

HANDBOOK for STRANGERS VISITING MONTREAL.

NO. 10.

THE MONUMENTAL TABLET ERECTED BY THE DRILL-SHED COMMITTEE IN HONOR OF THEMSELVES.



rato m'è 'l sonno
e più l'esser di
sasso."

So wrote Michel
Angelo on his own
statue of "Night"
in the Laurentian
Chapel at Florence.

It may be freely

translated thus :

"How sweet it is to soundly sleep
When all our labor's done,
And sweeter still, our names to keep
For ever, cut in stone."

DIOGENES has no doubt that the Drill-Shed Committee deem their labours over, but the Cynic believes they will not have heard the last of the Drill-Shed for many years to come. This noble ornament to the city is anything but complete, and seems destined to cost a great deal more money.

How often its walls may yet require rebuilding, how often its roofs may be smashed in, or how much it may cost to keep the fabric in repair, DIOGENES frankly owns himself totally unable to compute. He, however, trusts that the city will, at once, reconcile itself to the fact that a large sum of money must yet be spent, if the so called "armories" are to be made worthy the name. Not a single arm-rack or rifle-stand is yet in the building, or contracted for. DIOGENES trusts that some trouble may be taken to construct these on the most improved principles. It is very false economy to spare money in protecting military stores. Again, not a single provision has been made for an armorer's forge,—not even a chimney.—DIOGENES imagines that the arms used by the militia must, like all others, occasionally want repairs, and these were better done on the spot. He also supposes that the guns of the two field batteries will be stored somewhere in the building, but where? At present, it would be next to impossible to get them in or out. If these guns are to be kept in anything like decent condition, some accommodation must be made for a wheelwright, a saddler, and a blacksmith. At present there is none at all. Is military clothing to be kept within these walls? If so, let some means be provided to prevent its being devoured by vermin.

In no unkindly spirit, DIOGENES wishes to point out why this building may be considered a Monument of Folly. First and foremost, on account of the penny-wise and pound-foolish parsimony exercised at the commencement and the utterly inadequate time allowed in the first instance for its completion. The Corporation advertised for designs. Several were sent in, all more costly than the Committee expected. In this dilemma they selected the cheapest or what they deemed the cheapest. The result is well known. Foundations failed, the roof had

to be strengthened, the side roof was crushed by snow, making necessary those snow-guards which Alderman Munro states to be yet an inadequate protection. New expenses became necessary daily. The Council feigned indignation and the public were furious. The architects protested, while contractors raved for their money. The Council then called in two architectural experts from Ontario. These gentlemen made a most able report, shewing that the whole structure was deficient in certain requisites. "Quite true," replied the architects, "but how could we provide these when there was no money to pay for them." More extras! more money spent! and yet more money wanted!! If, as some say, there has been jobbery in all this, DIOGENES can only say that that jobbery must have been very unsuccessful. Can it be possible that those gentlemen who have had their names carved on the monumental slab over the doorway feel any *pride* in their work? DIOGENES sees thereon some names of men who have done good service to the city. All men are liable to blunders, but this is one of the few instances on record of men wishing to transmit their names to posterity in connection with their blunders. Why the name of our worthy Mayor should be inscribed at the head of this list of blunderers is more than the Cynic can understand. His Worship at least can fairly wash his hands of the whole transaction.

Stranger,—DIOGENES has been your guide for many weeks in seeing the lions of Montreal. Give him your candid opinion as to what is to be done with this slab.

Stranger (*loquitur*).—Take it down and turn it hind-side before, at the same time carving on the reverse a graceful *bas-relief* of a fool's cap and bells. Posterity will recognize the appropriateness of the symbol, but will remain in happy ignorance of the names of those who wore the decoration in the years 1867, '68 and '69.

A FACETIOUS REPORTER.

In a newspaper account of a fire that recently took place at a Hotel in Quebec, the following sentence occurs:

"The conflagration broke out suddenly, some time after midnight, and the guests accordingly barely escaped."

The reporter, in the opinion of DIOGENES, has advisedly made use of the term "*barely*" to denote that the guests escaped "by the skin of their teeth." They could scarcely, under the circumstances, be expected to waste much time on their *toilette*; but the annoyance of *barely* escaping in such Arctic weather as the present, was surely sufficiently keen, without having public attention so pointedly drawn to the fact.

A WAIL FROM OTTAWA.

Universal sympathy was manifested for the hapless Red Riverians when, last summer, they were eaten up by the locusts. Think of poor Ottawa and pity *her*, for, actually, the sun (of patronage) is darkened,—hidden by myriads of strange contractors. Every crumb that falls from the great table is in danger of being eaten up by stranger *genii* of the pick and the wheelbarrow. We are all on the Line, but we fear the Terminus will be Disappointment.

GO TO HALIFAX!

For the future make this addition to the objurgation—"and bring a HOWE back with you," or perhaps it would be more correct to say "Go to Portland! and meet Joe half-way!"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Several communications are in type—others are under consideration.