

Dec. 16th., 1908.

Mr. C.E. Daggert, Supt.,
Garbage Crematory,
C I T Y.

Dear sir:-

I enclose herewith the copy of a circular
letter I have received from James O. Rountree, Secretary of
the Portland Realty Board.

Respectfully,

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Mayor.

PORTLAND, OREGON, Dec. 14, 1908.

The Board of Trustees of the Chamber of Commerce,
City.

Gentlemen:-

Your committee on Municipal Affairs had its attention called to the frightful condition of affairs that exists at the City Garbage Crematory, and in order to get at the facts as they exist, on the 9th inst. held a meeting and at which Mr. E.L. Daggett, Superintendent of said Crematory was present as was also Dr. Esther Pohl of the City Health Board. Mr. Daggett stated in substance as follows:-

That the present crematory was built about eleven years ago and that its capacity when in fairly good shape is about 25 tons of garbage per day, but that by operating it throughout the day and forcing everything to the limit in connection with the incinerating of garbage, it has been possible to incinerate about 35 tons per day. That at the present time its period of usefulness is about ended as it is ^{so} nearly burnt out that it cannot last much longer and besides the top is inclining down in such a manner that it is liable to fall in any day, and when that happens there will be no means of incinerating any of the garbage of the city; that for a long time he has been repairing the crematory in order to keep it going. He further stated that the amount of garbage which should be incinerated delivered there through the winter months is from 40 to 50 tons per day and that during the summer months the amount of garbage which is delivered and should be incinerated is about 75 tons per day. By computing the average amount of excess of garbage delivered over that incinerated by the crematory for a period of, say, 6 months at 10 ton per day, there would be about 1500 tons of garbage which is not incinerated, and deducting 35 tons incinerated from the 75 tons

gathered for the other 6 months leaves 40 tons per day not incinerated or for a period of 6 months makes 6000 tons, making a total for the entire year of 7500 tons which is thrown on a dump in the vicinity of the crematory. This is all exclusive of such things as are not supposed to be incinerated at all.

He further stated that much of the garbage ^{that} is brought there during the summer season is so decayed as to be putrid and this particularly relative to vegetable matter and meats, that the smell is simply indescribable, and when it is considered that so large a portion of this matter mixed with other garbage, is thrown on the ground, it is not hard to understand what the odors must be for a long distance from the garbage crematory grounds. Added to this is the fact that, as he stated, the garbage in the dump is alive with rats and at times during high water the rats were driven out of the dump to such an extent that at times one person inclined to see how many he could kill, killed 500 to 1000 in one day with a club. It is needless to say that under such circumstances, more or less of the rats will go to other portions of the city and it is altogether probable that the rats that have infested the residence sections of the city for 3 summers past have come from the garbage crematory dump. In view of the fact that the rats are supposed to and in fact known to be the cause of the bubonic plague being carried throughout any city in which it once gets a start through the carrying of fleas which leave the rats when they die and get on to cats, dogs and other domestic animals and otherwise by reason of which

they get into dwelling houses and of the further fact that during the past summer there were two cases of bubonic plague in the city of Portland and of the further fact of the enormous expense which might become necessary in order to eradicate the plague, as for example, was the case in the city of San Francisco during the past summer when about \$750,000 was paid by the city in connection with the matter of killing off the rats and in order to stamp out the plague, we believe we are justified in saying that the most energetic efforts possible should be taken at the earliest possible time to compel the city to provide sufficient crematories to consume the garbage of the city or that a contract should be entered into by the city with some responsible party or parties whose duty it shall be to remove the garbage and incinerate the same and that action should be taken tending to destroy the myriads of rats that are now on the premises adjacent to the crematory or in and about the garbage which has been dumped there and about the city in general. From the best information obtainable it is now thought that not to exceed two thirds of the garbage of the city is being gathered and conveyed to the crematory. The crematory being in the northwestern portion of the city necessitates the driving of wagons conveying the garbage from all sections of the city east of the Willamette River over the bridges across the Willamette and thence through the business portion of the city and with that gathered from that portion of the city west of the Willamette River thence through one of the best residence parts of the city, in open filthy wagons, is so offensive as to be an intolerable nuisance to say nothing of the fact that oftentimes more or less of the offensive matter falls from the wagons and helps to

to litter up the streets.

Your committee were further informed by Mr. Daggett that the cost of collecting the garbage and transporting the same to the city crematory and including the incineration of the same, has cost the people and city about \$1.50 per ton; that a crematory with a capacity for incinerating 75 tons of garbage per day can be erected for from about \$70,000.00 to \$75,000.00.

Your committee have further learned that a garbage destruction company named "The Sanitary Garbage Destruction Company" has applied to the City Council for a franchise or for the privilege of collecting all the garbage during the night time and for the transporting thereof during the night time from the places where collected in wagons and carts so that the same can be closed so as to be air tight, and which shall be cleaned and kept absolutely clean and sanitary and odorless while the garbage is being transported through the city from the place so collected to some place at least two miles outside the city limits and there destroyed, all at its own expense, all for or charge of not exceeding 75 cents per ton or not to exceed one half the present cost to the people and city.

Your committee therefore recommends as follows, to-wit:-

First - That the Chamber of Commerce cause a suit to be commenced and prosecuted in the name of one of its members or of some other person against the City of Portland and such officers as now have charge of the collection, transporting and delivery of the garbage or otherwise as may be found advisable, and that it and they be enjoined from dumping any more garbage at any place within the corporate limits of the City and also from delivering or permitting to

be delivered at or in the vicinity of the City Garbage Crematory other than such as can be perfectly incinerated during the day when so delivered.

Second - We further recommend that the Chamber of Commerce use its utmost efforts to induce the city to erect or cause to be erected two garbage crematories, each of a capacity for incinerating 75 tons of garbage on the west side of the Willamette River and the other at some suitable place on the east side of said river, so that there will not exist the necessity of having the garbage transported any great distance through the more business part of the city;

Or, if it shall be deemed preferable, that a franchise will all suitable safe guards be granted to and a contract be made with some individual or company for the collection and transportation to some place at least two miles outside the city limits, of all the city garbage and at which latter place such garbage shall all be incinerated, all at the least possible expense and which expense shall not exceed 75 cents per ton, all in substantial conformity with a copy of the proposed ordinance, franchise and contract as submitted by said The Sanitary Garbage Destruction Co. which is hereto attached and marked Exhibit "A" and made a part hereof for reference only.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) S.H.Gruber
" J.O.Rountree
" Matt. Foeler

of the Committee.