

of natural gas to the City of Lethbridge on a basis of 25c for domestic use and, I think, 15c for power. Under this franchise he had until next year to bring the gas into the city. Meantime his franchise has been disposed of and is now in the hands of the Canadian Western Natural Gas, Light, Heat and Power Company. As soon as they decided to put the pipe line in, they approached the City of Lethbridge with a view of ascertaining whether arrangements could be made whereby the price should be increased from 25c to 35c for domestic use and 15c to 25c for power use. The proposition was rejected several times by the Council to present a by-law to the ratepayers authorizing an increase of the rates. They did this under threat that they would not come into Lethbridge but would leave it on the outside. Under the new by-law submitted there is no question so far as the City is concerned, some considerable concessions have been made, as the old franchise was about as loosely drawn as possible.

The weak points so far as the control of the streets is concerned and supply of gas, have been entirely eliminated and so far as that feature is concerned, a decided improvement has been made. Under the old franchise, all they guarantee to supply was a minimum of 250,000 feet, and in the negotiations the new Company practically intimated to the City that unless they conceded the points they asked for, they would not supply any more than 250,000 feet which of course would be entirely inadequate for the supply of the City. To my mind it is questionable whether the by-law will carry or not, but they seem to have by some means or other, got the co-operation of a number of people who were formerly very antagonistic to any such increase.

So far as our coal operations at Lethbridge are concerned, the increased price will be a benefit, as at 35c it is just a question if it would not be cheaper to burn coal than gas, and I fancy that a large number of people, rather than go to the trouble of installing gas, will continue to burn coal.

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Manager.

If these letters reveal anything, they indicate that possibly our railways are already in politics—that they are in a position of very great power and that the way men may be induced to vote by the influence of a railway corporation may have