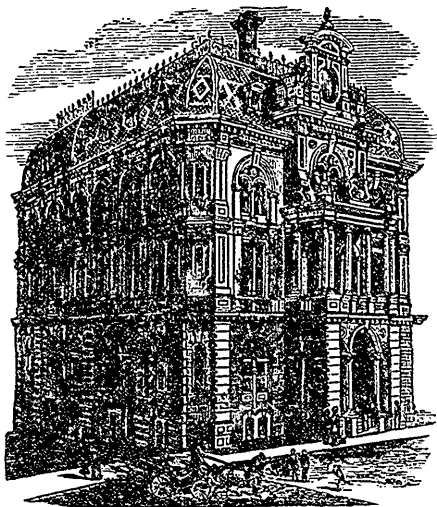


In the year 1795 Governor Simcoe removed from Newark (Niagara), the first capital of Upper Canada, to York, which he had selected as the seat of government before a single house was erected in the latter place. He lodged temporarily in a canvas tent or pavilion, pitched on the plateau overlooking the western end of the bay. It is a matter of historic interest that this tent had been originally constructed for the distinguished navigator, Captain James Cook, and was by him used in his explorations. In 1797 the provincial legislature of Upper Canada was opened in a wooden building near the river Don, whose site is still commemorated by the name of Parliament Street. Before this event, however, the founder of Toronto was transferred to



CUSTOM HOUSE.

the government of San Domingo. He had employed the King's Rangers to construct the great northern artery of commerce, Yonge Street, leading from the city toward the lake which bears his name, and had projected a comprehensive policy for the establishment of a provincial university and for the development of the resources of the country. On his removal, however, most of these wise schemes either fell through or were indefinitely postponed. Land designed for settlement, especially near the infant capital, was seized by speculators, and the growth and prosperity of the town of York was thereby greatly retarded.

During the disastrous war of 1812-14, York was twice captured by the Americans, and many of its public and private buildings were destroyed by fire. After the war the town experienced a revival of prosperity, and as the seat of government and the principal courts of law became the centre of a somewhat aristocratic society. The unfortunate political disaffection of the