

TO CUT FIRE RATES

Insurance Compact Agrees to Lower Cost

IF A FIREBOAT IS PROVIDED

Owners of Property Near Water Front Will Be Much Benefited—Wooden Boat Will Fit Portland's Needs.

A fireboat will lessen the cost of insurance. Alfred Stillman, head of the Board of Underwriters of the Pacific Coast fire insurance compact, says that the compact will promise in tangible form to the city of Portland the reduction in cost of insurance for property near the waterfront. The compact will promise to the city of Portland the reduction in cost of insurance for property near the waterfront. The compact will promise to the city of Portland the reduction in cost of insurance for property near the waterfront.

West side of Front street, 10 per cent. East side of Front street, 10 per cent. West side of First street, 9 per cent. East side of First street, 9 per cent. West side of Second street, 8 per cent. East side of Second street, 8 per cent. Between Second and Third streets, 3 per cent.

West of Third street, 1 per cent. Wooden buildings in these limits will receive a greater reduction.

Wharves and factories on the water front will get a reduction of 10 per cent. These figures give a general idea of what the lessened cost of insurance will be in the other parts of the city along or near the river.

The saving to property-owners will amount to a large sum. It is not possible to determine the total annual reduction in cost of insurance, and even Mr. Stillman cannot give this information. But the total will many times over amount to more than the interest on the cost of the fireboat. One firm will be benefited to the extent of \$500 per annum. But the saving will be not only from lessened cost of insurance, but also from smaller damage from fire.

The fireboat committee of the Chamber of Commerce is composed of J. C. Planners, E. M. Brannick, P. H. Ransom and John Poulson. It has frequent meetings, and will soon get its plans into definite shape. It proposes to raise a fund of \$50,000 by public subscription, the same to be repaid to the subscribers by a tax on the property of the city. This tax will have to be authorized by the next Legislature. All the members of the Legislature to whom the committee has written, or whom its members have seen, are willing to vote for a special tax. Therefore the committee looks for no difficulty in raising the fund. If this plan is followed, more than a year's time will be saved in getting a fireboat.

A wooden fireboat is deemed to suit the finances of the city best at this time. Such boats give good service in other cities. A steel boat would cost, perhaps, twice as much money as a wooden one, and \$100,000 is beyond the reach of the present method of obtaining a boat. The pumping capacity of the boat will probably be between 600 and 800 gallons of water a minute. This output of water is equal to about six big "steamers" like the two Portland has just added to its fleet.

A boatbuilder said yesterday that the hull of a 100-foot fireboat would cost probably between \$15,000 and \$20,000. The boat should have twin screws, about five feet apart, and good speed. As to a stern-wheel boat, he did not think such a model should be considered.

A prominent boatbuilder is said to be willing to build a fireboat at his own expense, lease it to the city and sell it to the city at the end of a given period. The fireboat committee has not come to the details of the boat's construction. The first thing is to raise the money, said Chairman Planners yesterday. The committee is a purely voluntary body, not recognized by law, and the money raised will be spent for the boat. Plans and specifications will be drawn up in the usual way, and contracts will be awarded in due course of time.

SUGAR IN THE REVENUE.

It Is Impossible to Regard It as a Subject for Free Trade.

New York Journal of Commerce. If the only question involved in the taxation of sugar were commercial the argument for free sugar would be almost conclusive. It would be wholly so from the point of view of abstract free trade; but it would be nearly so from the standpoint of moderate protection, for the beet industry has taken some pains to demonstrate its capacity to flourish without protection, though now it is making a great fight, and with more allies than we had supposed it could count on. Even the slightest reduction of duties that were fixed five years ago high enough to afford a margin of 20 per cent, according to the calculations of extreme protectionists, for reduction in the sugar tariff concessions. The cane sugar men have never admitted their ability to get along without a tariff, but if the duty were reduced, or even removed, the cane fields of Louisiana would be able to compete with the beet sugar of the United States.

The consumption of sugar in England, including its use in manufactures, has considerably exceeded 80 pounds. Cheap sugar has stimulated the production of marmalades and jams, which have become staple breakfast dishes in England and are enormously exported. And yet England is not a free sugar country, as compared with the United States, and, besides the preserved fruit industry, we have a great condensed milk industry which uses quantities of sugar. One concern is now using 150,000 tons a year, and free sugar would give this stimulus. England has allowed German bounties to paralyze her own refineries and blight her West India colonies because cheap sugar ministered to such an immense extent to the comfort of the people and the growth of her manufactures and exports. Whatever may be said about the colonies—and they are taking steps to produce more sugar with less expenditure, and so meet the best competition—cheap sugar as a food and a raw material is far more valuable to England than her refineries would have been. Cheap food and cheap raw materials are far more important to a nation than the business of getting the dirt out of raw sugar.

But this is not the only question we are compelled to consider. The Government has got to have a revenue, and a large one, and our general import trade is increasing very little. As our own manufactures increase our dependence upon

foreign manufactured goods must decline. Taxation of foreign raw materials is a handicap upon our manufacturers; we must not have more of it; we ought to have less. Internal taxation, except on beer, whiskey and tobacco, is very unpopular; the brewers have got their taxes reduced to the point before the Spanish War; the distillers are trying to get their taxes reduced, though they have not been increased since 1894. The revenue from sugar for the last three years has been as follows:

1931.....\$2,280,200
1930.....\$1,417,772
1929.....\$1,158,321

The revenue might be increased by reducing the duty. We offer no argument against that. But it is impossible to sacrifice this revenue without increasing taxation elsewhere, and public sentiment would not welcome that. The removal of the duty in 1890 was the cause of the deficit which soon replaced the surplus which the McKinley tariff was designed to cure, and cured only too effectively.

Furthermore, the sugar duty is more than many of our imports a revenue duty. More of it goes to the Government and less of it to private interests. In the last fiscal year the sugar production of the United States and its islands, cane and beet, was 230,000 tons; the sugar which the McKinley tariff was designed to cure, and cured only too effectively.

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BUILDING OUTLOOK GOOD

MILLS ARE BUSY AND CONTRACTORS SHOOTING FOR MATERIAL.

Grounds and Plant of Old Sellwood Sawmill May Be Leased for a New Mill.

Frank Schmitt, of the Schmitt Planting Company, on East Eighth street, said yesterday that the building outlook for the remainder of the year has greatly improved the past two weeks. He judges from the orders received by that establishment. Mr. Schmitt says that he had received more orders than he could fill, and others were being placed on file. The new machines are working smoothly, and there is a pretty full force of men employed.

"We are getting all the lumber we need," said Mr. Schmitt, "and running nine hours, and have on hand about 200,000 feet. We buy the logs and have them sawed out. Our pay roll last week was \$200. I am pleased with the way things

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erable delay on account of the difficulty in getting lumber, but now material for the completion of the repairs was on hand. The trestle between the two East Side spans and the approach are completed except the plank. The trestle between the two spans will remain until the bridge spans are rebuilt. It is the intention of the County Court to restore these spans as soon as possible. Timbers will be gotten out and shaped at once, and new iron will be obtained. The iron in the spans that were burned was ruined, and cannot be used. There was some talk of doing away with the spans entirely and retaining the trestle, but this idea has been abandoned, for the reason that it would be very expensive to keep the drift from accumulating above the trestle. The current sets in toward this part of the river, and even when there are no piles under the spans the drift gathers in great quantities. There will be no great amount of drift till late in the fall, and by that time the two spans can be completed and the piles pulled out of the way. At the West Side the approach has been entirely rebuilt.

Powell-Street Improvement.
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