

that the whole of the increased demand for Canadian manufactures, is not due to the tariff; but undoubtedly a considerable portion of it is. The *Times* cannot be said to endorse Mr. Blake's view of the tariff. On the contrary, it distinctly advises that the Liberal party should "stand up for a tariff for revenue only," without regard to its effect on the industries of the country. On this question of the tariff, Mr. Blake and his supporters ought to come to some understanding.

—The strikes which recently took place in the different classes of the building trades, have ended by an amicable arrangement between masters and men. The result will be considerably to add to the cost of building. The increase in wages and materials, especially bricks, will add about twenty per cent. to the cost of building. This will probably check building operations in some degree, and it will perhaps do no great harm; for there was a tendency to overbuild, in this city, especially among the speculative class of builders. Still there is no reason to suppose that building will cease. It seems to be inevitable that a large part of the building should be done when prices are high; for high prices are generally combined with stimulated enterprise and activity of demand. Overbuilding has not gone to the extent that some suppose; for it is doubtful whether there be as many vacant houses in the city as there were a year ago. The new houses are more convenient than the old, being adapted to modern wants, and it is the old unimproved houses that become vacant. To secure tenants, owners will have to adapt the old houses to modern requirements.

—Again the rumor comes that the duty on Canadian-built vessels, in France, are likely to be reduced from \$8 to forty cents a ton. Should this come to pass, Canadian ship-building will enjoy a revival; and the workmen who had to go elsewhere for employment, or to learn new occupations, will return to their old haunts and their old way of life. New Brunswick, which builds the most ships, would benefit to the greatest extent. Ontario would not be directly affected by the change.

—The event of the week in banking circles is the resignation of Mr. Geo. Stephen, as president of the Bank of Montreal. It is useless to seek for occult reasons for this step on Mr. Stephen's part, for he is known to have been anxious for some time to retire, and besides, he has his hands full of business connected with the Pacific Railway Co. He retires at a time when the bank is in a pros-

perous condition, as the recently declared dividend and bonus show, and his resignation has no serious effect.

—The Pacific Railway Company has been offering \$1.75 a day to laborers, in Toronto, to go out West. At this rate, it costs more than an acre of land to pay a day's labor of a navvy. The rise in the price of labor, and of other things will affect the calculations of those critics who fancied that the Syndicate would make untold millions out of their contract. This prospective rise was one of the things against which, as prudent men, the syndicate had to protect themselves.

—The spirit in which the strikes, in various industries, have been carried on, shows a great improvement upon former perturbations in the labor market. There has been no violence, in any part of Canada, and in most instances, the demands made, have not been unreasonable. A spirit of accommodation has been shown, on both sides; on which both employers and employed are to be congratulated.

—It is reported that, the Corporation of the City of Quebec, in its quality of bondholder, will contest the sale of Levis and Kennebec Railway. On the failure of Baron Grant, the city came into possession of \$250,000 of the bonds of this Company, and in this way it is largely interested in this railway.

#### BUSINESS MATTERS IN QUEBEC.

A correspondent who passed last week in Quebec reports business in that city upon the whole, as in very fair condition. Wholesale grocers and dry goods importers report having done a good spring business, though perhaps not up to the anticipations formed in the Winter. Remittances have come in well, and failures have been conspicuous by their absence. The tanners and manufacturers of boots and shoes—which since the decline of shipbuilding is Quebec's most prominent industry—are taxed to their utmost capacity to fill orders, a very large proportion of which are from Western shoe jobbers. As a natural sequence the price of shoe hands' labor has increased, and even at the improved rates of wages, several manufacturers report themselves short of hands, and unable to fill the vacancies. Still, as compared with wages at other points, the rates seem very low, \$4.50 per week being the average pay of an ordinary tannery hand, with from \$6 to \$7 a week for foremen. Quite a trade in buff leather is being done with England and several prominent tanners are devoting special attention to that article for export, the prices realized being very fair, and the returns quickly made.

The spring fleet has not been so large as was

expected, but this is accounted for to a certain extent by the fact that a number of vessels have been very late in sailing, owing to the severe experience with ice in the Gulf last year, and to other causes, and it is thought that ships will continue to arrive in very fair numbers throughout the Summer. Perhaps the low stocks of lumber at present on hand may have had to do with the few arrivals thus far; and as there is a disposition on the part of some shippers to hold on till next season in anticipation of better prices for their lumber, there may be a scarcity of freight. One thing which beyond doubt deters many vessels from coming to this port, is the absolute tyranny exercised by the Ship Laborers' Society, an organization which may be said to virtually control the whole city. We have not space to enter fully into the subject here, but when we state that the Society is powerful enough to say to the owners or agents "you must employ only members of our organization to load your vessels, and the rate is *four dollars* a day," and even will not allow the sailors to assist in the loading or discharge, some conception can be formed of the power it wields. A Society that defies all authority which conflicts with its own, and that plants loaded cannon in the streets to enforce its own decrees, must seem a strange anomaly to outsiders; but everybody has heard of the Quebec Ship Laborers' riots, and Quebecers acknowledge with shame the terrorism the organization exerts.

Some enthusiasm is trying to be worked up with the object of starting several manufacturing industries, for which Quebec has peculiar facilities in the way of cheap labor, &c., but so far nothing tangible has been forthcoming, though a public meeting is intended to be called to discuss the building of a cotton factory. It seems hard to rouse any public interest in such matters, and the general apathy with regard to public improvement is the frequent remark of strangers.

The scheme for the erection of the new hotel fronting on Dufferin Terrace, has assumed definite shape, and it is hoped the hotel will be ready for occupation next Summer. It will be called the "Princess" as a compliment to the interest shown by the Princess Louise, many of whose suggestions have been embodied in the plans. The length of the building will be 228 feet by 145 wide, six stories high with piazzas on three frontages. The cost, with furniture, is estimated at \$500,000, all of which will be furnished by American capitalists. Mr. Willis Russell, long known to the travelling public as proprietor of the St. Louis and Russell hotels, will have the management.

#### TOBACCO.

When this much-praised, and almost as much reviled, plant forms part of the weekly purchases of the majority of men in the land, it is a subject of sufficient interest to deserve some present attention. There are rumors of higher prices coming, albeit those of some Canadian makes have of late been reduced, and it is worth while to see what basis there is for the supposition.