

THE HAMILTON TIMES

SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1909.

MAYOR McLAREN'S VIEW.

The Times prints elsewhere to-day Mayor McLaren's statement explaining his reasons for urging the ratepayers to vote in favor of the power contract with the Cataract Power Co. As His Worship was one of the strongest opponents of the Cataract agreement, and gave to the Hydro-Electric scheme his hearty support last year, the reasons which he advances for his present course are worthy of consideration by those who seek enlightenment on the question at issue. Mayor McLaren is now thoroughly convinced of the superiority, from every point of view, of the agreement made with the local company. Under it we are guaranteed, for public and private uses, power and light at a lower rate than the Hydro-Electric Commission can give. The ratepayers are relieved from the heavy financial obligations which a deal with the Hydro-Electric Commission would involve. We have no cost of a transmission and distributing system to maintain; we are not obliged to undertake the administration of a great business enterprise under municipal patronage, and to incur the dangers of inefficiency and graft which it would involve; we pay for what we get under any of the options which we may select, and we have at each five-year term the choice of ending or renewing the contract as may be agreeable to us. Under the proposed Hydro-Electric contract the city would be bound hand and foot for 30 years without any security as to what its power would cost it; we should have to shoulder a very large financial obligation and pay interest thereon, and to reimburse ourselves for this outlay we should have to depend upon the sale of electricity. It is far from certain that we should find it easy to realize the prices which the Commission must necessarily charge. Private power users would assuredly not be ready to pay higher prices than the local company charges for its service. The result would be that the ratepayers would have to make good the deficiency out of taxes. The Mayor's advice to the people is to approve of the agreement. The additional guaranties which it contains remove any doubt from his mind as to its safety. For itself, the Times feels confident that there is still, even beyond the figures of the guarantee, a wide margin of advantage to the city to be realized by the local contract as a mere matter of good business management. We shall be much astonished if the advantages, both to public and private users, do not greatly exceed the figures guaranteed. But the fact of the existence of these stipulations removes any apprehensions which some many have entertained. Read the Mayor's statement carefully.

PLOTTED IN ONTARIO.

Major Israel C. Green, who captured John Brown, of Osawatimie, at Harper's Ferry, died the other day, aged 85 years, near Mitchell, N. D. The passing of Green serves to recall the now historic raid made by the abolitionist zealot, for which and the murders growing out of it he was executed. Brown, with a few misguided followers, entered Harper's Ferry on Oct. 16-17, 1859, and with the aid of sixteen armed adherents held the place for fifty-eight hours. They made a fort of the engine house, which was pretty well riddled with bullets when Major Russell and Lieut. Green with their force of eighty marines arrived. Eleven of the besiegers were killed in the struggle. Brown was captured, tried and executed. Of Green's part in the fight Paymaster Dangerfield, who was one of the hostages held in the engine house by Brown, says: "I had assisted in the barricading, fixing the fastenings so that I could remove them upon the first effort of the marines to get in. But I was not at the door when the battering began, and could not get to the fastenings until the ladder was fixed. I then quickly removed the fastenings, and after two or three strokes of the ladder the engine rolled partially back, making a small aperture, through which Lieut. Green, of the marines, forced himself, jumped on top of the engine, and stood a second in the midst of a shower of balls, looking for John Brown. When he saw Brown he sprang about twelve feet at him, and gave an underthrust of his sword, striking him about midway the body and raising him completely from the ground. Brown fell forward with his head between his knees, and Green struck him then, smothered, split his skull at every stroke. I got out of the building as soon as possible and did not know till some time later that Brown was not killed. It seems that in making the thrust Green's sword struck Brown's belt and did not penetrate the body. The sword was bent double."

John Brown was a character about whom there has been a great deal of controversy. By some he has been pictured as a saint and a martyr; by others as an unscrupulous and dangerous fanatic. Perhaps the careful student will, in the light of the historical facts and after a consideration of the man, his aims and methods, concede neither contention. That Brown was a fanatic is not to be doubted. That he was sincerely, zealously given to the abolition cause is equally true. He appears to have been so possessed by hatred of slavery that antagonism to it and to any thing and person that seemed to aid it justified in his mind any deed done which appealed to him as weakening its partisans. He did not stop at violence and murder in his campaign against it. At one time Brown's friends denied his culpability for the atrocious Pottawatomie, Kt., assassinations, but according

to his most recent biographer, Sanborn ("Life and Letters of John Brown") it is freely admitted that Salmon Brown's statement that his father "was not a participator in the deed" was a mere verbal quibble, and that Brown "was the originator and performer of these executions" although the hands that dealt the wounds were those of others. Brown conceived that he was inspired; that he "bore the commission and enjoyed the protection of the Almighty"; that he wielded the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. He was courageous, dogmatic, ignorant. He was intensely religious, had great power over a small following, and built much on isolated passages of scripture which seemed to fit his views. There is little doubt that such as we may approve of his antagonism to slavery, we should be constrained to regard him as being a victim of insanity. Harper's Ferry seizure was but one of the schemes which had risen in his zealous brain. Brown intended to raise the standard of slave revolt in the Virginia mountains, and he expected the colored hosts to flock to him. He had in February, 1858, collected 200 rifles and 200 revolvers, and he proposed to arm the body of his "troops" with pikes, dodged armed forces in the woods and mountains, and colonize his freed slaves there. Success would make permanent his campaign. He had twelve recruits drilling in Iowa! He had 1,000 pikes ordered in Connecticut! His vagaries were not to be confuted; he dived all with a few texts of scripture. It may not be generally known that a very important convention at which the Harper's Ferry outbreak was planned was held by Brown in Chatham, Ont. After visiting Boston he went to Chicago, coming to Chatham about May 1, 1858. On the 8th of May Brown held a convention in a building near the corner of King and William streets (it was standing not many years ago), at which Brown's original company of ten or eleven white and one colored attended. There were many Canadian sympathizers present, mostly colored people. The late Isaac Holden, of Chatham, took part in the discussions and voted on the election of officers at the adjourned meeting held two days later. He personally had no confidence in Brown's plans, but credited him with great power over his following. This convention adopted a "constitution for the proscribed and oppressed races of the United States," and chose a cabinet, but deferred the choice of a president. John Brown was elected commander-in-chief. That fall he made a raid from Kansas into Missouri and carried away eleven slaves to freedom—and Canada! His thousand pikes were shipped to him. Funds from Boston friends were more plentiful and an attempt on Harper's Ferry followed. The attack on the sleepy little town of 5,000 inhabitants was made on Sunday evening, Oct. 16, 1859. The result is history. Brown paid the penalty with his life. He did not help the cause he had at heart; that triumphed in spite of his folly. As Lincoln said: "John Brown was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts related in history at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsin's attempt on Louis Napoleon and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry were, in their philosophy, precisely the same."

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Northwest weather is very favorable for the growing crops, and they are making rapid progress. A Cleveland shipbuilding firm proposes to establish works at Port Arthur, to employ ultimately 1,000 men. A Toronto handbook man has been fined \$100 and costs for conducting a betting business. Two other charges failed. New York has been losing half a million a year on her municipal ferries. There is a further decrease in receipts of \$41,000 this year! "Let the Fenians stay in Hamilton" is now the Toronto Telegram's cry. Thanks, awfully, old chap! We are duly grateful don'tcher know! The French striking Government employees have been refused reinstatement by the Chamber of Deputies. Those who quit work quit for good. Perhaps the City Solicitor could say if the question of the Gore Park fence, which seems to cause some people anxiety, is settled by the terms of the deed of gift? The aldermen are looking for a fine lot of fish stories when His Worship comes back from his Caledon Club outing. None of your "big fellows who got away," either. If Engineer Macallum can demonstrate that his scheme of reorganizing the departments will save \$15,000 to \$20,000 before December—or even half of that sum—he will deserve to be complimented. The Grimsby local option by-law will probably be settled some time. Meanwhile, it must be a bonanza for the lawyers. The case was before Chief Jus-

tic Muloek, on Friday, in the effort to have the repealing by-law re-submitted. His Lordship reserved judgment. Roy, the former President of St. John's Bank, has been sentenced to five years in prison for making false returns. He made a piteous appeal for mercy, but Judge Monet gave him the maximum penalty. Chatham Council says water cannot be furnished to its people at a cost to the city of less than 7 1/2c a thousand gallons. W. D. Sheldon offers to give bonds to the amount of \$10,000 to undertake the work of furnishing water at 6c a thousand gallons. Lady Grey will be able to tell the Ottawa people something about the beauties of this garden region of Canada when she returns to the capital. Nobody can say that he has seen the best of Canada until he has become acquainted with this district. The interest and dividends to be paid out by industrial railroad and traction corporations in the United States at the end of June will amount to nearly \$74,000,000, an increase of about two and a quarter millions over June, 1908. A vast number of shareholders depend on these payments for their living. Perks' very effective confutation of the partisans who to make capital for their party represent Great Britain to be a decadent country may encourage some of their Canadian dupes to perk up a bit. Great Britain is still the leader of the world in civilization, finance, commerce and manufacture. She has not lost her grip. The poem was, a day or two later, shown to Jas. T. Fields, editor of the Atlantic Monthly, who suggested the title, and published it. It attracted little notice at first. The "hymn" found its way into a Southern prison, where it was sung by Union prisoners, and one of whom on his release lectured on it. Soon afterward it became highly popular. The books of the United Copper Co. which are wanted for examination in connection with the affairs of the Mercantile National Bank have disappeared from the company's vaults in New York and Heinz, President of the United Copper Co., refuses information about them. It is supposed that the missing books are in Canada, and proceedings for grand larceny may follow. Now Whitney is asking that the Dominion Government pay the salaries of the little army of fire rangers which he has appointed in the northern part of the Province. This remarkable claim is made on the ground that the National Transcontinental Railway, which is passing through that territory, is a Dominion work. The territory, however, is Ontario's, as is the timber, the protection of which is a matter for the Ontario Government. Hamilton may claim the honor of having introduced Empire Day, but Toronto celebrates it more enthusiastically than any other city in the Dominion. Over-Seas (Canadian Courier). Oh, come, now! The champion blowhard about Toronto's noisy patriotism is the Toronto Telegram, and it gives place to the following complaint from a recently arrived Englishman: Throughout the whole British Empire to-day is celebrated as "Empire Day," and as I was told that Toronto was an ultra loyal city I expected to see a great celebration, volunteers, cadets and the Governor-General leading the van, instead of which I find the day ignored, except by a few scores of Victorians who limped up to your park with a band and laid a few flowers on some monuments. Where is your loyalty? Where is your Governor-General and volunteers and cadets? Why is Toronto silent when the ring of empire around the world is all ablaze with loyalty on this great "Empire Day?" Julia Ward Howe, who on Thursday celebrated her 90th birthday, has recently been indulging in verifying, but the production is not in the class of the one poem upon which her fame is founded, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." That was produced in December, 1861, the first year of the United States civil war. Twelve years ago Mrs. Howe personally wrote this story of the "hymn," which was written, with the idea of accommodating the words to the tune to which the soldiers sang "The John Brown song" while on a visit to Washington: I slept as usual that night, but awoke before dawn the next morning and soon found myself trying to weave together certain lines which, though not entirely suited to the John Brown music, were yet capable of being sung to it. I lay still in the dark room, line after line shaping itself in my mind, and verse after verse. When I had thought out the last of these, I felt that I must make an effort to place them beyond the danger of being effaced by a morning nap. I sprang out of bed and groped about in the dim twilight to find a bit of paper and the stump of a pen that I remembered to have had the evening before. I completed my writing, went back to bed and fell fast asleep.

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