

BIGELOW IS AHEAD.

Blaxter Takes Revenge on the Mayor and Turns Out the Light.

HE HAD ANOTHER BID HANDED IN.

The Chief Will To-Day Let the Contract Over Gourley's Head.

CITY HALL LIGHTED BY TALLOW DIPS

Controller Morrow's fight on electric lighting at City Hall culminated yesterday in the shutting off of every light in the building. Superintendent Blaxter, of the Allegheny County Light Company, called at the Hall early in the morning and had an interview with the Mayor regarding his veto of the company's bill, asking what objection he had to paying for the light furnished in April.

"I have none at all," answered his Honor. "You are entitled to your money; but this matter has been annoying us for some time and I had no way of bringing it to an issue until this resolution came before me. I deemed it only the proper thing to bring it to public attention. The city's officers must, if I can compel them, utilize this \$10,000 worth of free gas each year. If it is impracticable to use it in the City Hall, and I think it at least a disagreeable light where light is needed all day long, then some other means of utilizing it must be adopted. It could be used on the back alleys where gas lamps are used now in the lower part of the city and in the market house, but until some such step is taken I will oppose in every possible way the burning of any other light in this building or paying for any."

The Mayor's manner was determined and his language emphatic. Mr. Blaxter agreed that his position was right and said he had simply called to ascertain what his company had better do.

"We don't want the contract for lighting either this building or the market house," continued Mr. Blaxter, "because we lose money on them. It has cost us considerable more than \$4,000 a year to light this building, and we could not get more, so I am glad of an opportunity to close the thing up. I will have our lamps taken out at once and that will end the matter."

Turned Off Every Light. The Superintendent was as good as his word as far as shutting off the light was concerned. Twenty minutes after he left the hall every light in the building went out. It was nearly an hour afterward before any of the clerks or officials knew the cause. The clerks in the dark rear offices sat at their desks waiting for the light to return, supposing that, as is frequently the case, the current had been shut off temporarily at the works and would be turned on again at any moment. Controller Morrow was as much surprised as anyone else. His office is the darkest in the building and he was in the act of signing the warrants for the monthly pay roll when the light went out. He sat in his chair in the darkness, cursing gently at being delayed in his work, until finally, growing too impatient to contain himself, he rushed to the telephone and rang up the light company.

"What's the matter with the light at City Hall?" he exclaimed.

"Shut off," was the laconic reply.

"What for?"

"Don't pay."

"How long is this nonsense going to last?" was the next query.

"Until the city pays her bills, I guess," answered the man at the other end.

The truth dawned on the Controller then

for the first. He sat down and fanned himself for a few moments and then a happy thought struck him. He struck a match and attempted to light the gas, but it failed to light. Assistant Controller John Davis fished out an old-time lamp from the vault and placed it on the counter. A candle stuck into an ink bottle was placed on the other end. Everybody knew the Controller had started the fight on the electric light and he was at once accused of ordering the light shut off, and consequently everybody in the hall went to his office to complain or to joke about it, as they were in the humor. He had calmed down in the meantime and met all comers with the statement that he knew nothing about it except that the light was shut off.

Bigelow Will Let the Contract To-day. The inconvenience all through the city building was great. In a few offices there was gas in the pipes and it was lighted, but the heat produced was terrific and caused many long, loud and deep complaints. In the other offices lamps and candles were burned and two Chinese lanterns were hung up in the Controller's office. In the City Assessor's office 'Squire Rafferty pored over a long column of figures which he illuminated with a coal miner's lamp fastened to his hat, and other tricks of the same kind were indulged. The light was also out in the city hall clock.

It was charged that the Controller had recommended the payment of the light company's bill to Councils and had then put the Mayor up to vetoing it. Both officials deny the statement, however, and the Controller produced from the City Clerk's file the communication he sent to Councils and which simply stated that the bill was due and that action by Councils was necessary. Chief Bigelow and the Controller had a wordy war about the matter in the Controller's office and the Chief declared a new contract would be let at once. He went up to Common Council chamber shortly after and opened the bid of the Allegheny County Light Company for lighting City Hall at the same rate as last year, \$4,000. In view of Mr. Blaxter's statement to the Mayor this was rather singular, but it was the only bid offered and the chief will let the contract this morning in time to have it approved by Common Council at the special meeting this afternoon.

"I will arrange for lighting the building as quickly as possible," said the Chief last night. "It is out of the question to light the hall with gas, now that it is hemmed in by tall buildings. Light is needed all day long and the heat from the gas, as shown to-day, would be unbearable for the men."

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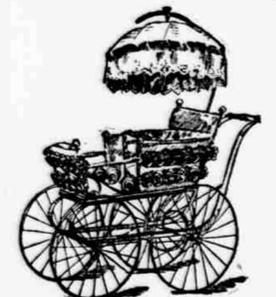
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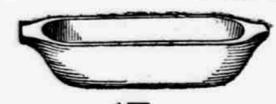
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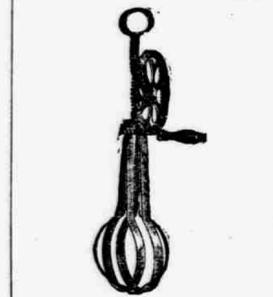
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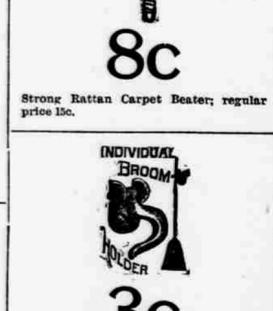
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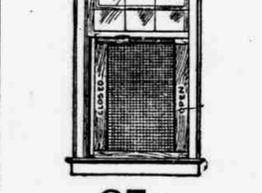
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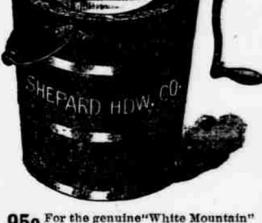
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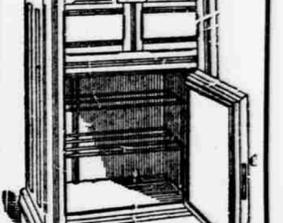
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