

KANSAS CITY SPEAKS.

Business Men Declare for a Water Supply Plant Independent of the Old Company.

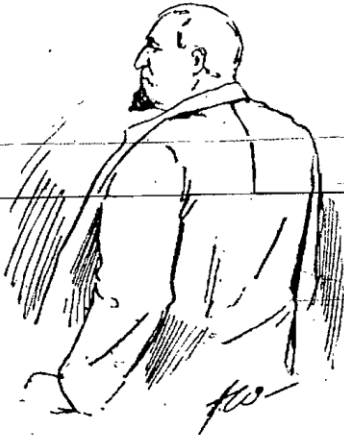
NO LACK OF CAPITAL.

Men of Wealth Say Plenty of Money to Carry Out the Plan can Be Secured Right at Home.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN SOON.

A Committee of Representative Men Named to Consider and Report on the Project at Once.

Kansas City took a decided stand for municipal ownership of a water works plant yesterday afternoon when thirty representative citizens dropped consideration of their private business and met for the purpose of devising ways and means to free the municipality from the clutches of the water company. The result of this meeting, called by the mayor to ascertain the general sentiment toward the proposition suggested in THE STAR last Saturday that citizens form a corporation, build a supply plant in Clay county and supply the city with



CAPTAIN CANNON: "FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I FAVOR SMALL BONDS HOLD IN THE WEST."

water until such time as it can purchase the entire plant, was a ringing indorsement of the plan.

For over two hours the water works situation was considered and discussed and in the end the citizens, almost as one man, gave indorsement and encouragement to the plan whereby it is proposed to sever all relations with the National Water Works company of New York and to begin work upon the theory that Kansas City is big enough, rich enough and able to build, buy and operate water works of its own. Every citizen present at this meeting was a property owner representing large interests. There was no hurrah or demonstration of any kind. The situation was reviewed calmly and intelligently discussed and after every phase of the case had been placed before them the conclusion was quickly reached that Kansas City must have a supply plant built by home men and paid for by home capital and that, when-

and paid for by home capital and that, when ever the city is able to purchase it may become the owner of both the supply plant and the distributing system.

At the suggestion of the mayor, supplemented by a motion from General H. F. Devol, it was agreed that a committee should be named by the mayor to ascertain what can be done toward organizing a company with home capital to build a supply plant across the river in Clay county, with the understanding that it may be bought by the city after a short period of years. This committee was named by Mayor Cowherd to-day. Its members are:

W. B. Clarke,	George W. Jones,
Charles Campbell,	J. E. Richards,
A. R. Meyer,	H. C. Kumpf,
J. K. Davidson,	Peter Soudou,
George W. Tourtellot,	H. F. Devol,
Thomas Corrigan.	

The committee will meet at the mayor's office in the city hall at 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

When the meeting assembled at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon Mayor Cowherd and Attorney John C. Gage were absent in court, but City Counselor Rozzelle, after those present had drawn up their chairs in a semi-circle on the south side of the upper house chamber, announced its purpose. It was to discuss the building of a water supply plant in Clay county by a company, the city to buy the plant in a few years. Mr. Rozzelle briefly explained the arrangement of the water works plant and pumping station at Quindaro and the additional pumping stations at Turkey creek and Kaw point. When the plant was built and the franchise granted, he said, it had been agreed that the city should have the option to buy the plant at the termination of the franchise. "The city," Mr. Rozzelle declared, "has made the company every reasonable proposition that can be made, and not one has been accepted. We offered to buy the entire property, the company refused. We said, 'Go into the courts and let them determine whether you can deliver the pumping station across the state line, and if we cannot buy it all we will buy the plant on the Missouri side and buy water of you.' They rejected that. To our suggestions they offered a counter proposition, asking for another franchise for twenty years.

"In the controversies regarding the value of the plant the experts of the city and company fail to agree. The city bases its valuation on what it will cost to replace the property, and fixes the figure at 1 1/2 million dollars. The company values the plant at its earning power. Taken on that basis the property and franchise are valued at 4 1/2 million dollars.

where there could be no question as to they a
evidently believed, that it would be beyond m
the power of the city to reach it. Besides ve
they added 2 million dollars to its bonded th
debt. The question then arises, who owns the of
pipes that have been laid in this city? Do
they belong to the city or are they the prop-
erty of the company to be condemned and
paid for by the city? Even if they belong to
the company it will not be necessary to take
them up; but we can go into court, have them
condemned and take them as we can anything
else under condemnation proceedings. co
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"Since November 15 the National Water Works company has no authority whatever to use the streets for furnishing water to private consumers or to collect water rent. It does so because it is permitted, not authorized. pa
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"It will be noticed that matters were so arranged that the regular half year with them expired a few weeks ago and they collected the rents at once. Any private citizen can now go into court and compel the company to furnish water at a rate to be decided by the court. The company now says that it will cut off the city's water supply but continue to supply water to private consumers and that it will pay the city nothing for the use of its streets. Now if we can get a company of citizens to come forward and build the supply plant we can get the old distributing plant of the company by action of the courts."

CANNOT CUT OFF THE SUPPLY

"Cannot the courts force the company to furnish us with water?" put in Colonel A. A. Tomlinson.

"They can," was Mr. Hagerman's prompt response. "The United States circuit court would have jurisdiction over the properties in both states and could compel the company to furnish us with water both to individuals and, I believe, to the city."

"How can the company cut off the hydrant supply and still continue to furnish water for private use?" asked H. D. Ashley.

"It is claimed that the plant has been so built that water can be cut off the fire hydrants just as it can be from private consumers."

At this point City Counselor Rozzelle returned from the engineer's office with the detailed report of the engineering experts giving estimates of cost for the proposed supply system across the river. The report showed that, without the distributing system which in this case can be secured already in the ground, the pumping station, tunnel and all the other necessary parts of the supply system can be built for about 1 million dollars. The estimate was made when materials were more costly than now and is considered to be above what the plant would really cost. This includes a pumping station at the foot of Washington street to take the place of the one at Turkey creek.

"Iron is much cheaper now than then," said C. A. Rollert, ex-member of the board of public works. "You see it was estimated at \$27 a ton and in other things the estimate is very high."

"It is proposed in these plans," said Mr. Rozzelle, "that the tunnel shall be an iron tube eleven feet in diameter through the solid rock and below the river about twenty-five feet from the water line as I remember it."

General Devol asked: "Wouldn't it be possible for the city now to deal with the company on the Kansas side and either make a contract or buy their plant without treating with the National Water Works company?"

Counselor Rozzelle: "While they are acting as different companies they belong to the same interests and it is useless to ask one company to treat with us on a different basis from that of the other. They won't talk business with us."

"There is where the difficulty lies," added Mr. Hagerman. "You can reach the National Water Works company through the courts and although they are the same people you can't reach the Metropolitan company. For their own purposes they appear to be different people."

HUMILIATING TO KANSAS CITY

HUMILIATING TO KANSAS CITY.

"It seems to me," said General Devol, "that this city is able and has business men who are able to take this matter up and give us a system where we will be under no obligations to outside people. We can have our own works. This is too humiliating, and the people of Kansas City won't stand it much longer. Public sentiment favors our doing something ourselves. We can build the supply plant and it don't matter much whether we build or buy the distributing plant, though it would be better for all parties if we could use the plant already laid."

"Can't we throw this into court and secure a receiver who would manage the old plant under the court's directions until we can build a new plant?" asked Colonel Tomlinson.

"That would be too much like taking an advantage and would be using them as they use us," replied Mr. Hagerman. "The courts would hardly permit it. But if we can't do any better we can use the Kaw river water, and pump it at Turkey creek while the new plant is building. We have used Kaw river water before now."

"Can't we raise the money for the new plant by selling the old bonds?" said Mr. Rollert.

"The only trouble with the bonds is that the water works company has given them a bad reputation in this country and Europe through circulars and telegrams. They have scattered the report everywhere that if the bonds are sold they will contest them and buyers prefer clear bonds to those that will make them trouble. There are 2 million dollars of these bonds."

Mr. Rollert: "We can sell one million of them right here in Kansas City. Some of our people have money and aren't afraid of the bonds. How much interest has already accumulated on them?"

Mr. Rozzelle: "About \$90,000 interest in the city treasury now. We are not collecting interest for the bonds this year."

Mr. Hagerman: "It is doubtful whether it would be wise to attempt to sell the old bonds. The bad reputation given the bonds might hurt them even at home. But I believe that we have men in this city who would furnish the money and put in the supply plant

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s vested"

Mr. Clarke: "Why did the city let the \$76,000 annual water rent up of the expiration of the franchise?"

WHY HYDRANT RENTAL UP

Mr. Rozzelle explained at a

"The reason is simply this," he contract called for certain high time of fire and we couldn't get

pany only added twenty pound domestic pressure in time of fire and the not sufficient. Even then the mains often broken just at the critical time. time ago the company put in gauges for purpose of measuring the pressure knew when the tests were to be and had men out to see them. Soon I got to get messages by telephone that the were breaking and the pressure falling at different points along the line. We tried the tests made but the company made their tests, threw water horizontally with the

tests, threw water horizontally with the and then had engineers to calculate how water would go up when it went a certain distance horizontally. And even then they broke the pipe. The pipe that does the mischief is the big main on the Southwest boulevard. If our plan is carried out that ought to be replaced or a new main run through the middle of the city with the other pipes radiating from it.

General Devol: "Did not the franchise require that the pipes should be capable of sustaining a high pressure?"

Mr. Gage: "It did, but that requirement was never fulfilled."

"About a year ago the city council adopted a resolution to have the pressure tested," added Mr. Rozzelle. "The company was asked to participate, and by way of answering notified us that we would be held responsible for any break that might occur. But the engineer turned in a fire alarm and made the test and it fell short of the requirements."

"What has been the recent testimony on this point?" Colonel Tomlinson inquired.

"It has been scientific," Mr. Gage replied with a smile. "They refused to make a practical test. They set up that a scientific and mathematical test would be more satisfactory. I told them I thought it would be for them, and asked if the principal advantage did not arise from the fact that a scientific test did not endanger the pipes."

At this there was a general laugh.

General Devol asked: "Couldn't we get an independent pressure from the Turkey creek station if we build the plant proposed and in that way get a stronger pressure?"

Engineer Donnelly—The extra pressure for fire comes now from Turkey creek and Kaw point. With a stronger main we could get the stronger pressure, but the trouble is in the mains. The reservoir gives some pressure, but it is not high enough to give all that we want in time of fire.

Mayor Cowherd, who had arrived a few minutes before, explained the object of the meeting much the same as Counselor Rozzelle had given it. He added: "I do not think there is any question but that we can get the distributing plant and if the company insists upon putting its supply plant beyond our reach we can supply ourselves. I hope that you gentlemen can show us a way to form a company and let the company supply the people and city for a time and then sell the plant to the city."

BONDS FOR THE PEOPLE TO BUY.

Captain J. S. Cannon, who was president of the board of public works when the expert estimates were made, was called for by the Mayor. "I am not sure that you will agree with me," he said. "I have had projects of my own and differed with you, but this is not a time to talk of differences. We have a common interest now, and the thing for us to do is to take the best remedy offered and pull together. I would say repeal the old bonds and go before the people with a new system of bonds issued in a popular way. For the first time in my life I favor small bonds sold in the West. Political and financial reasons make these the best of securities and the best method for us. The people have been putting their money into savings banks, but for the next ten years they won't do much business with savings banks organized under the Missouri laws. There are 3 million dollars locked up somewhere in Kansas City and seeking a profitable investment. That is where our money has gone when we complain that money is scarce, and that is where the money can come from to meet our present needs. Sell small bonds, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000, to home capital and with the money build our own supply plant. But, at all events, let us do something."

Ex-Mayor H. C. Kumpf told of an effort which he had once made while mayor to arrange for purchasing water from the supply plant at a certain rate per million gallons to be distributed by the city when it came in possession of the distributing plant. That had been a failure as he believes all such efforts will be and the only thing now is to get a supply plant independent of the old company.

Mayor Cowherd: "I would like to have an expression as to whether or not the money can be raised if a company is organized?"

NO DOUBT ABOUT THE MONEY.

Charles Campbell, vice president of the National Bank of Kansas City and ex-president of the Commercial club, replied in his prompt, positive way, "The money can unquestionably be raised. The time has come when our people with small savings and with larger ones are looking for safe investments. If the city can guarantee to a company good interest on money invested we can form one much more quickly than we can accomplish anything with the old bonds. Let the money be made out in small denominations and at home with the agreement that the city buy at a certain time. The money will flow from just such sources as Captain Cannon gets."

General Devol: "I believe that the should begin at once and prepare to bonds in small denominations to take place of the old ones."

Counselor Rozzelle: "An independent pany can construct the plant with few lays and much more cheaply than the city do it."

General Devol: "A private company want a good guarantee."

Mr. Campbell: "If a company the city would not need to make making power or does could guarantee the bond and guarantee to the city income."

General Devol: "Why not in the matter?"

"The city can't move to be formed," replied Mr. only treat with the office company."

"The city would have a