PROMINENT TOPICS.

The observance of the day of the Queen's funeral in this city was deeply impressive, it seemed as though every family was mourning a dead member. The emblems of mourning draped the city in purple and black. The statue of the Queen was decorated with exquisite taste, the base being covered with fluted drapings of purple. All around, wreaths were hung, composed of roses, lilies, and other floral tributes, all of them most costly, and arranged with remarkable taste. The students of McGill College marched in a body to place their splendid wreath on the Queen's statue, and held a special service in honour and memory of their beloved Queen. Funeral services also were held in many churches, including the Roman Catholic Cathedral, where most touching eulogies of the Queen were delivered.

The magnanimous conduct of the leading businessmen in New York, Chicago, Buffalo, Boston, and other American cities in participating in the demonstrations of grief on the day of the Queen's funeral entitles them to the gratitude of every British subject. More durable than brass will be the memorial of sympathy so nobly displayed, for it will remain as a fragrant memory forever throughout the Empire.

Parliament was opened on Wednesday last under more melancholy circumstances than ever before. The function, therefore, was more sombre than usual. For one of the parties it was especially so, for, from their ranks was absent the veteran leader whose ringing tones will no more reverberate through the Chamber. The ex-Minister of Finance, too, had no place in the House, and other familiar figures on both sides were away in the shade of private life; whether enjoying the seclusion or fretting over defeat they best know. But, as several ex-members, famous for loquacity are not in the present House, the Session may be all the shorter for their absence—all the more business-like also let us hope.

The Finance Committee of the City Council has ractically decided to take a separate vote on each item of the proposed expenditure of $1,800,000 to be provided by a new loan, instead of submitting a by-law for the whole amount. In the last issue of THE CHRONICLE some of these items were discussed. It is, however, essential for eliciting a thoroughly intelligent vote of the ratepayers that full and definite details regarding each item be furnished. The headings, Bonsecours Market, Civic Hospital, Water Works, Roads, are mere hints as to the purposes of the large expenditures proposed. The ratepayers are entitled to such information as will enable them to judge as to the wisdom, or present necessity of spending such large funds on the objects so vaguely outlined. Since the proposal to expend $400,000 in enlarging and improving Bonsecours Market was first made known, there has been an almost universal protest raised against the scheme. It is held by all classes of citizens that the location of Bonsecours is not appropriate for the city, as the population has moved away to so large an extent from that district as to have made it necessary for the chief market of the city—if one must be kept up—to be much nearer the residential centre, more especially, more easily reached by those classes who frequent such a market, such as retailers, and buyers of frugal habits. For $400,000 a market could be established more centrally situated and more convenient, alike to those who supply and those who purchase what a public market has on sale. When particulars are forthcoming as to the mode of spending the $1,800,000, we shall be in a better position to discuss the new loan.

In addition to the above loan, which has to be submitted to the ratepayers, another one for $1,500,000 will shortly be raised, and for providing interest and sinking fund provision will have to be made in accordance with the terms of the city's charter. This loan is intended to provide the needful for taking up old securities which are maturing for the same amount, so that the civic debt will not be increased. On the other hand, as the interest rate on the new loan will be much below that of the securities to be retired, there will be an annual saving of interest charges, the operation, therefore, is very satisfactory.

No information has been published as to the method proposed for floating the proposed loans. The citizens are anxious that the loans will be negotiated on a business basis, so that the best possible terms may be secured.

The Council is still dilly-dallying over the contracts for lighting the city. Why there is so long a delay is one of the mysteries of the Council Chamber. If the interests of the city prevail, there will be prompt action taken to call for tenders, as the prospects are not favourable for better terms being obtained by delay.

Rumours are still rife as to the amalgamation of certain life companies; like the spectre that worried Macbeth, they will not "down," but, so far, we are told, nothing definite has been arrived at.

The fire insurance companies are busy adjusting and paying losses by recent fires in this city. These disasters will be a salutary lesson to citizens. Judging from present signs they will take no excuse for delay in thoroughly equipping and improving the fire brigade as to appliances, men, and management. Thorough reorganization is essential. Any one who will consider how terrible would have been the financial disaster from the fires last year and this, had it not been for the fire insurance companies, must entertain a kindly feeling towards these institutions. Those who carp and cavil at the fire companies for charging high rates, forming combinations, etc., do