

TORONTO AND ABOUT.

The Toronto City Council, so far as the matter of bonuses is concerned, appear at last to be coming to the right way of thinking. Mark H. Irish said he would expend \$250,000 on improvements at the island if the Council would remit his taxes for five years. The Council appeared to acquiesce in the matter at first, but now they are in doubt as to the propriety of making a practice of this sort of thing. It is to be hoped they will arrive at the correct conclusion, and stick to it, for there is no possible reason why these wealthy speculators, or poor ones, should have their property exempt from taxation at the expense of their fellow citizens.

The Conservative portion of the community are quoting pretty freely the Grand Trunk Traffic receipts for the past few months to prove that the N. P. is working satisfactorily. And they say that the increase in the receipts is something extraordinary over that of last year and the year before. They forget however, (or rather they wish to deceive) that the Grand Trunk Railway has acquired within the last year or two the control of several new lines of roads and therefore their receipts must as a matter of course be greater now than they were two years ago.

There is much excitement in Toronto over the elections. Some say the Government is going to be beaten and some say that the Liberal party will triumph. Which ever party triumphs, this much I know that both the Government and Liberal parties are guilty of infringing on the direct meaning of the Dominion Election Act when they try to coerce voters by promise to vote for their party. This nefarious system of canvas by the representatives of party should be cried down. A vote should be held sacred, the law protects its secrecy, and the party candidates should do no less. Why should I tell every man who comes to my door whom I intend to cast my vote for? or why should I be troubled to open my door to such impertinence? It is a direct violation of the spirit of the Act to inquisitively pry into the privacy of a voter's intentions.

The friends of Mr. Capreol say he has not much chance, although, as all things are possible, he may by a miracle be elected. I should be sorry, however, to think that Mr. Capreol's chances are so slight as to make his election a miracle, for even if the interest of Toronto can have no weight with the electors, his past services and efficiency to represent them now should have a little weight with the electors at the polls.

The pet in the political arena of West Toronto is A. W. Wright. It is felt that he is advocating a wrong cause, and it is evident he is prepared for defeat, but his rhetorical powers are brilliant, his hold upon his audience is sure, and his delivery is perfect. Mr. Wright, as the advocate of the National currency, I trust, will be a failure. He proposes to build the Canada Pacific Railway on Government scrip. No money to be issued until the work of a portion is done. He sets down the price of the railway at say, \$100,000,000; this is to be disbursed in navvies' wages, contractors' bonuses, and in rolling stock. He says the navvies, contractors and manufacturers will gladly take this irredeemable paper money, but I have my doubts, and I fancy they will rather have gold. When asked how this money was to be redeemed, he said the Government should hold 100,000,000 acres of land on either side of the railway, and sell it at \$2 per acre to the holders of paper money; even if only one-half of the land was disposed of in this way, there would be a surplus of \$100,000,000 to build a second line. It looks very simple, but I should like to know where our credit would go to? Mr. Wright says "we do not require any credit"; this is something new, for I think it would puzzle Mr. Wright or any other rag-baby advocate to find a nation existing, or that ever existed, without trade and commerce, and trade and commerce with distant countries necessarily means credit of some sort.

The Reform party have as yet promulgated no new platform for Mr. Ryan, the candidate, to lay down. Mr. Blake waxes eloquent over "Pacific Scandal," but the electors heard that years ago and are

sick of it. Surely there are a thousand things wanting reform, of which Mr. Blake and his party could make a platform to bring before the electors at this time.

And still another paper is brought out to be circulated daily, at the remarkably cheap price of one cent, the *World*. The wisest of Toronto's journalists are puzzled. We have in Toronto at the present time four daily papers; each are doing a flourishing business, and soon the *Evening News* will make its appearance, making the fifth.

Mr. A. W. Wright, late Editor of the *Telegram*, has started the *Commonwealth*, a weekly edition, and still he is not satisfied, but intends, with the assistance of one or two other bright lights, to start a Sunday newspaper that shall eclipse the *Detroit Free Press*. I wish him success, but he has either to fail in the attempt or make some of our present weeklies go to the wall. Time will tell.

This same Mr. Wright says he is the friend of Denis Kearney, and a hater of the Chinese, or in other words, a Communist. He has startled the quiet politicians by introducing a new feature into the political meetings of his supporters, viz., ballad singing. The *Telegram* has a short satire upon this innovation, and suggests that the ballad singers be dressed in costume. The arguments in favour of ballad singing are, it helps to relieve the monotony of the demagogue, and induces the ladies to take part in the singing, thereby lending additional inspiration to the orator, causing his speeches to become less offensive to the ear. But I would suggest that instead of introducing ballad singing in political meetings, politicians study their temper; to be temperate because of the presence of ladies, argues nothing in favour of him who is temperate, and although the presence of ladies might be calculated to allay the bitterness of party spirit, yet the beneficial effect, I imagine, is a matter of question when the nature of a political meeting is taken into account. A merry Andrew and a Minister of the Crown would look rather out of place on the hustings. However much this sort of thing may be in favour in the United States, I trust it will be long before it can be said of any candidate for political honours in Canada, "he carried his seat through a clown."

Perhaps there never was a more vexed question in Toronto than that of the moral effect of Sunday preaching at the island. The ferry boats make more money on the Sabbath than they do on week days. One-half of the Ministers of the Gospel are in favour of the proceeding and the other half discountenance such desecration of the Lord's day. There are only about one hundred summer inhabitants at the island, but the Sabbath excursionists increase that number to thousands. The effect of this sort of thing will be to open the opera houses next winter on Sundays, as was attempted a few months ago, and not altogether unsuccessfully. When the thin edge of the wedge is once inserted, it is a matter of the utmost difficulty to withdraw it. The good people of the City of Churches must be very careful over their lax laws.

Exhibition time draws near. It is a question if there are not too many of these fairs in Canada at one time. Certainly the advantage to be derived from the fact of having received a medal or diploma is questionable. However, in this age of travelling perhaps it is as well that excursions should obtain.

The citizens of Toronto are becoming really annoyed and angry at the lazy manner in which the City Council attends to the wants of the citizens in the matter of swimming facilities. There could not be a more unanimous cry for the privilege, but the summer is nearly spent and nothing done. The people are beginning to feel that Mr. Beaty's promises are like pie crust. His city charter was a bungle and took a year to bring forth. His proposed improvements at the island are still in the distance, and as for swimming baths or facilities for swimming they are as far off as ever. It certainly is extremely aggravating when their attainment is so easy.

Queen City.