

ground floor. The building, it is stated, will be fire-proof throughout, which, we presume, means that the woodwork will all be fire-proofed the same as the new Guardian building. The building is to be ready for occupation by the 1st May, 1904.

The property purchased by the Eastern Townships Bank is situated at the corner of St. James street and Victoria square, which belonged to Mrs. Stevens. The price paid is \$27 per foot, amounting to \$200,000. The present building may be remodelled and a few stories added or entirely demolished to be replaced by an up-to-date office building. With these two additions six banks contemplate erecting new buildings on St. James street all within a stone's throw of each other.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The Hon. W. S. Fielding laid the estimates for next fiscal year before the House of Commons on 16th inst. with commendable promptness. The total expenditure provided for is \$57,109,974, of which \$50,680,224 is chargeable to Consolidated Fund and \$6,429,750 to Capital Account. The estimates at first submitted are invariably supplemented by others late in the Session, they must, therefore, be regarded as only giving an approximation to the actual expenditure of the next fiscal year.

The total decrease in amount chargeable to Consolidated Fund as compared with current year is \$514,000 and decrease in capital expenditure \$1,437,950, the total estimate for 1903-4 being \$1,951,960 below the total of 1902-3.

* * *

A perusal of the items in estimates schedule reveals no amount of special importance. The capital expenditures, as usual, are spread over a wide area chiefly for canals, enlargements and improvements, new piers, wharves, dredging harbour works. A vote of \$141,000 will be asked for to maintain monthly steam communication between Canada and South Africa, which seems a trifling sum for so important a service. Comment on the preliminary estimates is, however, premature.

* * *

Principal Peterson, of McGill University, has called public attention to the system adopted by the Ontario Education Department of practically boycotting the graduates of any other University than the one in Toronto, that is, practically, a government institution. Principal Peterson's protest against such narrow-minded regulations as shut out the scholars trained in other Colleges than the one in Toronto from the public service in Ontario is endorsed by every person of culture. The learned Principal of McGill says in his protest. "If the letter of the present regulations restricting specialists' standing to

universities in Ontario is to be rigorously maintained, the only method that McGill, as it seems to me, could successfully make in this connection would be to move itself into the Province of Ontario, and so far I have not heard this suggestion seriously made." The Ontario restrictions are a scandal.

* * *

The town of Oshawa has voted to grant a land and cash bonus to the largest dry goods firm in Toronto, which proposes to establish a factory for manufacturing white wear goods. This is one of those cases in which the firm that proposes to establish an industry in a certain locality is already supplied with ample capital for all the needs of their projected enterprise. Any subsidy granted by the town will be a mere bagatelle compared with the extensive capital controlled by the firm in question. It will not be large enough to be any material inducement to select that town in preference to others that offered more attractive facilities in the way of cheap labour and economic transportation. That the firm selected the place for its factory is a demonstration that it had such superior advantages over other localities as to have been a good business proposition to establish the industry there. The municipal subsidies, therefore, were not required either on the ground that the firm needed financial help, or, that it was attracted to the place by the offer of financial assistance.

* * *

A conference was held on 18th inst. in the board room of the General Hospital in connection with the proposed erection of a contagious diseases Hospital for this city. Those present were:—Mr. H. Stikeman and Mr. J. R. Wilson, representing the Montreal General Hospital; Mr. R. B. Angus, Mr. E. S. Clouston, Hon. Geo. A. Drummond and Dr. James Stewart, the Royal Victoria Hospital, and Mr. C. F. Smith and Dr. F. W. Campbell, the Western Hospital. The Hon. Mr. Drummond was elected president and Mr. Clouston honorary treasurer. Mr. J. J. Robson was appointed secretary.

Eleven governors will be appointed by the three hospitals, viz., The Montreal General Hospital will be represented by Mr. J. Crathern, Mr. Stikeman, Mr. J. R. Wilson and Dr. Craik; the Royal Victoria Hospital by Mr. Angus, Mr. Clouston, Hon. Dr. Drummond and Dr. James Stewart, and the Western Hospital by Mr. C. F. Smith, Lieut.-Col. Burland, and Dr. F. W. Campbell.

The Hospital will, it is estimated, cost \$125,000 to \$150,000. In order to leave the civic grant of \$15,000 annually wholly available for costs of maintenance, the Hospital is to be erected by private subscriptions for which an earnest appeal is about to be made and which we have every confidence will meet with the usual generous response our citizens give to objects of benevolence.