

HOW THOUSANDS OF POUNDS ARE SAVED THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN EVERY YEAR

SHOWING THE MUNIFICENT BENEFITS RESULTING IN ENGLAND WHERE PUBLIC UTILITIES ARE DIRECTLY UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE GOVERNMENT. IN SOME OF THE CITIES THE GAS PLANTS ARE OWNED BY PRIVATE CORPORATIONS BUT SUCH IS THE WORKINGS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL THAT FEAR OF PUNISHMENT EFFECTUALLY REMOVES ANY POSSIBILITY OF IMPOSITION ON THE PEOPLE

Municipal operations of public utilities in Great Britain, as observed by a committee of experts sent abroad last year by the National Civic Federation, is treated at length in a series of reviews by members of the committee, which were made public today. These reviews of the experts' reports, written by Milow R. Maitble, Wilton Clark, vice-president of the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia, and Charles L. Edgar, President of the Edison Electric & Illuminating Company of Boston, are divided in opinion as to the success of the undertakings as a whole. Mr. Maitble, is one of the members of the newly created Public Service Commission of Greater New York. This body has the widest powers and the greatest responsibilities of any commission to which the regulation of corporations has been entrusted, up to this time, in the United States. Mr. Maitble spent six months in Great Britain supervising the work of the expert accountants and engineers. He says that municipal operation of public utilities in Great Britain has passed the experimental stage. He declares that the gas and electric plants operated by municipalities, generally give a superior service at a relatively lower cost, as compared with the privately owned companies. By far the most interesting part of Mr. Maitble's conclusion, however, is that actual ownership and operation is not necessary for the success of the municipal ownership idea. He says that the power to operate, if necessary or desirable, in many instances, has been as effective as actual operation—that the mere fact that a city has the power to step in and operate an undertaking itself often makes the exercise of this power unnecessary. "It has been found in Great Britain that no system of control or regulation is complete without the power in the hands of the municipalities to purchase and operate," says Mr. Maitble. "If one company may be succeeded only by another or only hedged about by restrictions, there come times when action, not repression, is wanted, and then no remedy is adequate unless it be the power of the city to step in and operate the undertaking itself. But the mere fact that it has the power often makes its exercise unnecessary, and what the Britisher desires is not the universal adoption of some method of producing results, but the results themselves.

"In the following analysis of the results of public and private management it should be borne in mind that such a comparison is not a comparison of municipal with private operation subject to no restraining force, but with private operation under systems of regulation which are claimed to be the best which have yet been devised in Great Britain and with private management that has been chastened and bettered by the fear of public condemnation, the restraint of government regulation and the possibility of municipalization. Thus the low price at which gas is supplied by the Sheffield company is largely the result of the avowed determination of the men in control to head off municipalization. If municipal operation had not been a possible alternative looming above the horizon, it is likely that even now the consumers would be paying very much higher rates; and the present low rate so far as they are due to the desire to prevent municipal operation should be counted as one of its direct results."

The reasons that have led to British municipalization, Mr. Maitble finds, are many. First among them although not the most general nor the most important, is the desire to secure for the public the financial profits of the undertakings. Second there is the desire to keep the city from being mulcted by a private company and third, the general demand for better service at lower rates. He mentions also, a fourth cause, which has played a prominent part in the United States, and which is not unknown in Great Britain, namely, opposition of privately operated public utilities companies to the welfare of the city. A fifth factor has been the belief that municipal operation would permit the co-ordination of public services in a way that is not possible where different services are operated

by private companies. Messrs. Edgar and Clark favor some form of regulation of private companies rather than the adoption of the municipal ownership idea. They declare it to be plainly proven that municipal ownership is productive of many and serious ills with little or no compensating good. They hold that the solution of present difficulties is to be found, not in municipal ownership and operation of public utilities, but in the election of municipal officers who will protect the governed against injustice on the part of individuals or corporations.

British Gas Lighting.

The gas plants examined by the Investigating Committee of municipalities were those of Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds by private companies at St. Newcastle and Gateshead and the South Metropolitan of London. On the important subject of maintenance of plants, etc., Mr. Maitble says that during last year every municipality set aside out of earnings a larger total to maintain or extend the plant or wipe out indebtedness than did any private company. As to the price of gas to the consumer, Mr. Maitble points out that the private company at Sheffield is able to buy good gas and coke making coal at a lower price than any other company or municipality and finds a market for its coke at its very door in which it receives more per ton than any other undertaking save one; and that it sold its by-products for more than the cost of its coal, oil and other supplies, making profit thereon of 2.13d. per thousand cubic feet of gas sold. No other undertaking was so fortunate, and a comparison as regards prices and costs between Sheffield and any other plant not so well situated would be misleading and unfair.

In order to reduce the undertakings to a fair basis of comparison, says Mr. Maitble, suppose we assume that the residuals paid the cost of gas materials in every plant. To determine what the price of gas would have been under equal conditions, it is necessary to subtract the net cost of coal from the average price at which gas was sold during the year. It has already been pointed out that certain deductions should also be made to equalize charges for maintenance, rates and taxes, contributions to the public funds, etc. Making these deductions, it is found that the average price at which gas could have been sold by the municipal plants would have been 16.84d. per thousand feet and the private companies 21.31d. provided that residuals had just paid for gas materials, that the same amount (7.50d. per thousand) had been spent by each plant for maintenance, depreciation and taxes, that nothing had been paid to relieve taxation, and that all plants were on an equality in these regards.

In operating expenses there is not much difference between the municipal and private plants, the differences in expenses being confined to interest, dividends and credit balance, and in these items he finds the municipalities superior in that their charges therefor average only 3.31d. per thousand, while the private companies' expenditures for the same purpose average 7.53d., two and one-third times as much. This condition he finds to be due to the higher rate of interest and profit, and the greater amount of liabilities of the private plants.

Character of Service.

Price without regard to quality, is a tale half told, says Mr. Maitble, and the most important element in quality is continuity of supply. All of the undertakings examined, he sets forth, have a good record in this respect, and barring the few accidents which happen in all plants, gas has been continuously furnished in all plants, both by the companies and the cities. He finds, however, that the municipalities are better prepared to furnish an uninterrupted supply during a strike than the private companies for these have carburetted water gas plants, with a capacity equal to about one-quarter of the entire capacity, whereas only one private company has a water gas plant and it cannot produce more than one-

tenth of the total output. The quality of the gas itself, that is its candle power, Mr. Maitble finds to be superior in the municipal plants, according to the official reports. The charge was made, however, that the tests were not fair, in that the municipalities tested their own gas, while that of the companies was tested by an official examiner not connected with the companies. Mr. Maitble declares, however, that investigation that so far as the independence and reliability and accuracy of the persons making the tests of candle power are concerned, there is no difference between the companies and the municipalities, except possibly Leicester and there the allowance would

be greater than that of the municipal gas plants, the loss due to leakage and gas used at work was 6.95 per cent. of the gas made and the companies 8.17 per cent. The amount per mile of mains was 359 thousand cubic feet for all municipalities and 489 thousand feet for all companies, a still greater difference, which is due again to the larger number of miles of mains which the municipalities have. The difference between all the municipalities and all the companies is more than the difference between the four municipalities and the three companies—a fact which goes to show that the municipal plants selected for extensive examination are not the only good instances of municipal operation.

Progress.

Discussing progress and the introduction of new inventions, Mr. Maitble's view is that the municipal plants are as modern, as efficient, and as fully up-to-date as the company undertakings. It has also been shown he declares, that the municipal plants yield good results, viewed from the standpoint of operating efficiency. He also gives it as his opinion that the encouragement given to the production of new inventions and the discovery of new processes by a probable demand for them, is certainly as great under municipal operation as under private management, for if municipalities are as free and eager to adopt improved methods and inventions as we have seen them to be, there will be as great a demand as where private companies are in complete control of public utilities. Indirectly, also, the municipalities have encouraged inventive genius by taking the same position that has been adopted by the best companies. For example, the engineer of the Leicester works, Mr. Coism, who has invented a number of devices and perfected several new processes, works under an agreement with the municipality, whereby all royalties from his inventions and discoveries belong to him personally, except when used by the Leicester undertaking, which has the privilege of adopting his inventions and discoveries without paying the royalty he would ordinarily receive. As a result of the adoption of this or a similar policy, a number of inventions have been made by the engineers of municipal plants—fully as many as by those in private undertakings.

Electricity Supply.

The electric lighting plants investigated by the Civic Federation Commission were the municipal ones at Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and the Borough of St. Pancras, London, and those operated by the Newcastle Supply Co., the Newcastle District Company and the four London companies—the City of London, Westminster, St. James and Central. Charges by the municipal plants were more economical, according to Mr. Maitble, the cities charging .529d. per unit less than charged by the private companies. As to efficiency of service, there was no difference between the municipal and the company undertakings, as regards the promptness with which current was turned on and complaints attended to, the convenience of the location of offices, the testing of meters, the restoration of paving after streets were opened, the care given to street work gener-

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Men's Straw and Summer Hats

One-Third Off Coming Week

There will be a general clearance the coming week in Men's Straw and Summer Hats. The savings offered during this sale are such that no man in need of an extra hat, during the warm weather, can thoughtlessly pass up.

Among the lot are Sailors, Panamas, Crash Hats, Serges, etc. All of them are good values at the regular price—take our word for it—and when you are offered them at the discount that prevails the coming week, you are, indeed, getting a big bargain. The entire week, all go at

One-Third Off

HIGH GRADE TAILORED MADE SUITS

There is a class of men who are difficult to fit, and they require a suit made to their exact measurement. Then there is another class who, seemingly from birth, prefer a tailor-made suit to one ready made.

For these two classes, we have taken the agency for two of the best tailoring houses in the country—Mark G. Harris, Chicago, and the International of New York and Berlin. The work these two houses turn out is simply beyond criticism, and the materials that go into the garments are of the very highest grade.

Take the Mark G. Harris Front, Shoulder and Sleeve Head, it is one of the greatest triumphs in present-day tailoring. It gives your coat a shape and hang that no tailor can bring out, and, although you pay \$17.50 or \$40 for a Mark G. Harris tailor made suit, the same sleeve head and pains-taking work is put into it.

We are now making suits for the most prominent men in North Bend, Marshfield and Coquille, and everyone of them have assured us of their permanent trade—so well pleased are they with the work.

The fall samples are now here. Among them are some of the prettiest and snappiest patterns ever shown for Fall and Winter. Let us show them to you.

SOROSIS SHOES

Prices \$3.50 and up

The trade we are getting on Sorosis Shoes is something immense for a district with a population such as Coos Bay. The women have long since realized the durability of Sorosis, and for comfort they have no rival.

Take the Sorosis Shoe we sell at \$3.50, we will put them up against any \$4.50 ladies' shoe in the country, and if it does not give an equal service and more comfort, let us know, and we will make you a present of a pair.

Then, concerning our \$4 Sorosis Shoes. These shoes we will put side by side any day with Cousins, Hanan, Laird or any other brand that sells around \$5 and \$6, and demonstrate to you conclusively that Sorosis at \$4, is a far superior shoe, and possesses much more snap and true shoe comfort.

If these facts were not so, we could not afford to sell Sorosis shoes and give to our customers a guarantee like the above. But we are on Coos Bay to stay, to build up a large clientele of satisfied customers, and if the selling of the best and most popular brands, together with low prices and fair treatment count for anything, we will have attained the honor of being the reliable trading center of Coos Bay and Southern Oregon.

Wash Dress Goods Savings

There is undoubtedly a great saving for you in the Wash Goods Section the coming week. Every piece of summer material is not only reduced, but the reduction is so pronounced, that it will pay you to buy, in anticipation of your needs for many months to come. Read the following items. There are many more just as good, that we cannot make mention of here.

- 35c to 45c Wash Fabrics, in beautiful organdies, lawns and mercerised effects, go the coming week, yard **25c**
- 50c Wash Fabrics in handsome mercerised effects, printed lawns, organdies, etc., all go, yard **35c**
- 65c and 75c Silk and Mercerised Cotton Fabrics, in plain and fancy floral designs, yard **47c**

65c Silk Pongee Suiting 30c

This handsome Pongee Suiting should certainly move out with a rush the coming week. Think of buying a material like this for 30c. It makes up beautifully into summer dresses, skirts and shirt-waist suits. Colors are light blue, grey and tan. Yard **30c**

Ladies' Tailored Shirts

Some very pronounced savings will be given on all tailored skirts for the coming week. These skirts are this season's styles, and represent the newest and prettiest patterns of the season.

- \$6 to \$8 Tailored Skirts, choice **4.98**
- \$9 to \$12.50 Tailored Skirts, choice **7.25**
- \$15 to \$22.50 Tailored Skirts, in invisible checks and striped suitings. Choice **8.45**

Ladies' Wrappers

\$1.25 Ladies' Wrappers, all sizes, choice only **95c**

Short Kimonos

- 85c to \$1 Short Kimonos, choice **50c**
- \$2 to \$2.25 Short Kimonos, choice, each **1.25**

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