

At the present moment, city of Quebec six per cents, which a few months since were as high as 103 ex dividend, have fallen to 91  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and were even as low as 90  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and Ottawa six per cents, which were equally high but a short time ago, have receded to 95. It is to be feared that Grant Brothers, who have issued all the loans of these cities, would not, under any circumstances, have treated them differently from Emma Mine and Lisbon Tramways loans; and at the present time, if these cities desire to restore confidence in their securities, they must employ some other medium than a firm whose reputation is gone.

The state of the civic finances has lately been engaging serious attention in more than one Canadian city—the result perhaps, less of increased taxation, though that in some cities has been heavy enough, than of the greater economy felt necessary and practised in every household, consequent on the protracted depression in trade. Whether a curtailment of civic expenditure will result, it is difficult to determine, as discussion in such cases usually unveils the fact that certain expenditure has been authorised and must be met by taxation, and then, the taxes once paid, the public relapse again into indifference, from which they probably will not be aroused until the tax-gatherer once more makes his appearance. There can be no question as to the indifference with which the civic expenditure appears to be regarded in most of our cities, and it is indicative of the indifference, and results from the intensity with which party warfare is waged, that whilst an expenditure of fifty thousand dollars, the propriety of which it was possible to question, could not be made by the Government at Ottawa without the whole country being made aware of it by

editorials in the public press, an expenditure of a similar sum by a civic corporation would often scarcely be known to any one who did not read for himself the City Council reports. At the end of the civic year the rate-payers are alarmed at the amounts of the taxes which they have to pay; but are they not themselves in part to blame? It is to be hoped, however, that some reform will result from the discussion. Cities and towns, as well as private individuals, must contract their expenditure when the necessities of the times require it. It is of as much importance, and even more, to the one as to the other, to maintain its credit. Municipal corporations must realize the fact that their expenditure must be measured entirely by their income, and their public indebtedness by the permanent advantage resulting from the expenditure of the moneys borrowed, and by the perfect ability and willingness of the ratepayers to pay the interest and sinking fund. The temporary expedient, but financial fallacy, of having a floating debt, which generally in the end has to be provided for by a new issue of bonds, must be done away with; the idea that debts of whatever nature can always be disposed of by such new issues of bonds must be dissipated; sinking funds must be more carefully guarded in the hands of trustees, and more carefully re-invested than in some cases they have been; and corporations must have it brought home to them that however advantageous the object may be, to carry out which they at any time desire to borrow, they can never place their loans to the best advantage unless there is the greatest confidence placed by the public in the cautious and economical management of their finances.

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### MORNING SONG.

SONGSTERS of the wood ! awaking  
 With the breaking  
 Dawn, forth-shaking  
 Golden arrows of the day !  
 Sing ! a sweet song-offering making !  
 Sing and pray !