## WHAT WAS REALLY SAID

## Sworn Statement of Court Reporter on Street Car Controversy.

## Proceedings of the Only Meeting Between President Wattles and the Committee.

eading statements that have been made concerning the points at issue in the street railway strike, and to correct any misapprehension that may exist as o what the union has demanded and what reply the company has nade to these demands, the treet railway company presents herewith a stenographic report of the conference between Presilent Wattles and the committee of the union.

This conference was held last Wednesday, and was the only conference of the kind held.

The shorthand report of the proceedings was made by Court Reporter Frank J. Sutecliffe, who was employed by the union men to report the conference held between the president of the company and a union committee during the controversy that arose two and a half years ago. The report presents all that was said by either side.

The conference lasted two hours and a half.

Report of meeting between a committee of seven of the union employes of the Omaha & Council Bluffs Street Railway company and Gurdon W. Wattles held at the office of Mr. Wattles in the United States National bank building, on Wednesday afternoon, September 15, 1909.

Committee: W. Gillan.

P. J. Linahan, W. H. Poncelow,

M. J. Kinney.

H. R. Nelson, C. H. Lear.

Mr. Wattles: "You have presented an agreement here which you desire to have aigned by the street railway company with the union.

"It is not the first time that a similar agreement has been presented to the officers of the company to be signed by them with this union, so that this is no a new question. It has been threshed our several times before, but it seems necessary to thresh it out again and to let you know exactly what the company proposes to do in regard to this or any other agreement with the union employes of this

When the union was first organized in this city, about ten years ago, among the street railroad men, I don't know as any of you men were present, but I think some of you were, the men who joined the union, about fifteen in number, were discharged or were suspended by the company. They asked for a hearing before fied, or whother or not they were justithe board of directors, which was granted, fied in striking at that time. and when they came before the board of directors-Mr. Murphy was then presideat of the company-they asked that the national organizer, Mr. Wilson I believe name was, who was here organizing the union, should be admitted room and should be allowed to speak on the subject of the union, as the men at that time did not feel fully competent to describe exactly what the union was go ing to do in connection with the street railroad employes.

"Mr. Wilson came before the board and what he said was taken down and made lows;

"He said that the purpose of organfring the union among the street railroad men in Omaha was not to stir up any strife or conflict either among the emplayes of the company or with the officers effect that the company would not be reof the company; that they sought to organize a union among the employes of this company for the betterment of the drawn and that the grievances therein conconditions of the employes and for their mutual uplifting; that all over the country, in many of the principal cities, in

ent with the national organizer, Mr. now? Wilson, the opposition of the company to drawn and the men who had been diswith its organization, securing quite a

a different manner than we did with them company if they did not join the union.

"We said to these men very frankly that the association, that no contract would be required or asked of this company."

ne of the questions that the committee have come up here to discuss with you."

want to discuss."

be and we stated to them that our agreement was with the union, and they were promined that we would never place our-selves in a position where they should not receive exactly the same treatment as strength of the agreement that we had.

after they had heard the evidence, whether

me with this proposition, was this: That gate here to you and I repeat, if there when I knew I was right I had no fear is anything written down here that you of appearing before God man or devil, and want to talk to me about and want to stating what my position was and that I know what the position of the company is would appear before any body of men and going to be regarding it. I am here to room and sat here and heard the evidence duced, and one of their findings, when they announced it in writing, reads as fol-

tract demanded on the part of your orgamisation we find that inasmuch as an agreement was entered into at the time of the formation of your local union to the quired to sign such contract, we therefore recommend that said contract be withtained be presented as such."

"Signed by McDonald and Guye and Pol-

Mr. Linahan: "Mr. Wattles, that is not

Mr. Linahan: "We have a new contract

"Now, as I was saying, our employes" asked us what our position was going to kind.

any other employes or where they would be put in jeopardy of losing their positions. Our promise was given them on the "Now this matter came up. as you know, wo years ago last spring and was threshed out. At that time a contract similar to life, and so when I come and hear the the one that is now presented, was presented of you men and your troubles. sented to us-a little different in form, but similar in substance-and the company refused to sign it upon the same grounds that I have stated here, and the question working, and I sympathize with every of whether or not the union street railway one of you; and if you have never tested en were justified in calling a strike at

nearly all of the principal cities where Mr. Linshan: "Can I say a word now?" we represent naming the other, and the eworn at, too

that this company has a contract with the don men and nonunion men in all these national officers of this association that you represent that they shall not sign men who should join the union-it was ing us not only to violate that agreement the Omaha Street railway at that time- but to violate our solemn obligation and

Mr. Linahan: "May I

"So much for the contract part of it."

union men or not, but when I find that sort or kind, against this company, if it is within my power I will correct it. Now that goes to every man in the employ of this company. You men are here today, a committee of you. Some of you have been here as individuals. I have not seen as much of you as I would like to have seen, mor of the other employes of this company. They have come in here and have said to me this, or that, or the other thing, and they have never gone out without a courteous reply and without fair treat-timent, no matter what their complaint, was, whether it was a personal one to the content of the other entry of the company and the content of the men was, whether it was a personal one to the content of the company and without fair treat-timent, no matter what their complaint, was, whether it was a personal one to the content of the company are pertained to the content of the content of the content of the company are pertained to the content of the company are pertained to the content of the company and that I refuse to any of the company and said How are you will Mr. Linahan: "Yes, sir: "Mr. Linah Mr. Wattles: "If you will let me get through, Mr. Linahan, we can get this in better form. I will soon be through with better form. I will soon be through with the said to me this, or that, or the other thing, and to me this, or that, or the other thing, what these six hundred men might desire in regard to the union. We have not get and you are going to these original quee- ment, no matter what their complaint tions. We have a new contract that we was, whether it was a personal one to got their this pretty soon and we will come right of this property it has all the mittee to take up."

down to the present time, so that there and honest and open treatment from me mittee to take up."

While we are getting and I will give you all ample time to talk the surprising thing to me, gentleand opportunity to talk on any part of men, about this whole recival that

have come to ask favors of all and every kind. Every one of them was granted with pleasure. Why? Because I have been a laboring man myself. I have been a poor man myself. I know every step of the ladder from absolute and abject poverty right all the way up along the before we go further. That brings up a force we go further. have come to ask favors of all and every poverty right all the way up along the line. I have worked by the day. I have worked for smaller pay than you men are getting today. I have done everything that you have done. I have said and repeated time and again that there should not be any intimidation on the part of the officers of this company toward any of its employes regarding whether they belonged to the union or not or whether they were going to join. I have said, they appeal to me; they put me back to feet right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe and the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect right to say to an employe of the company has a perfect rig poverty right all the way up along the they appeal to me; they put me back to the time when I used to go out and have to dig and work along as you men are that time was raised, and we were asked invitation. Instead of holding meetings to appear before a body of union men and down here plotting against your employ-state our case, with the understanding ers, try to see if you can disrupt this that these union men were going to say, situation. You ought to be passing resolutions commending the men that you or not the position of the men was justi- have got and the institution that you are working for. "Now I have wandered from the sub-

"My answer to Mr. Yelser, who came to ject a little hit, but I have opened the would go before the union itself and state tell you; I am here to meet you fairly what my position was. And the result and honestly and discuss with you as was that these men came here to this very men. I want to know if you have got that was introduced at that time and pro- if you have, to help you adjust them.

Mr. Wattles: "I will answer that ques-

ideas and their vote in regard want to discuss."

Mr. Wattles: "I will get through with that pertained to the whole management this pretty soon and we will come right of this property—it has always had fair that is too broad a question for this com-

and I will give you all ample time to talk the surprising thing to me, gentleand opportunity to talk on any part of this subject you want before we are through. But as you have raised the question yourselves about whether this company are held up to you as bad men, as men that are not inclined to be fair and right, the surprising thing to me, gentlemen, about this whole revival that is going on here, in which the officers of this agreement was signed by Mr. Wilson. That agreement has been violated time and time again in this city. Not by you, I don't say, but by your other officers. It has been violated right today. You agreed that some of you men that sit and hear that you would not interfer with this tion, and I am answering it." union, why, I want to answer that question, and I am answering it."

Mr. Linahan: "That was the instruction we had when we came here, not to go into past history, but to talk on the present troubles. We are not here to discuss old that would make you blush for shame that you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way, that you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. That you would not interfer with this union in any way. The your anything in the way of your men or garlians. The provide would not interfer with that talk do not resent it to the limit. troubles. We are not here to discuss old that would make you blush for shame that you had men in your association that you had men in your association that would hear the officers of this company maligned in any way and not stand up and deny it.

They have come here in their personal troubles and they never went away sition we take.

They have come here in their personal troubles and they never went away sition we take.

orneer of this company has a perright to say to an employe of the
any, I would prefer that you don't
he union, but at the same time he
d say that if you do join the union
will be no discrimination against
Now, Mr. Lear, you say that ofof our company..."

of our company—" Lear: "Yes, air." Wattles: "I have intimidated the Lear: "Y Wattles: Lear: 'Yes, sir." Wattles: "I call for the names of

Mr. Lear: "Right there is a communi-Mr. Linahan: "There is a statement

"Now, regarding the statement that men have been stationed down here in front of Labor temple of the union to intim-There date the men. What are the

being placed there was with the idea that the men would be afraid to go up there. That is the way I looked at it. And I know lots of the men were afraid to come up there because they were afraid some body was watching them."
Mr. Wattles: "There is no purpose or

Mr. Wattles: "There is no purpose or intention on the part of any of the officers of the company to keep these men from going there, or to intimidate or prevent any man from going up there. No such purpose at ail."

Mr. Poncelow: "How is that, Mr. Wat-

Park passenger car, and the work in was pretty close to it; and the work in stopped to back in around the curb Sixteenth and Harney, and the Park came right upon the crossing, you Wattles: 'Yes, str."

Mr. Gillan: "And they had on it a puple of loads of this base that they put couple of loads of this bare that they put in asphalt—put it under the asphalt—tar and cement and broken stone—and it was right there, and they had dropped some of it on the rail, and it was just like grease on the broken rail, and they came right up the track with the two loads, and I could not stop my car because I had no sand or anything, and I just barely slid, and I put on the reverse and my fender struck the other trucks. He stopped kind of short right on the crossing, on account of the other train. Well, my car backed right away from it, but it bent the fender up and I was suspended that next day and the next day and I lost two days, and the other man was suspended and lost one day and I was absolutely not to blame; couldn't be possibly to blame no way."

Wattles:

Wattles: "A year ago?"
Gillan: "I think it was a year ago ter up to me?"
Mr. Gillan: "No. I did not." Mr. Gillan: " Mr. Wattles: Mr. Wattles: "You cannot expect to

just | two thus selected naming the third. Are | Mr. Wattles: "Did he say he was sworn, lost any time or that you would have have proofs, and plenty of them, that

ise in carrying it up further."
Mr. Wattles: "That is not the case."
Mr. Lear: "It may not be the case,
but that has always been the under-

standing of the men."

Mr. Wattles: "It is a misunderstanding."

Mr. Lear: "I don't know whether it is a misunderstanding or not. The other day a man was sent for from over in Iowa. I don't know what his name is, I think his name is Albertson. This friend of his went to the foreman; he knew they were short to the foreman; he knew they were short of men, and he said he knew of a good, the the honest, sober young fellow living in some that he would way from joining the Methodist church or the union, or the Baptist church."

Mr. Poncelow: "You mean, there was no intention on the part of the men down on the corners there to intimidate the men from coming up to the meeting?"

Mr. Wattles: "Yes, sir."

Mr. Gilian: 'I had quite an experience myself a year ago last August. I had a tittle accident at "lixteenth and Harney. I was going east. I had one of the little open cars. I was going east and a Park car was going north, and there was nonstruction car—a work train—absent the man belonged to the knew they were should honest, sober young fellow living in some little town here over in Iowa that he would like to get a position for him and Mr. Knapp says, why send for him by all means; he says, we are short; and he came here and went down to Mr. Nash. I think it was, if I am not mistaken; and Mr. Knapp telephoned the foreman went down with him and Mr. Nash says, no; the says, I don't want him at all; I don't want any of your kind; you are nothing but a labor agitator. I don't know as the man belonged to the foreman they were shout of men. and he said he knew of a good honest, sober young fellow living in some little town here over in Iowa that he would like to get a position for him and Mr. Knapp says, why send for him by all means; he says, we are short; and he came here and went down to Mr. Nash. I think it was, if I am not mistaken; and down with him and Mr. Nash says, no; the says, I don't want him at all; I don't want any of your kind; you are nothing but a labor agitator. I don't know as the man belonged to the foreman the work in the was the work in the work in the tore.

agilator or not." What is his name?"
Mr. Wattles: "What is his name?"
Mr. Lear: "Albertson."
Mr. Wattles: "You don't know his first name?"
No. Mr. Lear: "No. sir. he works at Twentyname?" Mr. Lear: "No. sir; he works at Twentyourth and Vinton."
Mr. Wattles: "Now, let me get these ames down before we go any further. Mr. inahan, you gave me the name of Mr.

an?"
Linahan: "Yes. sir."
Wattles: "What are his initials?"
Linahan: "M.J."
"And at what barn is he?"
Linahan: "Twenty-fourth and Vin-

"And this other man is Mr. Albert-Mr. Lear: "Albertson."
Q: "Twenty-fourth and Vinton?"
Mr. Lear: "Yes, sir."
Mr. Bolen: "There is another case I want

Mr. Bolen: "There is another case I want to bring about this Mr. Sisnick, who used to work for this company, and wants to work for these again. He went down there and had been a few years at work for the company. He belonged to the union before, and was no agitator nor anything else. He is a man that attends to his own business, and he wanted to get back and get a job. Mr. Nash looked him up one side and down the other, and he says. Mr. Johnson will fix you out. Mr. Johnson fixed him up, and when he was walking out of there—out of the room—Mr. Nash patted him on the back and said no more union for you."

Mr. Wattles: "Where is that?"

Mr. Bolen: "Twenty-fourth and Vinton."

Mr. Bolen: "Twenty-fourth and Vinton."
Mr. Linahan: "Mr. Wattles, we could recite so many of these cases it would be surprising-many other cases. But, really, are not here today for the purpose of prising—many other cases. But, really, we are not here today for the purpose of discussing those matters. Our instructions were to come up here and try and discuss the grievances as we have presented them to you in writing, and as I see that you have declined to arbitrate any of the grievances as written—to practically ignore them all—if we cannot change your mind, I presume that this committee, according to their inwant to talk to me about and want to know what the position of the company is going to be regarding it, I am here to meet you fairly and the position of the company is going to be regarding it, I am here to meet you fairly and the world get my time; that I was called down and the world and you want to meet me on that hashes to meet me on that hashes to meeting is open for you talk hashes the meeting is open for you talk hashes the world hashes to meeting sopen for you talk hashes the meeting is open for you talk hashes the world hashes the meeting is open for you talk hashes the world hashes the meeting is open for you talk hashes the world hashes the meeting is open for you talk hashes the meeting in the possibility of the poss

president of the road, that it is the to ignore the organization completely. It is the position of the men at this that they are going to inches

"The wages and hours of all motormer and conductors and shopmen shall be as follows: Wages for motormen and conductors for the first year's service, 2 cents an hour; for the second year's service, 27 cents an hour, and for the third year's service and thereafter 28 cents per hour. per hour. "That is one of the things you w Mr. Linahan: "Yes, sir; that is one of the things we want."
Mr. Wattles: "Do you think that is a just demand?"
Mr. Linahan: "Well, if you can show

Linahan: "Well, if you can show is not a just demand." Mr. Wattles: "You show me that it is will you? Let us hear your side of it. Now let us hear what the men have to say on the subject?"

Mr. Linahan: "Well, in the first place, the newer men in the service—which it a the newer men in the service—which he a great many—only receive It cents an law for the first year, and the hours of fime are limited for them so that they cannot make any amount of money—any reason—

dea." Mr. Wattles: "Well, how much do they Mr. Linahan: 'Well, I presume they will average from \$45 to \$50, running up to \$55 a month. I think they will.'

Mr. Wattles: 'Forty-five to \$55 is what they average.'

Mr. Linahan: 'Of course to \$55 is what that

they average."

Mr. Linahan: "Of course, I do not say that they will all average that. That is a question upon which I have no certain knowledge. I do not know just what the average would be the year around; but I know that they will average that during the summer months, but in the winter time, when the traffic is less, they will not do so well."

Mr. Wattles: "Let me refresh your manory on what was presented here the other

day. We got the figures from the general manager. He had the books. Do you remember what it was?"

Mr. Lear: "We did not get them."

Mr. Gillan: "I believe the conductors made \$48 to \$49 and the motormen, \$50; a little over \$20."

Mr. Wattles: "About \$51."

Mr. Gillan: "Fifty-one dollars, I believe."

Mr. Linahan: "Now Mr. Wattles, you Mr. Linahan: "Now Mr. Wattles, you understand that the cost of living is very high. The cost of living in Omaha new is considerable higher than it has been. Everything is higher, House rents ark higher, and you can easily understand yourself from the way the men are quitting every day that they cannot make a decent living any more under the present conditions in the street railway service. They are quitting, as the records will show, at the rate of 25 to 39 every month, and, of course, that puts the older men in a bad place; for the simple reason that there is a shortage of help most of the time and as a result he is overworked, and those are the conditions that we are trying to allminate.