

CITY COUNCIL.

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE).

erected on the city's land near the pumping station. The advice of Mr. Brown, a capable electrician of the St. John Street Railway company, was obtained, and he was employed to come to Fredericton, and report upon the plant of the Gas company. Mr. Brown reported that the electrical machinery was in good condition, the dynamo, which was purchased two years ago, he declared to be one of the best available, and he also expressed the opinion that the present station being centrally located, was in the interests of economy. The report of Mr. Brown had the effect of removing the prejudice against the Gas company's plant, that had previously existed in his (Clark's) mind. The report of Mr. George H. Waring on the boilers and engines was also quoted by the speaker and commented upon. Continuing his explanation, he said that the only object of the committee was to procure a plant at a price that would be in the interests of the city. They had anticipated that there would be opposition to the proposal to purchase the Gas Company's plant, and the company had also anticipated it. The company's first proposition was that they would sell the plant and building for \$16,500, and on the strength of the reports of the experts the committee had made an offer of \$15,500, deducting \$1,000 in lieu of the boilers, which it was decided not to purchase. In regard to the number of poles, the statement was made to Mr. Brown, that there were 600 poles, and the secretary of the company thought at the time that the number was in excess of that. It was afterwards ascertained that the number of poles, was less than 400, and the committee was able to induce the company to make a further deduction of \$1,000 for the shortage of poles, and in the case of 127 other poles which the company will continue to use, it was agreed by them to accept a rental of 40 cents each per annum until such time as the city can erect poles. This will make the total cost of the plant about \$13,800. The committee feel that the plant and poles ought to be purchased outright and owned by the city, and the intention is that at a later date additional poles will be put in by the city. In the meantime only a nominal rental will be paid for the use of the others and the company will be compelled to paint and keep them in repair. He believed that all franchisees of this kind should be controlled by the city, and he trusted that before long power would be given the council to engage in commercial lighting.

Ald. Clark then spoke of the efforts put forth by the committee to protect the interests of the city. They had given a great deal of time to the matter, and he could truthfully say that they had not been influenced in favor of the company in the slightest degree. Personally he had given the question much care and attention, and had been actuated only by a desire to do what was right for the city. He had been a member of the board for five years, and recently for the first time in his civic career he had been obliged to defend himself from an attack made upon himself in the press by another alderman. He referred to the letter published over the signature of Ald. Vanwart. He had known Ald. Vanwart quite intimately during his career at the board, and they had always been on friendly terms. He was naturally a little surprised therefore when he read the letter previously referred to by him. The only way that he could account for the absurd and untruthful statements appearing in the letter was that another person had written it, and Ald. Vanwart had signed it without perhaps giving it due consideration. By attaching his signature to a document of that kind Ald. Vanwart had assumed responsibility for its contents. He would like Ald. Vanwart to tell the council whether or not he is the author of that letter. (Ald. Vanwart looks thoughtful but says nothing.) He would like also to ask Ald. Vanwart to tell the council if he really believes all the absurd statements contained in that letter.

Ald. Vanwart—I will explain matters when you get through.

Ald. Clark continuing, said that during his career at the board he had never known Ald. Vanwart to draw up a resolution, and he was loath to believe that his real sentiments were reflected in the letter to which he had attached his signature. He (Clark) had served at the board for five years, and had given freely of his time for the benefit of the city. The aldermen served without remuneration and had to attend a great many meetings in the run of a year, and got but little thanks for it. He had always endeavored to discharge his duty conscientiously, and he believed there were citizens who appreciated his efforts in their behalf. In

regard to the purchase of the electric light plant, he felt sure that the citizens when they became possessed of all the facts would agree with him that a substantial saving had been made to the city.

ALD. VANWART'S STATEMENT.

Ald. Vanwart said he had no personal feelings against Ald. Clark or any member of the board, nor had he any feelings against any member of the Gas company. They all knew of the stand he had taken on the question from the first. He did not think when the legislation was obtained that any member of the council had the slightest idea of buying the plant of the present company. For the last ten years our light system had been very bad and citizens have found a great deal of fault with it. It was his ambition that the city should operate its own plant and have a first class light system. It seemed to be the desire of the members of the committee to purchase none but the plant of the Gas company. He had asked Ald. Clark, when the matter was up for discussion, if he had obtained an estimate of the cost of a new plant, and could get no information from him on the subject.

Ald. Clark—I stated that a new plant would cost \$14,900, without a building or poles.

Ald. Vanwart—I never heard such a statement.

The Mayor—The information was furnished by Ald. Clark as stated.

Continuing, Ald. Vanwart said that he would admit that in his communication that he had been mistaken as to the cost of the boilers. He had not taken the cost of the chimney or smoke conductor into consideration. Some of his other statements in the letter might have been in little strong, but they were to a large extent based on his belief in regard to boilers. He could assure Ald. Clark that he had not the slightest feeling against any member of the committee. If the language used in the letter was a little strong he was sorry for it. He had been opposed from the first to buying the Gas Company's plant and was still opposed to such a course.

In reply to Ald. Stockford, Ald. Clark, stated that Electrician Brown had been appointed by the committee and paid by the council for his services.

Ald. Stockford, wanted to know who had accompanied Mr. Brown on his tour of inspection.

The mayor replied that he and several aldermen had met Mr. Brown at the station, and had accompanied him over the city.

Ald. Stockford then started in and criticized the report of the committee in his usual vigorous style, greatly to the edification of the spectators. He thought it absurd to say that an electric light plant could not be operated unless centrally located. If that were so, how was it that the Gas Company proposed to operate their plant in future from the Gas house? What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. He was opposed to the city leasing poles belonging to the company, and he was also opposed to purchasing the Gas Company's plant. Who was it that discovered the shortage in poles? Why your humble servant of course. He claimed that the insulator was worn from the wires in many places and that it would cost a lot of money for repairs. It had been stated that the Gas Company's dynamo and lamps had cost \$4,900. He was authorized to offer a similar outfit to the council for \$4,300, and would bet 500 to 1 that it could be bought for that amount.

ALD. FARRELL'S VIEW.

Ald. Farrell said it would be a rather difficult matter to reply to Ald. Stockford as he did not stick long enough to one subject, for any one to follow him. It was not necessary for him to deal with the work of the light committee, after the exhaustive, clear and truthful statement made by Ald. Clark. Ald. Stockford claimed to be an authority on matters pertaining to electricity, and he would like therefore to ask him how many years it was since wire was insulated for the purpose of transmitting electricity. He was not surprised at Ald. Stockford's inability to answer the question. As a matter of fact the insulating was only introduced a few years ago, and its only object is to protect the wire from the weather. He (Farrell) had consulted a gentleman connected with the fire alarm system and had been given by him to understand, that the wearing off of the insulation from the wires was bound to occur, and was not a matter of great importance. That was a fitting answer to the contention of Ald. Stockford, that the insulation was worn from the wires, and therefore the plant should be condemned. Ald. Farrell conceded it to be the right of every man to criticize the action of the council, but did not think all those who were opposing the purchase of the Gas Company's plant were actuated by right motives. A great deal of criticism had been offered and some of it was most ridiculous and showed a lamentable lack of knowledge. It was contended that the boilers were no good. Well, if that is

true, the city will not be the loser, as the boilers are not to be included in the bargain. Then the engine to be purchased, is not the one now being to operate the street lighting plant. The engine to be purchased is the Wheelock, a splendid machine of 95 horse power, and the city is also to get a smaller engine for use in lighting the public buildings. Ald. Vanwart had complained that no information had been given him as to the cost of a new plant. He (Farrell) had heard Ald. Clark state from his place at the board, that a new plant would be supplied by the Canadian Electric Company for \$14,900, this not to include the cost of poles and a building. In regard to the condition of the present light plant he had the statement from Mr. William McGinn, who had given him permission to use his name, that it was in good condition and would do the work in a satisfactory manner for years to come. He did not think that Ald. Stockford could refute that statement, when it was from the same source that he had obtained most of his electrical knowledge.

Ald. Stockford denied that Mr. McGinn had provided him with any information as alleged by Ald. Farrell. He also doubted if Mr. McGinn had given any opinion to Ald. Farrell as to the value of the plant.

Ald. Farrell said that Mr. McGinn had stated to him that the plant was in good condition and was as competent to do the lighting of the city as it ever was. In regard to the dynamo, Electrician Brown had stated that it was of the most modern type and that the St. John Street Railway Company intended ordering one of the same kind in the near future. He (Farrell) did not think that any man in Fredericton seriously believed that the council would buy the company's poles without first having them counted. The committee had been most generously treated by the company during the negotiations, and he felt sure that the members of the company would not accept pay for poles they did not possess. He maintained that the sole object of the committee was to protect the city's interests. As Ald. Clark had said, what object would the members of the committee have in favoring the company. They were under no obligation to them. He (Farrell) was as poor a man as there was on the committee, and he did not consider himself to be under obligation to any member of the (Continued on Second Page.)

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