

The Evening Times and Star

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THE HYDRO CONTRACT.

Commissioner Wigmore put the case for prompt action on the hydro contract very clearly and forcibly in his remarks at City Hall yesterday morning. He sees plainly that any delay in signing the contract would not be in the interests of the city but of the Brunswick Power Company. Put in brief form, this is the substance of Commissioner Wigmore's remarks:

"The city has decided that it is going to make use of the Musquash hydro, regardless of the disposition of the New Brunswick Power Company. That fact is clear in the minds of the people, who have twice endorsed this policy. Therefore the first act of the city must necessarily be to sign the contract for the delivery of the current. The question of offers to the New Brunswick Power Company, and the matter of plans and specifications for a distribution system, are subservient to the main issue—getting the current by contract. Therefore it is only a waste of time to dilly with the details while the principle issue hangs in the air."

The City Council wasted a forenoon yesterday. It seems to have become a habit, despite two mandates from the people to get on with the business. Commissioner Frink wanted the contract held up until the ten-day offer had been made to the New Brunswick Power Company. Let us suppose that course was adopted—what would happen? Mayor Fisher would write to the Power Company. The company, knowing he had no weapon in his hand, would feel under no obligation to pay any attention to him. But if the city had closed the contract for the Musquash power the company would know the city meant business.

The signing of the contract is the first business before the Council, and any attempt to delay it is a move in the interests of the Power Company, whether the Commissioner who makes the attempt realizes it or not. Mayor Fisher was elected to get that contract signed. He has no cause to be either timid or apologetic. Those who elected him want determined action and they want it now.

The matter of plans and specifications for a distribution system has nothing whatever to do with the case until that contract is signed. Mayor Fisher's course is perfectly clear. Get the contract signed and then discuss the distribution system.

Commissioner Frink agrees that the Power Company should not be offered more than the amount fixed by the Supreme Court, but he appears to be critical because more information has not been laid on the table at City Hall. He says the matter must be settled there. He is wrong. The matter was settled at the polls—not once, but twice. The citizens certainly expect the Council to conduct the business in the city's interest, but definite plans and specifications have been laid down to be followed. The first step is to sign the contract, and the Commissioner must see that it takes precedence over any talk about a distribution system or any offer to the Power Company.

Of course any profession of ignorance on the part of Commissioner Frink is merely the expression of his naivety. He is quite as intelligent as other electors of the city. The whole matter has been under discussion from every angle for nearly a year, and he as a representative of the people has given it careful study. He knows why the electors rolled up a huge majority on two occasions for hydro, and he agrees that what the people want their representatives should give them.

Commissioner Thornton's attitude is different. From the first he has not appeared to be in favor of the policy twice endorsed by the people. He may have been misunderstood, but his remarks yesterday did not tend to remove it. No citizen will deny him the right to oppose; but, if his opposition should be continuous, those who want the Fisher platform carried out will have to consider what effect such opposition may have on the interests of the city.

The Council did not have long to wait for the plans and specifications

LIGHTER VEIN.

Benny.

She (at the theatre)—It's frightfully close in here.

He—Cher up! The orchestra will change the air in a minute.—Boston Transcript.

Rough and Ready.

The curate entered the railway carriage in which were seated a gang of navvies. En route the language of the latter was particularly emphatic and free. Thinking to ease matters, one of the navvies turned to the curate and said:

"Look 'ere, guv'nor, you'll 'ave to excuse us chaps. We're a rough and ready crowd and calls a spade a spade."

"Most extraordinary," replied the curate. "Judging by the run of conversation, I should have imagined you'd call it anything but that."—London Opinion.

A Useful Poem.

A Kansas family, so relates former Senator J. L. Bristow, on his return from a tour of the world, when the boy presented himself at school he was asked by the principal, among other things, to recite a poem.

"The Village Blacksmith," was the response. "I recite it every time we have company."

"Does your father ask you to do it?" "Yes, ma'am," said the boy. "He says he thinks it keeps us from having much company."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Located.

"Look here," exclaimed the stranger, as he stumbled into his twentieth predicament. "I thought you said you knew where all the bad places were on this road?"

"Well," replied the native, who had volunteered to guide him through the dark, "we're finding them, ain't we?"

Still More Deadly.

"Why did you suddenly assault this man?"

"He moved his hand toward his hip pocket, Your Honor."

"Did you think he was going to draw a gun on you?"

"Worse than that, Your Honor. I thought he was going to offer me a drink of bootleg whiskey."

MR. LAW AND CHES.

(London Observer.)

One afternoon in the latter part of 1880, writes Mr. Van Vleet, I was reading a newspaper in the historical (now extinct) Chess Divan of Simpson's, in the Strand, when the door opened and there entered a shaggy-looking gentleman, who took a seat opposite the late English chess master, H. E. Bird, and after a few words of greeting commenced playing chess. He played for several hours, during which I did not remember him speaking a dozen words.

When his time was up he left the room as ostentatiously as he had entered. I had noticed that he played a better game than the average visitor at the Divan, and after he had gone I asked Mr. Bird the name of his late opponent. "Mr. Law," was the answer. "Mr. Law," a member of the Glasgow Chess Club, was the answer. If Mr. Bird had ventured to add "and a future Minister of Great Britain," I should probably, and sympathetically, have advised him to consult a mental specialist. There is the delay which gives the enemy more time to marshal his forces. There is the cool disregard of the wishes of the people. There is the bold assertion that the people do not know what they want and that a mandate is not a mandate. The views of a little group are not to be set at naught by the will of the people. The will of the people has been declared, and whatever steps may be necessary to carry it out will be taken whenever the necessity is made clearly apparent.

READ THE COMPARISONS.

Readers of the Times are urged to study the comparison on another page of this issue of the New Brunswick Power Company's reduced rates to come into effect in January with its present rates, and also with the rates that will prevail under hydro. Many people are asking questions on this subject. The comparisons given in the article on another page are clear, and show that under hydro the small user will get light and power at half or less than half the new rates announced by the Power Company. This is an unanswerable argument for hydro, and for prompt action by the City Council to get the full benefit for the people as quickly as possible.

AUSTRALIA'S BOY IMMIGRANTS

(London Times.)

The British farm apprentices' scheme is proving increasingly attractive, and the Labor agitation urging its abandonment has apparently ceased in consequence of the good reports received, says an Adelaide cable. And when despatched to their new homes almost immediately on their arrival, and are encouraged to take the future of the settlement officer into their confidence with regard to their treatment.

MAN WHO SHAVED HIM.

(New York Correspondent.)

Real life situations are often too impossible for fiction. A New York judge paid a recent visit to Sing Sing. He had a dinner engagement and remained longer than he intended. He asked the warden if there was a barber shop near the station where he could be shaved while awaiting his train. The warden settled himself in the chair. A prisoner came in and began stropping the razor. He looked at the judge and they recognized each other instantly. The judge had sentenced the prisoner to life imprisonment. "I was never so anxious to get through a shave in my life," said the judge. "Is it any wonder I told him 'once over, please'?"

THE SALE OF THE LONDON TIMES

(London Spectator.)

(A correspondent, on whose accuracy we can rely, sends us the following interesting account of the various steps which led to the happy arrangement under which the proprietorship of the Times has passed to John Walter and Major Astor. It could not be in better hands. Under its incoming proprietors, supported by Sir Campbell Stuart and his colleagues, the new Times will be once more the old Times at its best.—Ed. Spectator.)

Only a few people in legal, journalistic and financial quarters have been aware of the intense struggle which has been in progress for some weeks for the control of the Times. Victory has seemed to lie first with one, and then with the other, of the protagonists. Now the issue is decided. Wednesday morning contained the very formal, but most interesting announcement that John Walter had, in co-operation with Major Astor, acquired the holding of the late Lord Northcliffe and Sir John Ellerman in the Times Publishing Company.

This keen competition for the Times is not surprising. It is, indeed, a curious repetition of history in its similarity to the negotiations which preceded Lord Northcliffe's acquisition of control fourteen years ago. It is not generally known that Lord Northcliffe's original holding in the Times Publishing Company, Limited, was not sufficiently big to give him control. That was only brought to him by virtue of an agreement with Mr. Walter.

It was not until two months before Lord Northcliffe's death, when Mr. Walter sold his ordinary shares to Lord Northcliffe, that the latter actually became governing proprietor. It has been an open secret for some time that Lord Northcliffe wished to own the Times. The resignation by Sir Campbell Stuart, the managing director of the Times, of his directorship of the company, when it became known that Lord Northcliffe would become chief proprietor of that journal was regarded as significant, and rumor affirmed that he was championing the Walter interest.

Quite a number of syndicates were in process of formation to purchase the Times until it became known that Lord Northcliffe had directed in his will that his shares in the Times should first be offered to Mr. Walter, although only at the best price obtainable. In this condition of affairs the weapons of the legal and financial contest which has just ended, that Sir Campbell Stuart was acting behind the scenes, was well known, but Major Astor's name was a well-kept secret.

John Walter is the great-grandson of the John Walter who founded the Times in 1788. The name of Walter has always stood for the highest standard of British journalism. Major Astor served with distinction in the war. Like Mr. Walter, he is well known, and no one could wish for a better influence in the conduct of the historic journal.

It will be of interest to readers of your paper to know that while in the hands of Sir Campbell Stuart, the Times was actually corresponded with by the editor of the Spectator, and that Sir Campbell Stuart, in the matter of the Spectator, had been a long time of lawyers who have held high positions in the government for some generations. His influence on the Times has always been for good, and we may be assured that it will so continue.

SOVIET PROGRESS.

(New York Evening Post.)

Nikolai Lenin is usually referred to in the dispatches from Moscow as Premier Lenin, while in correct enough for the head of a Cabinet without portfolio. In practice, however, Lenin has his own special department, Trotsky is Minister for War and Navy, Chicherin is Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kravskii is Minister for Education, and Lenin is minister for breaking the news to the Communist comrades in Russia.

Addressing the convention of the Third International last Monday, Premier Lenin gave utterance to a new assurance of the bitter truth which should arouse interest beyond the confines of Russia. He was speaking of the rigid internal economies. "Not a ruble," said Lenin, "has yet come from the outside in the form of a loan. Not one of the foreign concessions which you have all heard about has yet brought us a single penny."

The reason why foreign concessions have brought no money into the Soviet Union is that there are no concessions. And the reason why there are no concessions is that the Soviet rulers have never taken the talk about concessions anywhere seriously as a considerable portion of the outside world seems to have taken it. Like Lenin's famous scheme for electrifying Russia, which was as practical a proposition as a scheme for electrifying the Sahara desert, but which did succeed in electrifying a good many trustful people in the United States, the concession policies of the Soviets have not been business and industrial success, but a matter of faith.

How long will it be before Lenin, in his capacity as minister for breaking the bad news, will be called upon to announce a new policy with regard to heavy industry? Not very long, if not a ruble comes in from foreign loans, and not a penny from foreign concessions.

Fully 25 per cent of accidents to workmen are due to insufficient lighting.

Illinois was fifth among the states in mineral products produced in 1919.

VALENTINO IN STIRRING DRAMA

(The Young Rajah" Viewed by Packed Houses at the Imperial Yesterday.)

One of the strongest stellar vehicles for Rodolph Valentino, yet selected, is the enthusiastic opinion of the patrons regarding "The Young Rajah," a new Paramount picture, now at the Imperial.

Three other notable features make this picture one of the strongest in which Mr. Valentino has yet appeared, under Paramount auspices. The story is the famous novel, "Amos Judd," by J. A. Mitchell, which proved one of the most successful American works of fiction. It was adapted to the screen by June Mathis, the adapter of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," "Blood and Sand," and other Valentino pictures. The cast is unusually large and includes many prominent and popular players, including Wanda Hawley, Charles Ogle, Pat Moore, and others.

The story, which is laid in America and India, introduces Amos Judd, first as a young Hindu prince—a child brought to this country for political reasons and placed in the care of Joshua and Sarah Judd, kindly New England farmers, together with an immense fortune. As the child grows up he demonstrates a remarkable gift of forecasting events, and his predictions always come true. As a man, he goes to Harvard and wins signal honors, but incurs the bitter enmity of a rival, who believes him responsible for the accident which causes the death of Slade, Bennett's friend. Amos and Bennett fall in love with the same girl—Molly Cabot.

In India, there is religious conflict and a usurpation of the throne. Amos and his friends are taken for his protection, but the Hindu gets him and are about to murder him, when General Gadi, the man who had brought Amos to America, the priest Narelda and Gadi's men save him. The priest tells Amos he must come back and free his people from the usurper. Amos fights between love and duty and finally decides he must fulfill the latter and return to his native land.

Molly is heartbroken at his departure, but later Amos is seen looking into the waters of a beautiful lake, wherein he sees the vision of a Hindu wedding, and as the bride raises her veil, her face is that of the woman he loves—Molly. Amos and Wanda Hawley plays opposite the star.

PRISCILLA DEAN IN BEST ROLE

The New Photoplay, "Wild Honey," at Star—Super-Picture of Many Thrills.

As commanding in the open wastes of the Transvaal as in the drawing-room of an English manor, Priscilla Dean surpasses her Englishman as Lady Vivienne in the Universal-Jewel attraction, "Wild Honey," based on the novel by Cynthia Stockley. It is at the Star Theatre.

The role is one without many rivals among the super-humans created by the screen. Lady "Viv" isn't an ordinary creature in any sense. She has fire and spirit, dignity and grace. Wanda Hawley, in her latest impersonation as Lady Vivienne in the Universal-Jewel attraction, "Wild Honey," based on the novel by Cynthia Stockley. It is at the Star Theatre.

The action ranges through two main localities, aristocratic English neighbors and the wilder spaces of South Africa. Lady Vivienne goes to the Transvaal to find out the true value of the land which her father has sold her entire fortune before he died. Coming in contact with the fierce venom of unrestrained and brutal nature, the rough characters of the country and the bitter reality of having worthless land moves, of course, that the role is that much harder to enact, calling for all the ability that has elevated Priscilla Dean to leadership in the class of vital, emotional artists.

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NEW SHOW AT QUEEN SQUARE

Manager Selby fulfilled his promise at the Queen Square Theatre yesterday, when he presented Phil Ott and his musical comedy organization. The company has an unusually strong cast of principals, including Phil Ott himself. The latter is a popular comedian and his work did not include so much buffoonery as is often the case but was regarded by the audience as one of real merit. "Who Wants a Wife" was the title of the bill and it afforded scope for every member of the company. Miss Nettie Nelson might well be termed "an added attraction," she has been hailed as a real burlesque queen, being a clever actress of staturesque and handsome appearance; she wears elaborate costumes and scored one of the successes of the show.

Corks make a good substitute for the wooden knobs on pot lids.

There are 45,000 mental defectives in New York state.

Extract of phosphoric acid from phosphate rock by the heat of a crucible furnace promises to furnish much cheaper fertilizer.

The X-ray was recently used to discover two rings which a woman had stolen and swallowed.

The University Fire.

La Presse: "The whole population will deplore the repeated disaster that has befallen our French-Canadian university. However, courage must once more triumph over difficulty. The first of last year stirred in the people a practical and live sympathy for the work of the university, and we are confident the same sentiments will animate the citizens generally in face of the second disaster which has fallen upon our highest house of learning. In the meantime inquiry should be held in order to find what cause was responsible for Tuesday's fire. Public opinion will exact that this shall take place."

A WORTHY EFFORT.

(Ottawa Journal.)

There seems to be considerable force in the suggestion that the Children's Aid Society, the Juvenile Court, the Welfare Bureau, the Social Service and other similar services should be united into one Civic Department. The Children's Aid Society and the Welfare Bureau are not civic services. They are private philanthropies. The work they do is really work which the corporation could officially do with good grace, and with as much justification as other social service effort which it is making.