

more willingly recognize it than the Toronto footwear manufacturers.

RAILWAY CHARTER POLICY.

It is a principle pretty clearly defined by the different governments of Canada that a duplication of franchises for constructing railway lines in practically the same territory is inadvisable. To grant the petition of the promoters of the Toronto and Hudson Bay Railway Company would be a violation of this policy. The James Bay Railway Company has been incorporated to build a railway from Toronto to James Bay which covers the only part of the territory through which the proposed municipal line would pass where railway construction is practicable. We are not conversant with the detailed plans of the James Bay Railway Company and do not wish to be taken as advocating their cause. The incorporation of a company to build a railway in Canada is but a preliminary step, which is usually followed by securing financial assistance in foreign money markets. The grant of a second charter for the same purpose must necessarily harass those who have secured the first, in their negotiation in the money market. The question is a broader one than the competition between two financial interests; it involves the general policy of the Government in granting charters for important undertakings in which the public are interested. A company should be incorporated for railway construction only after the Government is convinced that the proposed route is practicable and promoters responsible. When once these questions have been decided in the affirmative, only upon strong reasons should other interests be given a second charter for the same purpose. The act of incorporation limits the time within which the construction of a railway shall be commenced and completed, and the public interest is in this way protected from any unreasonable delay on the part of the holders of the charter.

MATTERS IN MONTREAL.

Having escaped a flood this spring—thanks to the ugly structure along the revetment wall that you were pleased to describe when you were down as "beastly," in appearance, and that some of our citizens condemned as useless and rotten—we are looking with something like eagerness for the spring fleet. It will be, there is some reason to think, a bigger fleet than ever. I mean that the calibre of the steamers will be increased. And this brings one to remark that I am glad you have had with you in Toronto, before your Board of Trade, too, a man that could explain what some of our narrow-minded "plugs" don't seem able to take in, that Montreal is not up-to-date as a sea port. Harling is a clever fellow; something of an enthusiast, too. At least he is full of ideas and ready of talk about what is needed here. Even suppose it is true, as some folks say, that he is simply "talking for Harling"—and the Dominion Line, I don't blame him for that. If he can make this harbor what it ought to be, others will benefit as well as Harling. I hope Toronto will shake off her jealousy of Montreal and help us to get what we need.

The old town continues to move, as an American humorist once said of his country, not so rapidly as some giddy young things might desire, but perceptibly and horizontally. You know the peculiarities of Montreal; how we were laid out at first on a small scale, according to Old World notions. Narrow streets! How often have we had to undergo this reproach. How often have people told us that we were three-fourths French, and the other fourth nowhere. But the other fourth is the fourth, and we should not be the Montreal of to-day if it were not for this broad-minded, up-to-date, Anglo-Saxon back-bone of the community.

Our French friends of la Chambre de Commerce gave a dinner to His Honor, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, the other night. But you will have learned all about that

from the papers. Perhaps I ought to mention some of the improvements of the streets made or in progress. There have been a number of good buildings and good blocks built in the business quarter and more are coming. On St. James Street this is especially noticeable. The London and Lancashire Life Assurance Co., has bought the famous Barron Block, which was burnt down a few months ago, you remember, and are building a block of stores thereon of cut stone, six stories high and basement, which when finished will be fireproof and have all modern improvements. It is not yet an old story that the Standard Life building, handsome as it was, has been enlarged and improvements made in it. The Imperial Bank branch, recently established, occupies the basement and Mr. J. A. Richards, the manager, has fitted up his offices both in front and rear, in a very handsome manner. You may be prepared, of course, to hear, also, that our manufacturers are not behind the age in making their premises what they ought to be, or more nearly so. One of the oldest shoe manufacturing firms of the city, The Ames Holden Company, who have extended their premises and manufacturing departments in the city, are doing a business at the present time of about \$2,000,000 yearly. They have branches in St. John, N.B., Toronto, Winnipeg, Man., Victoria and Vancouver, B.C. In fact, generally speaking, the business of the city almost in every department is in a very satisfactory condition, so far as I can gather about it in my daily rounds.

That was a sad thing happened this day week when Charles D. Hanson, insurance agent, was run over by a street car and had to have a leg amputated. He is, however, reported doing well. Apropos of this accident, The New York Herald of Sunday last, has a full page of illustrations showing how some men save time by doing similar rash things, trying to catch a moving car, etc.

I hear that Mr. C. H. Nelson, one of the Nelson Brothers, fancy goods dealers, of this city and Toronto, has bought Tasse, Wood & Co.'s cigar business here, and what is more, that he intends to run it. We shall hope he may make a "Klondyke" out of it, but he may not.

I noticed your article on the removal of the Grand Trunk Railway offices to Toronto, but hardly think you mean it. Don't imagine for a moment that the company have any intention that way. Your arguments would equally apply to the New York Central, but who would dream of their moving their general offices out of New York, although that city is really only the beginning of their line? These concerns want to stay in the most wealthy and populous centres, and be among the big ocean shippers.

G. O. M.

Montreal, 18th April, 1898.

OTTAWA.

Observations in the course of successive visits, year by year, make it plain that the capital city of the Dominion is developing rapidly. Extensive business blocks and numerous fine private residences have been erected or improved, writes a correspondent, in almost all parts of the city since I was here last. This is especially noticeable on Sparks street and Wellington street, the two principal business thoroughfares of the city, and nearly all are built of cut stone, with fine fronts, plate glass windows, and tasteful ornamentations. In one of these structures is the fine building of Messrs. Butterworth & Co., stove and foundry manufacturers, and general dealers in plumbers' and other hardware goods, which are well displayed on each of the four floors of this large building. The Messrs. Butterworth are an old established firm in Ottawa, having been in business since 1875.

On the corner of Sparks and Metcalf streets is the magnificent block of the C. Ross Co. of which Mr. Charles Magill, head of the Bank of Ottawa, is president. The general manager of this large business is Mr. C. Ross, who has been in business in Ottawa for a number of years. The building has six floors and the frontage is striking. The interior arrangements, also, are all that could be desired, and a great business is done in this dry goods palace.

On the corner of Sparks and Bank streets is the newly-erected building of the Sun Life Insurance Co. The exterior is beautifully ornamented and all modern improvements have been introduced within. Messrs. Mortimer & Co., the stationers, have also been rebuilding and extending their premises, covering some 99 feet frontage. The Massey-Harris Co. have erected new offices and showrooms on the corner of Parks and Kent streets; Mr. W. J. Best, the manager in Ottawa, has the production of this well-known firm displayed on each floor of the new building.