WATER WORKS FOR HELENA.

Mr. Woolston Heard in Connection with His Proposed Undertaking.

To the Editor of the Herald.

Will you kindly permit me to speak through your paper in answer some of the inquiries which very naturally and justly arrise in the minds of your people touching the water question.

As to the want of a water system, with large mains, plenty of fire hydrants and an abundance of pure, wholesome water, there seems to be but one opinion. No reasonable person would say that your city should be exposed to the dangers of fire with no better protection than it now has one day longer than necessity forces.

That you can be a city, with city improvements, comforts and luxuries, or can have a system of sewerage without water, no one claims.

That the question of your water supply is a very serious one and its realization to your needs an expensive one, no one denies.

That it will largely reduce insurance and the expense of your fire department by having water and pressure enough to throw ample fire streams by attaching hose to the hydrants, without aid of fire engines, is admitted.

The question only remains, How can our city best procure this system in a manner that will best serve the interests of the largest number of citizens?

First, The cost, it is known, will be large, approaching a half million of dollars.

Second, The city cannot create a bonded debt sufficient to construct the works.

Third, If it could, the interest and expense of operating the works would be forty to fifty thousand dollars per year, would be constantly a cause for political contention, and not least by any means is the fact that no one can say just what the cost of such works as I have proposed will be.

Now if eastern parties and eastern money are disposed to take this responsibility from your shoulders onto theirs is it wise to transfer it? It will at once be said, "Oh, well, they know what they are doing, and will not go into it unless they are safe and think it profitable." Yes, that is true. I think with the growth of your city the time would come when the works would pay a dividend. You well know that there are plenty of capitalists east who are always ready to take a fair risk and make or lose some money. This is demonstrated in every railroad you see constructed in your country and in investments in many of your mines. Is it judicious to get the money in this case and reserve your own means for sewers and other improvements which you are sure to want and which from their nature outside parties would not take hold of? I believe from the talk I have had with your people, that the universal answer in this case would be, Yes, get the water works by all means if you can on any fair terms by which the city's interests will be fairly guarded.

Now as to my proposition. It contemplates a complete system, first class in every respect, good, wholesome and pure water, mains large enough and long enough and sufficient hydrants to protect ever portion of your city, so that you can bring eight or ten streams to play on any fire in the business portion of your city and four streams on any fire in a resident portion, with pressure onough to throw over any building. The price, if I am correctly informed, will be much less than now charged, and will be a part of the contract, to be as low as can be expected and cut off the possibility of any extortion. I find some do not understand the prices published in my proposition, thinking that one tap would be one dollar and each additional faucet in a house would be another dollar. It would be one tap one dollar per month. Additional use of water, such as bath tub, wash stand, and water closet, would in no case be more than four dollars per year in a private house.

	Per Month.
Say one tap in kitchen giving hot and cold water	$1 00
Bath tub, hot and cold wath	33
Wash basin	25
Total	$1 58

As to the length of mains required by your city I have made a careful estimate and find that ten miles will reach all parts, and would refer you to your City Engineer who I think will bear me out in this. As to the future, ten miles more will supply you when you have thirty thousand inhabitants, this making an amount at that time of twenty-six thousand five hundred dollars.

I do not think that your people will regard that amount as at all excessive for your city, nor do I think they will so regard if they will figure what it will cost if you undertake the work as a city, and give due credit for the reduction in direct water rates, the quantity of water to be furnished, the saving in your fire department, the reduction of your insurance, and that your city does not take one dollar of risk until I have erected the works and furnished the water at my cost.

I have carried through several enterprises much larger than this one, and I can fully satisfy your Council as to my ability to perform what I undertake. Asking a fair and frank consideration of this question and as speedy action as is consistent, I am respectfully yours,

GEO. F. WOOLSTON.

Toole's Work in Congress and the