 o'clock when the "killer" struck their boat, tore the bottom out of it and threw the three men into the sea. They managed to lash the canvas around the bottom of the boat, right her and climb in, but the water rushed in faster than they could bail it out. The boat would fill and turn and turn again. Collinson took a position at the bow, where he held on and treaded water. He did not have to turn with the boat, and in that way he saved his strength. Bodine and Georgeson in their struggle for life lost their judgment and made wild efforts to get back upon the boat every time she came up either way. Just so sure as they did they were thrown off. The same name was attended by one of those incidents which appeal to the hearts of men. He was the first to go. Once when the boat turned he was thrown into the water several feet away, and was so weak he had no effort to get back. Bodine pushed an oar out to him, and with a last effort he grabbed it. The oar was not big enough to support him and slowly he disappeared beneath the surface still clinging to the oar.

Minutes upon minutes the two men watched in silent horror the spot where Georgeson disappeared. Then in a moment the oar slowly came to the surface. It told the story of the end. Bodine looked at Collinson and said, "He is gone and I will soon follow him." Ten minutes later Bodine's hold was loosened and he slipped quietly down to his death. When the schooner reached Collinson at 7 o'clock that evening he was sitting in the boat, stripped of his clothing, in water to his waist, and holding the boat with his oars. He was all but bereft of his reason by his experiences of the day, and nearly dead from exposure.

Another serious accident occurred about a mile south of the Copper Islands. It is described best in the language of Thomas Brown, the hunter. Said he: "I was out as usual with the two men, Jack Lundy and Sam Thomas. The day was a fair one, and we had the sail up. There was a little wind blowing and we were moving along at average speed. I had just shot a seal and was standing as high up in the bow as I could looking forward for seals. Suddenly and without the slightest warning the boat started to sink. I was thrown forward in the air and landed in the water several feet away. I was the most surprised man in the world. First I thought the gun had gone off and then I had an idea that the ammunition box had blown up. When I looked around I saw Lundy and Thomas sitting on the boat, which was bottom up and had a great hole torn in her. I had on heavy rubber boots, and was warmly dressed, so you can imagine how much trouble I had in getting out. 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