

## TORONTO AND ABOUT.

A notorious bricklayer of the city related to me yesterday the following monstrous fact as a sample of the ignorance of the City Fathers. He observed, cautiously: "Of course this is without prejudice." He said the authorities of the new jail, some three years ago, employed him to execute certain repairs in the way of brick-work, &c., to that institution. After having completed the work, he found that the bill to be remunerative would be in the neighborhood of fifty dollars; but, to see how much he could get from the Council, he went over the bill a second and third time, exaggerating and adding item after item, until he had stretched his bill to the remarkable amount of \$300,—five times more than the value of the work, as actually performed. He sent in his account and waited patiently six weeks; at the expiration of this time he appeared before the Board, when the following excellent conversation took place:—

*Ald. C.*—"Well, Mr. C., what do you want?"

*C. (bricklayer)*—"Gentlemen, I have come to see what you are doing with my account."

*Ald. C.*—"The account is ridiculous; it is outrageous; it is, it is——"

*C.*—"Oh! this is the way you are going to treat me, is it? I find there are several items I have teetotally omitted. I have waited six weeks; I am rather a poor man, and the bill, I assure you, is an extremely reasonable one; in fact, I made it as low as possible on purpose, so that you might immediately pass it."

*Ald. B.*—"Nonsense! my dear fellow, we are not going to pass such an account as that."

*C.*—"Very well, gentlemen; I cannot afford to take two-thirds of a cent. less. I am only wasting my time here. Just make out a cheque for what you consider a reasonable amount, and send it to the 'Boys' Home' with my compliments. I wish you good morning."

Our "worthy" had gone but ten paces when the janitor called him back. He found *Ald. B.* in the act of moving a resolution that the bill be accepted, and an order given on the City Treasurer for the full amount forthwith. The resolution was immediately seconded, and unanimously adopted. Some of the very men who were on this committee at the time, represent the city at the Council now, and are about as much use to the city as the above incident shows them to have been then. The above incident is an actual fact, and will be remembered by many, and as an example of the manner of managing the finances of the city, is faithful in the extreme.

It is no uncommon thing to see in the streets of Toronto the disgusting remains of some poisoned animal lying in a state of decomposition for days. On Yonge street this last week I saw a dead dog so full of loathsomeness as to be really sickening, tainting the air for a considerable distance around. The excuse that city officials cannot be everywhere at once is lame and "played out." The police have not sufficient authority from headquarters, their authority permits them to poison animals, but refuses to allow them to remove the carcasses. I saw a little while ago a dead horse lying off one of the principal streets for four or five days. The *Telegram*, the people's organ of complaint, teems with the communications of the ratepayers complaining of this and other evils that should not for one moment be tolerated in a city claiming to have such pretensions as the capital of Ontario. People have become accustomed to abominations in Toronto, hence their carelessness in regard to the government of the city, cleanliness of the streets, efficiency of the drains, and qualifications of the police.

It must not be supposed the deputation that visited the American cities a month or so ago accomplished nothing. They succeeded in enticing General Grant to come and see us and be seen, next September at the Industrial Exhibition. What a boon to Toronto! The disappointed third-term General will be on view next September, for further particulars see small hand-bills and big posters; in the mean time the general traffic of the city must continue to be impaired through the muddy roads; if the axles of waggons and light phaetons become damaged to any great extent, after all, the blacksmiths and carriage makers are benefitted, so people must not grumble too heavily.

Perhaps it is not generally known that the erudition displayed by Toronto Methodist preachers in respect to Theological matters is marvellous. It is very consoling to know that the work of Toronto Methodist Ecclesiastics is fully appreciated; there are, I believe, as many, if not more, D.D.'s in Toronto than the whole Methodist Conference of England can produce. Truly this is a most enlightened age, especially about the capital of Ontario. It would be very interesting at this point to know how these D. D.'s obtained their degree; as a matter of curiosity I should very much like to know from what generous source so much honour flows.

Miss Henrietta Charles obtained considerable distinction at the late University examination and has in consequence been appointed Mathematical Instructor at the Ottawa Ladies' college. At the "Commencement" last week the enthusiasm displayed by the audience and students over the fact of a lady succeeding in such a marked degree was very considerable. The question of the higher education of women must soon become a settled fact. I do not however imagine that women will take a very prominent position at any time in either our colleges or our Universities, for there is a grander and higher education for women beyond the sphere of college life, and altogether outside the degrees of universities, to which every noble woman should look and without which she can never be said to be truly educated. Folly it is, for a sensible woman to be learned in mathematics and classics and social science at the expense of the happiness of "home."

It would be ungenerous to withhold the mead of praise from the "Choral Society," sister to the "Philharmonic Society." The performance last week which was of a miscellaneous character, though by no means as classical as the Philharmonic concerts, was certainly very creditable and Torontonians generally should be extremely proud that there are two such societies in their midst, educating the people to an appreciation of a higher class of music than was dreamed of twelve years ago.

I maintain that the exhibition at the walking tournament, held last week at the Adelaide street Skating Rink, was unseemly and brutal, and the band of trainers and hangers-on remind one of the "rubbus down" at the Derby. What good end is gained by such exhibitions of endurance, except encouraging a lazy habit and miserable means of earning a living? Was it elevating or dignified to hear the spectators' cheers over the pluck of one of the contestants, who travelled in such pain that a doctor in attendance had to inject ether in his knee to make his further locomotion possible? In conjunction with the "higher education of women," include also that of men.

Speaking of the qualifications of the police, a case in point suggests itself. A friend of mine, owning a private boat-house in the city, discovered one morning last summer, while the Chief of Police was taking a two months' holiday at the expense of the city, shooting prairie chicken out west, that his door had been forced, and a pair of oars extracted; he informed a detective of the fact; in two days one of his boats was stolen; he informed the police; the constable at the "station" laughed, and said nothing could be done, and they took no further notice of the complaint. My friend employed himself for a week in examining every boat-house in the city and was ultimately rewarded by recovering the boat. In two weeks two boats and all the oars and other articles were stolen, and this on the Esplanade in broad day. The police would have nothing to do with the affair, the name alone being taken. There have been several daring burglaries lately about town; a private house was entered and the whole family drugged. On a street where the beat of the policeman is a short one and where a night-watch is employed, they entered a warehouse and shattered a safe to atoms with gunpowder, and we will soon think the Chief is somewhat careless of his trust! The police, as a rule, are a fine body of men, and in a city having such a reputation for decency and order as Toronto, there should be no difficulty in keeping the peace and protecting property, but such is very far from being the case. It is no wonder that the more timorous are alarmed and feel themselves unsafe at night.

Queen City.