

News of Electric Railways

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St. Paul's Contract for Power

W. A. White Explains Some of the Workings of the Award Made by the Railroad to the Washington Water Power Company for Juice

Last fall the Washington Water Power Company, Spokane, made contracts with the representatives of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad for electric power for the trains of that company to be operated on the western extension of the present electric system of the road over the Rocky Mountains. In respect to this contract W. A. White, chairman of the finance committee of the Washington Water Power Company, who has been in Spokane, says:

"The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway contract calls for payments to begin on the contract on Nov. 1, although the railroad has not completed the work necessary to use the power. It stopped the work on that part of the line south of Spokane to put the men on the electrification through the Cascades. The greatest saving in operating by electricity is through the mountains. At the present cost of copper and other materials, as well as labor, the railroad can well afford to lose the interest on the payments its contract calls for if it saves the extra cost of construction under present conditions. When the electrification of the railroad through the Northwest has been completed the company will require more power than it has contracted for, and we expect the railroad to increase the amount it now has under contract with us.

"The construction of our proposed power line to Chewellah, 45 miles north of Spokane, is something still to be decided. I believe that present labor and materials expense make construction cost 40 per cent more than it will be four years from now. The demand for electric power from us in the Coeur d'Alene mines country is, I estimate, about 25 per cent more than it was a year ago. We expected that our new power line through the Fourth of July Canyon would be completed this winter, but it will not be. Construction work, however, will go on through the winter. It is difficult to say just when it will be completed."

Agreement in St. Louis

Proposed New Ordinance Considered Burdensome to the Company, but Public Hearings Will Begin

Richard McCulloch, president of the United Railways, St. Louis, Mo., and the public utilities committee of the Board of Aldermen on Nov. 2 reached an agreement on the proposed ordinance looking toward a settlement of the mill tax and franchise problems of the company. Mr. McCulloch filed a protest against some of the clauses in the bill, but announced that if the ordinance was passed by the Aldermen he would recommend to the stockholders and bondholders that it be accepted. Mr. McCulloch declared that he regretted the aldermanic committee had made material changes in the original ordinance and said that if the negotiations failed the responsibility would not rest on the United Railways.

The amendments agreed upon on Nov. 2 follow:

1. Reduction of the franchise extension from fifty to thirty-one years.
2. Reduction of capitalization of the United Railways to \$60,000,000.
3. Agreement to sell to the city for \$60,000,000 as the initial purchase figure, with allowances for moneys expended from the present time.
4. Agreement to pay the city 25 per cent of net profits above 7 per cent on \$60,000,000, and 50 per cent on surplus profits above 8 per cent. This is in addition to payment

of 3 per cent on gross earnings, which the company had agreed to in the first bill.

5. Agreement to let the city select any citizen to act on the joint board of control, instead of a man "skilled and experienced in the operation of public utilities."

6. Agreement to forfeit the franchise for failure or neglect to live up to franchise agreements, without making the city prove that neglect or failure was "willful."

In a statement which he read Mr. McCulloch said in part: "We regret that your committee has found it desirable to make material changes in ordinances which we believe we could have persuaded our security holders to accept.

"If we fail in this effort to bring about a better understanding between the city and the railway and to obtain a workable and feasible plan of reorganization predicated upon a municipal ordinance, the responsibility should not rest on the railways.

"This company has done and will do its utmost to save this situation, but we cannot be so assured of a successful reorganization under the drastic changes now proposed by the city as we would be under ordinance No. 1 or No. 2 as originally drafted."

Public hearings on the measure as redrafted were scheduled to begin on Nov. 6.

Coal Shortage in Kansas City

Railway Service Receives Preference Over Demand for Current for Light and Power

The citizens of Kansas City, Mo., demonstrated during the last few days by their cheerful acceptance of hardships with reference to electric lights and power, their conviction that electric railway service is a paramount and practically indispensable adjunct of city life. The Kansas City Railways was short of coal and for several days was unable to supply current sufficient to run its cars and also to meet the need for lighting through the Kansas City Light & Power Company. It maintained nearly its normal schedules of traffic during morning and evening for this period, but cut off lights from homes and from power users.

The Kansas City Railways has had difficulty several times during the past year in getting coal. The situation became acute late in October, when expected shipments from Illinois did not arrive. Coal could not be purchased in the open market in adequate quantities. It became absolutely necessary to conserve the supply in order to avoid a complete shutdown of electric railway transportation. The railway supplies much current to the Kansas City Light & Power Company. For several months now large power users had been co-operating to minimize the loads at the peaks of electric railway travel, in consideration of the necessity of getting people home safely and promptly at night. When the situation grew more critical during the week ended Nov. 2 some nineteen industries suspended operations entirely on Saturday. The light company had for several days previous been cutting out current to various sections for short periods during the evening, no one section being without light more than an hour. On Friday and Saturday many sections were without electricity in the homes during the railway peak load of evening. Many merchants darkened their display windows and their electric signs from 5 p. m. to 7.30 p. m. With many families lacking coal, with little gas for lighting or cooking, and with electricity for cooking cut off at the dinner hour, there was considerable hardship, but it was suffered generally with cheerfulness because the people could get home. The railway had 120 cars of coal tied up that should have arrived on Nov. 3. Thirty-five cars arrived on Sunday, and the industries started up Monday, though still on curtailed schedules.