

THE SUMPTER MINER

VOL. II.

SUMPTER, OREGON, JANUARY 9, 1901.

NO. 18

NEW MAYOR'S MESSAGE

HIGHLY COMPLIMENTS RETIRING OFFICIALS.

Points Out the Excellent Financial Condition in Which the Town Now Is—Favors Progress, Coupled With Wise Conservatism—Will Have Other Recommendations to Make When New Charter Is Secured.

The recently elected town officers were inaugurated last evening, except Alderman Bellinger, who was out of town on important business. No other business of importance was transacted. Mayor Robbins read his inaugural address, as follows:

TO THE ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF SUMPTER.

GENTLEMEN: At the beginning of a new year, and of the new century, we have assembled, in obedience to the will of the voters of the town of Sumpter, to assume our respective duties in the management of the town affairs.

It is customary, I believe, upon such occasions, for the incoming mayor to outline to some extent the needs of the city, and to recommend such new or changed legislation, or methods, as in his judgment may be deemed best for the public good. Owing, however, to the fact that the powers granted by our present charter are both limited and uncertain, covering the greater part of which I would say, I have deemed it best to anticipate the granting, by our state legislature, of our new charter, and defer several recommendations until they can be made applicable thereto.

The recorder's report, covering the transactions of the city for the past year, discloses a condition of affairs both unusual and remarkable, when considered in the light of all that has transpired within that time. And in justice to the retiring mayor and alderman and other officers who have contributed towards these results, and to the end that the example may not be lost to our own minds, I refer you to the fact that during the past two years we have grown from a little hamlet of 350 souls to a thriving, bustling little city of 2500 or more people, and during which time we have passed through a boom, the fury of which, for a time, fairly took one's breath away, and the like of which in most places has left behind a trail of disaster, with commercial failures, business men ruined, homes lost and hopes blighted, and too frequently with a municipal indebtedness of such a magnitude as to practically amount to confiscation of property and homes of those remaining.

Instead, gentlemen, our honorable predecessors deliver into our keeping Sumpter of today, with its 2500 or more inhabitants, its miles of sidewalks, crosswalks and street improvements, its schools, churches and secret societies, its well equipped fire department, its excellent water plant and electric light plant, its blocks of houses, modern brick buildings and pretty homes, without the cloud of a single commercial failure within the past year. With city property valued at and costing over \$5000, aside from crosswalks, street and other public improvements, and with a bonded and warrant indebtedness, all told, of less than \$1600, and all this without having ever levied one cent of

property tax. Such results are not obtained by mere chance.

Gentlemen, it will be left to others to review and report the result of our acts. The books are open, the entries must be made by ourselves; future report will be but a recapitulation of what we enter therein. Shall the balance be in red ink or black? For us it must remain as we make it. Still we should be progressive and ever watchful and ready to promote and advance the best interests of our city. Our conservatism and failure to accept responsibility is no less to be condemned than an unjust performance of duty attended by failure.

During the present year, perhaps more than ever before, will the advancement and future prosperity of our city depend, not alone upon the foresight and wisdom of its enterprising citizens, but upon the intelligent and legitimate encouragement of those in charge of the city's affairs as well.

In the delivery at our depot of 2000 carloads of freight during the past year, 270 carloads of which was machinery for adjacent mines, and in the immense pay rolls of the mines, we get but a hint of the wonderful development now taking place around us. While it might be said that such matters are not directly related to affairs of city government, yet they are of the most vital importance to the future of our city, and whether we may be able to aid in the way of encouraging an increase in such business, and toward cheapening its cost and facilitating its transportation, will in a like degree add to the growth and prosperity of its inhabitants.

The matter of rail transportation to our adjacent mines has already been much discussed. The matter of street railway and other such franchises may be matters for your consideration in the very near future. I would recommend just and fair encouragement to all such when properly and legitimately proposed, in good faith, by responsible parties. I would advise, however, great care in avoiding the granting of such privileges for speculative purposes without compensating advantages to the city, remembering always that excessive expenditures or appropriations can only be liquidated through burdensome taxation.

In looking over the items of expense for the preceding year, aside from salaries, I find the greatest to have been for the purchase of fire apparatus and the equipping of our fire department.

Upon more than one occasion during the year the wisdom of this investment has had practical illustration.

The subject of proper fire protection is one of grave importance to every property owner within the city, and the fact that the individual members of our fire companies devote their time generously without pay or reward, should appeal strongly to our own generosity in providing necessary apparatus and such firemen's clothing as may be necessary for their proper protection and comfort while on duty. I would further recommend that a reasonable compensation be allowed all firemen while on actual duty, sufficient at least to in some measure compensate them for the damage sustained to their clothing while on duty at fires.

Another item of considerable importance has been the health department and pest house expenses. Yet considering the unwholesome sanitary conditions of town and the almost universal prevalence of smallpox last season, as compared to our present total freedom from this much dreaded disease, together with the prevailing healthfulness of our city, we can but count it money well spent. And aside from money well spent much of the de-

sirable results obtained is no doubt due to the painstaking care of our efficient health officer.

In such positions it not infrequently happens that an efficient officer so far succeeds as to render a continuance of his employment unnecessary. It would seem, therefore, that due regard for economy might make it advisable to readjust the duties of health officer, leaving the street cleaning and scavenger work to be performed under direction of the city marshal and a nominal salary allowed the city physician for performing the remaining duties of health officer.

Yet, whether it would be prudent to dispense with the services of our present efficient officer at a time when contagious diseases are prevalent in so many adjoining towns, will be a matter for your consideration and discussion.

In justice to the officials themselves, as well as to the taxpayers, I would advise your honorable body to give careful consideration to the matter of formulating a more perfect system for keeping of the accounts between the various officers and of the various funds. A proper system should be provided and every officer who in any way handles public money should be required to so keep his accounts that the same may be readily and accurately checked up by another officer or by the finance committee.

Numbered receipts, with proper stubs, should be furnished every officer authorized to receive money, and a proper system of reports should be required at least once each month.

The same degree of accuracy and perfection should be demanded of its employees in the conduct of city affairs as would be exacted by a successful business man of those handling his money and his business.

To the health and police committee, I would enjoin the utmost care and watchfulness. The good health of our city is a matter of deep concern to all.

See to it that contagious diseases do not again get a foot hold in our midst. Should they occur, see that each and every case is promptly and properly quarantined, and when cured that the buildings are properly fumigated and disinfected.

See to it also that the proper officers exercise due care in removing and preventing all nuisances that might cause or encourage disease or sickness.

Exercise due watchfulness over the police department and exact efficient service from all those under your control.

The fire and water committee will have under their direct supervision all matters pertaining to the fire department, fire protection and water supply.

Our present high rate of insurance is a matter of vital concern to every business man and every householder. The efficiency of our fire protection may at any moment be on trial. Its failure not only means immediate loss of property, but an increase of insurance rates, or their cancellation.

I invite your careful co-operation with the officers of the fire department to the end that they may be properly equipped for their work and ever ready for an emergency.

To the committee on streets and public property, I would urge a careful observance of the condition of our streets and public thoroughfares. I would especially call your attention to the very unsatisfactory condition of lower Mill street, and those principal streets leading east and connecting with the county road. Likewise to Center street and Auburn street in the vicinity of the depot.

There is perhaps one thing that more than any other reflects the degree of thrift

and enterprise of a city than the condition of its streets. Due consideration should be given also to the needs and comfort of those residing in the residence districts.

It will become the duty of the committee on finance to report upon all bills presented to the council, to audit the accounts of all officers and otherwise to have general supervision over all financial matters pertaining to the city. The adoption and maintenance of a proper system of accounts and the careful observance of every detail pertaining to the financial transactions of our city involves much care and much labor, but has its reward in a duty well performed.

The judiciary committee by reason of the proposed revision of our charter and the revision of ordinances that must of necessity follow, will have many responsible duties to perform, which will demand both painstaking care and wisdom.

Again to the various committees, I wish to urge your close attention to all matters pertaining to your several departments, to the end that the council may have the benefit of your investigations and recommendations upon all matters requiring its action. The greater part of the city's business must needs pass through the hands of the various committees and a prompt discharge of their respective duties will greatly lessen and facilitate our labors.

J. H. ROBBINS.

Sumpter, Or., Jan. 8, 1901.

Saturday evening the old council held its last meeting. A communication from the town of Milton, asking for co-operation in changing the laws so that a town or city can levy and collect taxes was read. John Arthur was informed that he would have to secure a dance hall license, which he agreed to do. Reports of officials were filed. THE MINER was awarded the city printing for the ensuing year, at the same rate as in the past, five cents a line. There being a discrepancy between the reports of the marshal and recorder, the report of the latter was not accepted.

Much Machinery Moved on the Snow.

The huge temporary platform at the Sumpter Valley railway tracks at the depot, where many hundreds of tons of mining machinery have rested for many weeks, has now been cleared. The last piece of this material, which was the main ratchet wheel of the Red Boy hoist, weighing over 15,000 pounds, was loaded on the Sumpter Transportation company's heavy sleds Friday and started for its final destination. The good road made by the recent heavy fall of snow was taken advantage of quickly by the Transportation company, and, being so well equipped for the work, it was not long in clearing the cars, platforms and yards that was loaded and strewn with valuable freight. The Transportation company should—in the minds of those not familiar with its business affairs—pay some handsome dividends when a "clean up" from these hauls is made.

Married People's Sleighing Party.

A party of married people went out to Barnard's half-way house last evening in sleighs and had a dance and a supper and a time. They evidently took an oath of secrecy, for nothing pertaining to the details of the expedition can be learned, except that the supper was an excellent one and that they "maintained their dignity." Those implicated in the affair were Dr. and Mrs. Tape, Dr. and Mrs. Brock, Mr. and Mr. Swan, Mr. and Mrs. Steffen, Mr. and Mrs. Yeager, Mr. and Mrs. Hobson, Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, Mr. and Mrs. Crouse, Mr. and Mrs. Tedrowe, Mr. and Mrs. Morrell, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, Mr. and Mrs. Kitchen.