

TORONTO AND ABOUT.

One-half at least of last Monday was a glad day in the Provincial Capital. From four o'clock in the morning until the hour of departure for Hamilton, and again at midnight, the discordant braying of trumpets was heard at times, mingling with the shrill notes of the ear-piercing fife, in strict accordance with the dismal thundering of the big base drum, all of which was the property of the ancient and everlasting Orange institution. It was worth losing a day's pay to see the sight; the glorious colours were interspersed charmingly in cool and immeasurable fields of white-washed pants and tunics; the commonest sash of the "Prentice boys" was enough to break the heart of the stoutest lass in Hamilton. Even the orange lilies were beyond compare, forced by enterprising florists for the occasion; the purple and crimson banners were magnificent to behold with the "gold fringe" and tassels reflecting back the hot rays of the scorching sun. The mingling of all colours of the rainbow with the glistening of cold blooded steel in the horny hands of gentlemen with stove pipe hats and frock coats, and pants of a spotless Chinese white, preceded by a new feature in Orangism, the negro or coloured element, formed a never-to-be-forgotten picture of unparalleled magnificence surpassing far in glory and ostentation the remarkable procession of Aladdin as he wended his triumphant way exultingly to the Emperor to claim the hand and heart of the radiant princess. Yes indeed! the gorgeous apparel of these significant celebrations excels a thousand times the brilliant displays made by some of your Oriental monarchs, of happy memory, in ancient or modern times. People learned in gathering statistics have estimated that it would require *one ton and a half* of brass to supply even the buttons for the tunics of those who took part in the celebration of the anniversary of the "battle of the Boyne" at Hamilton last Monday.

What with lager beer, and brass buttons, and brass bands, and crimson sashes, and a day's holiday, and gaudy banners, and one thing and another, including the simpering of the fair sex, it is no wonder Orangemen are annually overpowered with a sense of their own importance and the necessity of such a Protestant society in this Papist country, as their own exalted Orange order. When will people learn common sense and think rationally of the folly of such a parade, and the ridiculousness of such outlandish uniforms, and have some sort of consideration for their fellow citizens of both religions? Will some one inform me what it all amounts to, or what object is gained thereby? One fact is certain, namely, that much time is lost, angry feelings are stirred up, and oftentimes damage is done. The moral effect is certainly bad, and further, many of the Orangemen were never in Ireland, and have but a faint idea of the event they are commemorating in this childish manner.

The chairman of the Board of Works denies that he has any interest in procuring the consent of the Board to the adoption of the "Brisley patent" for sidewalks. He says Mr. Brisley is not his tenant, but Mr. Brisley's son is, and that Mr. Brisley lives with his son. This is all very pretty: suffice it to say that there is a natural interest between the chairman and Mr. Brisley, as between tenant and landlord. What the people want to know is this, why is not the Brisley patent adopted? There are to be \$15,000 worth of sidewalks laid down this year, beyond what has already been laid, about \$30,000 altogether; Mr. Brisley claims that his patent if used would save the city just one-half, and yet all the influence of the great chairman cannot procure the consent of the Board to its adoption. There must be other interest somewhere, greater than the chairman's for his tenant. Certain lumber merchants and contractors, and certain aldermen would make a nice ring.

I permitted myself the privilege of attending the services of the excellent new Methodist Episcopal Church on Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, a few months ago. After the service I examined minutely the appointments of the edifice, and in conversation with one of the officials of the church was led into a discussion of the much-talked-of sanctity of the Sabbath, and of churches and church debts in general in Toronto. He informed me, although I was well acquainted with

the truth before, that they were, comparatively speaking, in comfortable circumstances so far as the church debt was concerned, yet their great difficulty was the usual trouble of getting people to attend divine service on the Sabbath. "How is it managed in Toronto?" he asked, "for I understand everybody goes to church there." The answer to this question may be gathered indirectly from a truthful sermon preached by the Rev. R. Anthony Bilkey, Rector of Christ Church, Toronto a month or so ago. His announcement was most startling and apparently uncalled-for, and utterly took the people by surprise. The *Mail* the next morning published the sermon verbatim, and the citizens as they read it opened their eyes wide and laughed, and said "He is right." The sermon tickled them for the moment; but, alas! it went in at one ear and out at the other. He said, point blank, that not only was Toronto the most religious city he had ever been in, and it had been his good fortune to visit many, but it also was the very wickedest. O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Yes; it is a solemn fact, Toronto, for its size, is the wickedest city in America, and in a great measure the churches are responsible for a great proportion of the deception and crime in her midst.

There are four religious bodies in Toronto of about equal strength, the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists; the Baptists being the weakest are the most sensational. These churches, in every sense, are rivals—it is, who shall have the largest church and most fashionable congregation? There is not a church in Toronto but has its scandal; Methodist, Episcopal, Congregational, Presbyterian or any other denomination. There is not one church in Toronto but is struggling and floundering in hot water through great financial difficulties. How many Toronto ministers draw their nominal salary regularly? How many organists receive their stipend, whether it be \$1,000 a year or \$100? I know of very few churches in Toronto free from such troubles. How many citizens of Toronto never go to church? None. Or rather there are those who never enter a church or house of prayer, but their number is small and they hold no position in society. Out of curiosity I asked a hard-looking citizen last week if he ever went to church, and his answer was, "Why, d——n you, what do you take me for? You bet! I go to Knox's every lick, regular as the clock; how could a poor devil like me live without going to church? Where would I get credit from do you think?" True enough, I saw the profane, but devout "Christian," with his Bible and Hymn-book under his arm, with bowed head entering last Sabbath the *house of God*. Toronto has more religion than any other city on the continent, but it is the wickedest city in America. Who are the worse, the citizens of Buffalo who make no pretence of going to church, or Torontonians whose boast is that in the city of churches there are none who know not God's house?

As a result of building Railways upon the strength of bonuses, we need but look at the Credit Valley Line, only a few months in operation, and the men two months behind in their pay and on strike. This notion of granting bonuses to railways is like putting so much cash in the hands, or rather pockets of unscrupulous directors. This bonus business is a real Yankee notion, and belongs thoroughly to Americans; but the system is thoroughly bad; if a company is so poor that even with liberal government aid it finds itself unable to build the line, then such a company had better cease to exist and give way to a more wealthy corporation. We are disgusted with this sort of thing in Toronto. The Credit Valley Railway has eaten up our \$250,000 and would like to have more; we have not received the interest of our money yet. The Toronto Grey and Bruce wants more, like Oliver; and to crown all, the Northern cuts us to the heart by its ingratitude and contempt, whilst the charter, in the hands of Messrs. Gooderham and Leys, for the building of the Toronto and Ottawa Railway bides its time to "nail" us for our shekels.

There is not a day that passes now but we hear of some fresh burglary in the city. The *Telegram* talks of forming a vigilance committee to mutually protect property. The police and detectives appear to be worse than useless and the Chief of Police more foolish than them all.

Queen City.