

TORONTO AND ABOUT.

The death of the Hon. George Brown has fallen upon us like a pall, and the city is filled with a profound sorrow. The flags flying at half-mast last Sabbath told of the decease of Canada's pet statesman, and the melancholy succeeding the knowledge of his death was felt by all creeds, both rich and poor. The Hon. George Brown is dead, and, like D'Arcy McGee, has come to that by the hand of an assassin, and like him also his name will long be remembered in Canadian history as the foremost man of his day; but, all honour to the dead, his day has long since passed, and the power he once wielded had not been his long before the people of Canada changed their Liberal Government and adopted the National Policy.

The suggestion of Mr. Langevin, supported by Mr. Blake, to thoroughly survey the Toronto harbour, is a suggestion that should be acted upon, as a "harbour of refuge" so disgraceful as that of Toronto can scarcely be conceived. Year after year accumulations of sand and lake stone find a lodgment in both the entrances of the harbour, until an elaborate system of dredging is necessary every season, and that constantly for the entire summer. The Government is dilatory in this matter; at every session of the House the question is broached, commented upon, and passed over as a matter of slight importance. This evil of an unsafe harbour is so patent to all, and is of such long standing that the patience of the good citizens of Toronto is nearly worn out; the suggestion of Mr. Langevin, however, seems to have put new life into the drooping spirits of the people, and we are looking forward with new interest for the erection of substantial breakwaters, something, we hope, after the fashion of those of Cleveland.

The question that appears to engross public attention more than all others in Ontario at present is the future destiny of Canada; we are anxiously looking out for an able article in one of our most influential journals upon this subject. True, the Toronto *Telegram* publishes any amount of anonymous communications upon the subject, the "Canadian Monthly" occasionally has an article, or paper, upon Imperial Federation, and the *Globe* sneers at all; but, as yet, no paper, weekly or daily, has attempted to give any sort of advice or suggestion upon the matter worth a moment's consideration. I heard the "Political Economy Club" of Montreal discussed pretty freely the other morning, and the suggestion was thrown out that such a club be inaugurated in Toronto; certainly the necessity for such a club is very evident, for the ignorance displayed by Torontonians in discussing the National Policy, National Currency, Annexation, Federation and Independence is something astonishing. To read the *National* of this city upon the currency question, the credulous must necessarily come to the conclusion that all that is necessary to make times good is for the Dominion Government to issue some twenty or thirty million dollars of irredeemable paper money and the hard times have passed away; if the times get hard again, let a few more million of dollars of worthless paper be sent upon the country—the times are improved.

The Ontario Government professes to befriend the emigrant, and for that purpose the emigrant sheds were erected. In my walks through them lately I could not help marvelling upon the disgusting appearance of the place, men, women and children hustled together like dogs, breathing the most fetid atmosphere, lying and resting on the dirty floor in every posture of discomfort. As I watched the shivering men and wretched women cooking their meagre fare of gruel (the gift of some charitably disposed individual), I thought to myself the Government might spend a few thousand dollars in providing accommodation for the poor people they have enticed to their doors. I enquired of a cowed Irishman "How long have you been here?" "A week, sorr." "Cant you get work?" "No, sorr, they are going to send me and me wife and two children to Brantford to-morrow, sorr." And so I found it, however much the Government of Ontario may smooth the matter over, the emigrants are imposed upon; they are kept here in the vain hope of procuring employment, and are then shifted to London, Sarnia, Brantford or away to Manitoba, as the case may be, in the fruitless search for work. I have a man employed now who was to have been sent out of the city in the vain effort to get something to do. Of course the Government cannot be supposed to find

work for every labourer who comes to the country, yet surely there should be some sort of discrimination used in enticing these men here and paying wastefully thousands of fares in shifting emigrants from town to town. I rather think the good farmers of Ontario see this too, and they very strongly question the wisdom of spending a first amount of \$500,000 on Parliament buildings when the money could be employed to much more advantage.

The bricklayers of Toronto are talking of striking, the carpenters and plasterers are also disaffected, and presently there may be expected a lively (?) time in the building trade of the city. I inquired of a bricklayer why he intended to strike; his answer was, that as the Parliament buildings were to commence immediately the demand for labour would warrant a strike. I informed him his services would not be required for fourteen months yet. The prospects of building in Toronto at present are dull, and how these men can be so foolhardy as to think of striking now is astonishing.

Toronto architects are generally incensed over the condition attached to the competition of the proposed new Parliament buildings. Seventeen of the profession met last Thursday to discuss the merits of the suggestions to architects and the conditions annexed thereto. There is to be a premium given to the selected best design of \$2000, the second premium is to be \$1,000, and the third \$500, after which the Government, or Mr. Fraser rather, proposes to purchase any other submitted design for \$400. The premiums in no case to be paid unless the design be up to the standard, the cost of the building not to exceed \$500,000 exclusive of fencing and improvements to the grounds. By this arrangement it is possible for Mr. Fraser, who is the sole judge, to discard all designs from receiving premiums, and may purchase the best plan, which possibly might exceed the \$500,000, for \$400. Again the Government proposes to make the architects tender on the superintendence of the building and if an architect's percentage is not low enough he may not have the overseeing of his work. Mr. Fraser's pamphlet of instruction enables him to procure forty or fifty designs from the leading architects of the Dominion and the States, and as he is the sole judge, he may reject all of them, from which he can select the best for \$400 and give the superintendence of the same to the government architect. The plans are to be sent in by the first of August; the architects decidedly objected to this, and requested that the time be extended to the first of December, there will be time enough then to receive estimates before Parliament meets. The resolutions adopted by the meeting of architects are about as follows:

That a uniform rate of 5 per cent. on the outlay be adopted by all the architects competing.

That the selected competitor shall undoubtedly have the superintendence of the works.

That the time for submitting designs be extended to the first of December.

That perspective drawings may be shaded (the conditions prohibit shading or colouring to the elevations, perspective, or geometrical).

That a copy of these resolutions be sent to all the architects in the province and Montreal for them to sign and return to Toronto, which together with a list of Toronto architects shall be forwarded to Mr. Fraser for his guidance (?).

I do not expect Mr. Fraser will pay a great deal of attention to these resolutions; but if he does see fit to extend the time, I fancy the chances in favour of the non-erection of the buildings will be considerably increased, as there is a decided feeling against the erection of the same throughout the province. It is to be hoped, therefore, for the sake of Ontario, that the time will be extended.

How comes it that the "Chronicle" of Quebec is so ill-informed in Ontario matters? Speaking of emigration and population it says "it is no wonder Ontario is *trebling* its population and making material strides in prosperity, while the province of Quebec stands still or retrogrades and literally allows the golden opportunity to slip through her very fingers." It will be news for Ontario to learn that she is *trebling* her population. I should like to know where this appears to the best advantage, for from Ottawa to Sarnia the population has positively been at a stand still for some years back; there is scarcely a village in Western Ontario that has made any increase within the past five years, and as for *trebling* her population through emigration that idea is too far fetched except for anything beyond the columns of the "Chronicle,"

Queen City.