

over the other. The practise of permitting over loaded teams to use the ferry at present rates should be ended at once. This would increase the revenue and lessen the cost of repairs, for as a ferry official observed to the writer, "each time one of these big loads ascends the approaches they tear out twenty five cents worth of planking and we only get twelve cents back."

There is still another branch of the civic service where public ownership is attracting some attention—the lighting department. Just now when the city has come into possession of a large water power in addition to that controlled by the city at Silver falls the question is more to the front than ever. The prevailing opinion among citizens of all classes is that their light bills are too high. Recently the St. John Railway company, which at present enjoys a monopoly of this important service, has placed all of its lamps on meters and the result is that there is not nearly so much private lighting as formerly. When the lights burned until midnight without extra charge they were allowed to do so. Now that the consumer has to pay for every watt of electricity and foot of gas consumed the lights are automatically shut off at 10 o'clock, when the merchants thinks the value of the advertisement ceases. Besides the number of lights have been reduced and St. John's stores are not so brilliant after dark as they formerly were. It is claimed that the price charged by the company for both gas and electric light is excessive, and that if the price were lower the consumption would be greater. Evidently the directors of the company do not hold to

this view as every act of theirs since they came into absolute control of the lighting of the city has been in the direction of an increase rather than a decrease—consequently the agitation for civic lighting.

In 1900, the streets of St. John (east) were lighted with gas, and those of Portland and Carleton by electricity. Portland was about the first city in Canada to adopt civic lighting and while the results have not justified the hopes of those who advocated it, still after 14 years of experience it has been amply demonstrated that the city can save money by operating its own electric plant, even on a small scale. It was the experience in the North end and the desire on the part of the aldermen to repossess themselves of a valuable wharf property that led to the purchase of the west side electric franchise at a price in excess of its actual value at the time of sale. In 1900 the lighting of the three sections of the city cost \$12,417. In 1891 a new contract was made to light the east side streets with electricity, and in 1892 the first full year after the change, the cost of street lighting had risen to \$18,505. In 1902 the expenditure had increased to \$23,159 practically double what it was in 1890, but this was largely for East and West side lights. The cost of the North end electric light station in 1892 was \$4,962, and in 1902, \$5,297. But the cost varies from year to year according to the stock of supplies on hand. In 1900 the expenditures were \$5,606, in 1901, \$6,383. There has been an increase in salaries and wages in 10 years of about \$400 but the number of lamps operated is also larger. The cost of the lamps on the west side in 1892 was \$2,944, and