

ing day, and some one had squeezed the 'blue-bag' into the water and daubed all the figures with it."

The Toronto Ratepayers' Association is composed chiefly of men whose principal object in life appears to consist in increasing the value of their property. The sole object of the Ratepayers' Association is to get a dollar or two off their tax-bills. They do not attempt anything positive, they are all for the negative. They have never done anything to make Toronto healthier, cleaner or more pleasant to live in. The Toronto Ratepayers' Association, so far as its individual members are concerned, have often crammed two houses where only one ought to be, but they have never made "two blades of grass grow where only one grew before." For these reasons the organization, which represents a large aggregate of wealth, is not a very important force in municipal questions. It never will be.

There are complaints that the church parade of last Sunday was, in some respects, not well organized. Some of the regiments were waiting for others on King street for a quarter of an hour; the admission of visitors to the galleries was not well arranged, so that rude women pushed their way in among the soldiers, and the officers on the platform were placed in detached sections instead of being symmetrically massed. A military function of that kind should be absolutely perfect in its attention to detail.

Close to a street corner on one of our busiest thoroughfares I noticed the other day an unfortunate exile. He has only been out a short while and is not yet accustomed to his surroundings. Like many other exiles he has apparently arrived at the conclusion that there is no use for him in this country, and he seems to look out upon the hurrying throng through his one eye, with its square pupil, in a desolate and hopeless manner. It must be bitter to him to look down the street at the stove store with its new fangled implements of cookery, and to remember the time when he was an honoured and indispensable member of an English household. He is only a brass roasting jack, hung as a curiosity in a shop window, a thing that few Canadians know the use of, and his eye is only a hole through which his internal economy is regulated, but he is a type in his way of many that come out to this country to a new set of circumstances and new surroundings to which they are helplessly unable to adapt themselves.

What memories of home that old brass jack awakened. I closed my eyes and I was no longer in a crowded Canadian street, but in an old fashioned English kitchen wide and deep, and floored with great flags of sandstone, where the hams and sides of bacon hung from the rafters and tiers of polished tin and copper pots and great dish covers gleamed against the walls. There was a mighty fire of soft coal in the large open range, and before it my old friend the jack or his twin brother revolved slowly bearing a princely joint and which the fat cook, red-armed and perspiring, occasionally basted with large spoonfuls of gravy from the dripping pan. There was the sound of a robin red-breast singing his merry song in the holly outside, as I had often heard it, and the musical clink clink of the housemaid's pattens as she phed mop and pail in the stone flagged passage. A man passing uttered a blasphemy of such a purely transatlantic character that I opened my eyes again. The robin's song resolved itself into a street hawker blowing a little warbler, and the sound of the pattens was nothing but the ringing of a pair of iron-shod boot heels on the granolithic sidewalk. So the vision passed, and I went my way. DIOGENES.

The Latest News From Paris.

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

EXCEPT among perhaps the officious journals, there is no delight and but little interest taken in the alliance of Russia, France and Germany, to make the Japs stand and deliver the fruits of their victory, in what end, save to give Russia more territory, is not visible to the naked eye. The attitude of Germany is viewed with more and more suspicion. What is the "move" that she requires, beyond what she always demanded, unprivileged trading for all? Is

Bismarck setting any new trap for France? With half Germany—and that the people moiety—hear it, O France!—are dead against crushing Japan, and the power of the Socialist. Germany will be slow to spend money in any wild cat venture in the Far East, with England, too, out of the "swim." Russia may commit herself to deeds that will rapidly involve Europe in war, when Japan will have the Far East game all in her own hands. She, too, has her "Alsace" to recover in the island of Saghalien, the Russian wrung from her in her unmodern days. I do not think Frenchmen are in any hurry to see a continental conflagration to keep Japan out of Port Arthur, and no one knows what may be England's rôle if she be compelled to accept allies in Japan and China. Every nation seeks useful friends. The bugbear of the Asiatics swinging round by St. Petersburg to Berlin, Paris and London, only passes for a joke. Up till now, Russia was accepted as the bugbear, the octopus, of Europe. There is no reason to doubt but that the Japs know what they are about and can appreciate the full value of the triple alliance—made to force down their expansion. Then, they have the invaluable habit of keeping their intentions to themselves. They have plenty of money, no national debt; are concentrated on their own health, and can buy iron-clads and cruisers. Their friendship and their power will be sought, and such are matters no Western nation can afford to despise. If Russia be involved in war, the Japs will remember their Alsace, and will take a peep into Vladivostock. It is on Bismarck the French keep their eye—and that shows their sagacity.

The decisive action of England in Nicaragua, by the landing of troops at Port Corinto, and undertaking to pay herself out of the custom receipts, and her independence to hold aloof and not to draw the chestnuts out of the fire for the benefit of Russia in the far East, are incidents viewed as showing she intends henceforth to act and to speak less. The politics of the world will be all the better for her adopting a spirited foreign policy. Nothing can be worse than a nation that does not know its own mind—like poor Dundreary's tumbler pigeons. She is on the winning side of the future, in seeking extensions for her trade, while leaving to others to do "land-grab." At the same time she must never let it become a legend that she is averse to fighting—that would at once place her in the lowest rank of nineteenth century civilization. She must arm up.

The social aspect of the French railway system is at the present moment worthy of profound study. The Congress of the Syndicate of Railway Servants has concluded its sittings and resolved to liberally invest the funds in the purchase of shares in the companies that employ them! That will give the several syndicates the right to assist at the re-unions of the shareholders. But that right, which is perfectly legal, is not intended to enable the employees to see for themselves the difficulties of administration, and to help by loyal inquiry and experienced suggestions to better what may need mending. No; the Congress has let the cat out of the bag: they want the shares to be able to keep the company in hot water; to have a sort of whip hand over their superior officers, till the moment of the general strike arrives—fixed for 1900 according to many—and then they will be able to dictate their own conditions; become, in a word, masters and not servants. The struggle is then for victory. The latter is not yet within measurable distance—and any interregnum strikes will be newer miseries.

The servants of the Paris and Orleans Railway Company and its branches keep aloof from the Congress of Syndicates. Why? Because they have no grievances to redress; hence, there are no strikes. From directors down to the porters all are a united family, where each knows his professional place, sees his position respected and himself esteemed. The Paris-Orleans company has just had its annual banquet and is a fitting vis-a-vis to the Congress of Syndicates. The "director" of the company presided, and the *chefs* of the several services and sections of the administration assisted and presided at the tables of their own men. Representatives of the latter delivered speeches; they declared they had no grievances; the company only desired to know if anything were wrong in order to correct it, if anything objectionable to be able to better it. Long before socialists and Governments had taken up the questions of old age pensions, compensations for accidents, sick relief, etc., the company had resolved them, and acted upon them, to the satisfaction of