

ELECTRICAL SUPPLY - OPENING CEREMONY ON MONDAY.

HISTORY OF THE SCHEME.

NEW ZEALAND HERALD, VOLUME XLV, ISSUE 13668, 8 FEBRUARY 1908

THE ceremony in connection with the formal turning on of the current at the City Council's electric power and light plant at Freeman's Bay will take place in the engineroom at the station, at three o'clock on Monday afternoon next. The Lady Mayoress (Mrs, A. M. Myers) will switch on the current, and speeches will be delivered by the Mayor and others. Everything at the station is now in readiness for the ceremony, which will, no doubt, be attended by a considerable number of citizens. After the opening ceremony the 'current will be available for the use of those subscribers whose premises are already connected with the mains.

PROVISION FOR EXTENSIONS.

The installation of the electrical plant was decided upon by the City Council in 1906, and, it was desired to utilise the steam produced at the destructor, it was decided to establish the plant alongside of that building. Mr. W. G. T. Goodman, representative of Messrs. Noyes Brothers, electrical engineers, was engaged to prepare a scheme, and submitted his report to the Council in March, 1906. He recommended the Council to start with a small installation, with a minimum capital outlay, it being, in his opinion, "much better for the Council to have a demand for electricity greater than they can meet, rather than have a large capacity of machinery and mains installed, and not sufficient demand to provide a paying load. The Council will be well advised if they start with a small installation, which they can increase in accordance with the demand, the value of which they will better ascertain when the installation is put into operation."

The Council decided to proceed on the lines advised, and to ask the authority of the ratepayers for a loan of £25,000, the estimated cost of the scheme as outlined by Mr. Goodman being about £21,000. The loan proposal was carried at a poll of the ratepayers taken on May 9, 1906. The erection of the building was shortly afterwards put in hand, and the installation of the plant was completed towards the end of last year. In the meantime the demand for electric power and light received from citizens had been so great that the Council, even before the scheme was in operation, recognised the necessity for putting in hand as quickly as possible a large addition to the existing plant to satisfy such demands, as well as to extend the electric feeder into other

portions of the city not already provided for. The cost incurred in connection with the original scheme, including some extras, up till November last, was £26,000, or £1000 in excess of the loan. A proposal was put forward for the raising of a further loan of £50,000 to provide for the necessary extensions. This loan was authorised on November 28 last, but as yet the details of the extension scheme have not been definitely decided upon.

The original scheme provided for one boiler, in addition to the steam from the destructor boiler, these two boilers being sufficient for two generators of 225 kilowatts or about 300-horse power each. Another boiler has since been ordered, and this is expected to arrive shortly.

The building contains a boiler and engine-room, both of which are large enough to allow, not only of the additions in immediate contemplation, but also of further extensions. In the engineroom one boiler is installed, and the other, now will be placed alongside of it. There is sufficient space for two further boilers. The boiler in this room, as well as that in the destructor, is connected with the engineroom by means of steam pipes. The engineroom adjoining contains two high speed enclosed engines of 300-horse power each, coupled direct to the two generators of 225 kilowatts each. A "booster" plant, from which the batteries are charged, is installed in this room, whilst the switchboard, from which the whole supply is controlled, is also in the same compartment. The battery-room, which is on the east of the engineroom, contains 250 storage cells of large capacity, which will be ample for all requirements for a considerable time to come.

In speaking to a HERALD representative yesterday, Mr. Wyllie, city electrical engineer, stated that the plant selected in connection with the original scheme was an excellent one, and that it was capable of considerable extension as the demand for the supply of current increases. The streets along which the mains have so far been laid consist of Queen-street (from the wharf to the Grey Statue), Custom-street West, Fort-street, Shortland-street, Wyndham-Street, Victoria-street, Elliott-street, part of Albert-street, and a short length of Wellesley-street.

COST OF LIGHT AND POWER.

The system on which the charges for current will be based is what is known as the "Brighton." or "maximum demand" system. For lighting the charge will be 7d per unit for the first hour in each day, and 2d per unit afterwards. For power the charge will be 3d per unit for a certain quantity per month (such

quantity being dependent upon the horse power required), and 2d per unit for all power in excess of that quantity. The system is, perhaps, not readily understood without a personal explanation, but this will be given by Mr. Wyllie to any person desiring it. Mr. Wyllie states that the charges compare very favourably with those in force in other towns in New Zealand of which he has any knowledge.

On the question of competition with the Gas Company being broached, Mr. Wyllie remarked that there was "plenty of room for both of us." In England he said, many municipalities not much larger than Auckland owned both the gas and the electrical undertakings, and that there was ample scope for the new systems in this city, with the rapid extensions always going on, need not be doubted.

(Searchable PDF version prepared by David Hyde - pseudonym 'David de la Hyde')

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 New Zealand Licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 NZ).