



MCGILL UNIVERSITY TUG-OF-WAR TEAM.

Our Toronto Letter.

[From our own correspondent.]

TORONTO, November, 1890.

Birchall and the effects of the McKinley Bill, or what to some judgments passes as such, the agitation in the money market, have divided public attention this week, giving the preference to Birchall. That source of excitement is now over and we are looking for its successor. The developments in the Street Railway arbitration promises some tidbits, but our citizens have so much confidence in the legal gentlemen employed on both sides of the case that they are not over anxious less they should be cheated.

The annual sop thrown to their constituents by certain of the aldermen, takes the flavour this year of retrenchment in the matter of civic salaries. Not being able to cut down taxes that they have by their own act fixed, they fall upon the men in whose hands lie the whole financial administration of this large and ever-increasing municipality and attempt to belittle their services in the eyes of the citizens, and on that ground cut down their, by no means, princely salaries, even if the City Treasurer's salary be adopted as an example. Moreover, as certain of the salaries paid have been fixed by the present year's aldermen it would be hard to expect them to eat their words, so the latest proposition is that the gentlemen in the various offices shall have their hours lengthened and be expected to work from eight a.m. until 6 p.m. This would be all very well if civic work were free from rush, and was of a mechanical nature requiring little exercise of the individual brain, but any person informed on the subject is well aware that civic work is full of the elements of strain, and therefore needs to stand upon the same basis in the matter of occupied hours as the legal or any other stringent profession. An informed person also knows that strain and rush break up the powers more rapidly than more ordered work; the question therefore arises: Are our aldermen informed persons in the matter of civic employment? and, if not, why not? For if they are, why do they not support the civic officials in the matter of adequate salary, and ask no more from them than a fair day's work for fair pay.

Dr. Bourinot's lectures on British Institutions in Canada have been well attended by the select hundred, but it is a pity that Trinity University does not engage a hall nearer the centre of the city than its own building. There is no subject at the present time of more importance to the Canadian than the subject of Canadian laws and institutions, and it is certain that if Dr. Bourinot's lectures were more accessible a larger audience would be glad to greet him, as also other of those excellent speakers that from time to time address Toronto at Trinity. The Canadian Institute also sins in this respect. Located in a dark corner of Richmond street and holding its meetings on a Saturday night, it is simply impossible for the ordinary and intellectual public to avail themselves of opportunities of hearing lectures, papers, &c., that they would be delighted to listen to if they were more accessible in the matter of time and place.

The Canadian Institute has put on its considering cap in this matter, it is said. We hope that Trinity will also move.

Old Shaftesbury Hall has become a new auditorium by means of much alteration and improvement of the building. This is a good idea, for the Hall has excellent acoustic properties and comfortable accommodation, but was spoiled by its bad entrance and certain annoyances that had crept in. Being close to Yonge street—on Queen street, it is very central, and with a new front and façade fulfils all requirements of public convenience.

The Chrysanthemum show was, as it deserved to be, a great success. The floor of the Pavilion of Horticultural Garden was filled with these showy and elegant flowers, so that there was but restricted space for moving about. Carrying their blooms at the top and being large plants, the ordinary shew-table cannot be used for their exhibition in pots and they have to stand on the floor. A large exhibit of cut blooms in hyacinth glasses were set out on tables along two sides of the hall, and sharing the same space were roses, orchids, carnations, double violets, and a few lilies to fill up spaces.

The Exhibition was organized by the Toronto Gardeners' and Florists' Club, partly for the encouragement of the cultivation of the Chrysanthemum and partly to raise funds for the meeting of the Society of American Florists, which will be held in Toronto in August next, and at which 600 or 700 delegates are to be present.

The Gardeners' and Florists' Club owes its inception to Mr. John Chambers, Park Commissioner for Toronto and Gardener-in-Chief of Exhibition Park.

The officers for the current year are:—President, John Chambers; 1st Vice-President, George Vair; 2nd Vice-President, C. J. Tidy; Treasurer, A. Gilchrist; Secretary, John H. Dunlop; Exhibition committee, William Houston, T. Manton, A. Macpherson, W. J. Lang.

These gentlemen must be more than satisfied with the result of their labours on behalf of the Chrysanthemum show, for a better, as to quality, it is hard to conceive. A larger may of course be organized in a larger population.

The varieties of the flowers were as remarkable as their characteristics. From the small close-petalled daisy-like bloom, with which we were familiar in our grandfathers' gardens in England, to the latest novelty, the ostrich-plume, is a long interval, and covers a wonderful variety of form. The ostrich plume is a white flower as large as the palm of one's hand, with incurved petals of almost translucent texture, covered with upright bracts (the correct botanical term is not known to your correspondent) which give it a most fairy-like appearance. Only two or three of our Toronto growers had it. Peter Henderson, New York, shewed it and a grower from Shorthills, N.J. An exhibitor from Adrian, Mich., also had it, and a pale pink one was also shown by Peter Henderson. In colours, yellow was most general, and ranged from a pale greenish tint to a deep orange; several bronzes were shown and numerous examples of the old chrysanthemum-pink or peach blow, as it used to be called. There were also a few pure rosy-pink flowers, but perhaps the most remarkable of all tints was a flower that, from its plentifulness, would not seem to be

hard to grow, of reversible petals, showing a rich garnet within and old-gold without, as the petals were incurving the old-gold was the obvious colour, the garnet showing as a lining.

By far the larger share of the prize cut blooms consisted of white flowers, and they were certainly magnificent,—some of the pompon form, others as shaggy as a wet Newfoundland dog, others incurved, some neither one way nor another, but looking as if somebody had dropt a pinch of paper strips upon the card. The resemblance in the manner of development of form of these chrysanthemums to asters was very remarkable, quilled, half-quilled, daisy-faced, incurved, ragged, regular and neat, irregular and indescribable, it was impossible not to see the similarity; there were a few specimens, however, so recurved and so like in colour as to suggest a zinnia, had not stem and leaf been there to prove it a chrysanthemum.

What the future of this elegant and attractive flower will be who can say, when one firm, that from Adrian, shews fifty new varieties for one year.

The collection of roses was small, but perhaps the finest ever shown in Toronto; they were all cut blooms,—*Perle de jardin*, *Bride*, *Mermel*, *Souvenir de Wootton*, *Madame Hoste*, *Nephtos*, each as perfect in form and colour as could be imagined, and with a transparency of texture that seemed to forbid a long lease of life, yet these lovely creatures will flourish for more than a week in water if rightly managed. The Wanda, a new rose, and some hybrid perpetuals, looking like the handsome old English roses of our childhood, filled the air with perfume and made us glad that growers were resuming the cultivation of scented flowers as well as, if not in place of, the scentless ones of late years.

Manton Bros. shewed the orchids that took the prize and deserved it richly, for their flowers were as fine as curious, but Cotterell Bros. had two or three curious and beautiful specimens among the non-competing plants from their greenhouses that filled an angle of the hall.

Mr. Chambers sent the splendid selection of plants that formed the centre-piece, with the exception of the fine palm around which they were grouped and which formed part of Mr. Watkin's treasures in the Pavilion Conservatory.

The high-handed action of the Wholesale Grocers' Guild, or more truly, combine, of this city, in trying to run the Retailers into a hole by shortening credit and lessening discounts, has developed a strong opposition on the part of the oppressed, who naturally objected to being coerced of their legal business liberty by any combine of richer men. The retailers have a hard pull very often to make ends meet, and it is not within their power to remove the pressure caused by long credits, which are often forced upon them by the action of other traders, in such cases as strikes for instance, when customers who continue to need their daily supplies of food and pay honestly as well as they can, are forced to ask long credit of the grocer, who necessarily is willing to oblige the persons on whose custom he depends for his ordinary business. To oppress the retailers then is a very illiberal measure on the part of wholesale men and very short-sighted also. Clarke Wallace's Anti-Combine Bill enables the law to step in at a certain stage, but under Mr.