

ment of a modern idea, taking shape as an invention, it is doubtful whether the progress of the bicycle is not without a parallel, especially when its effects upon the habits of large classes of people are taken into the account. We recall its first appearance in the City, when once in a while a venturesome boy or young man would appear perched aloft upon the rim of a big wheel which the rider would propel more or less rapidly, while a caudal attachment, in the shape of another wheel, whose diminutive proportions were in striking contrast with those of its leader, and whose frantic efforts to keep the pace gave us an almost painful sensation of unfairness and incongruity. Who would have expected at that time to see the day when men of age and dignity, tradesmen, professional men, even clergymen, would be found astride the new-fangled steed, now reduced to fair proportions, with balanced wheels moving steadily and gracefully. And even after it had become apparent that the novel mode of swift locomotion would become very popular with men, who would have predicted that women, too, would make the venturesome mount and quickly rival their compeers of the other sex in the grace and speed with which they would skim over the smooth pavements. And all this development sprang, we might say, from someone's happy device of getting rid of one or two superfluous wheels! The new machine has already wrought a marvellous revolution in the habits and, by consequence, in the health of many. With the aid of its companion novelty, the electric car, it seems to have come with a mission to shake the men and women of study or business or leisure out of the indoor, sedentary habits which threatened to destroy the health and vigour of the race, and to lure them again into the open highways, the fields, and the woods, there to renew the acquaintance with nature which was characteristic of former days and to find in her companionship the diversion, the solace, and the cheer which are her own correctives for many of the miseries of city life. What shall be the future of these aids to locomotion when their possibilities shall have been fully wrought out, or what other innovations shall come with new inventions as yet unthought of to break down the barriers between city and country, who can tell?

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The Toronto Bond Muddle.

THE citizens of Toronto who seem to be entirely satisfied with the action of the City Treasurer and Alderman Shaw respecting the issue of the City Bonds are Alderman Shaw and the City Treasurer. From the arrival of these gentlemen in London last year and their pilgrimage to Edinburgh immediately afterwards all the transactions connected with this important business have been of a very unconventional nature to say the least. The spectacle of the City Treasurer rushing off to Edinburgh the other day within an hour or two after a small and feeble majority of the Aldermen sanctioned the journey, and when the Mayor and the men of weight and understanding in the Council strongly protested against this second visit and against the whole method of procedure persisted in by Mr. Coady and his coadjutor, Mr. Shaw, is a spectacle eloquent of all that is undignified and ridiculous. When Mr. Coady first went to England to sell the \$1,224,500 worth of three and a half per cent. bonds he visited the correspondents of some of the leading banks of the Dominion, to whom he had been afforded introductions, and gave these great banking houses to understand that they would have the chance of tendering for the bonds. He then proceeded to Edinburgh and began negotiations with Messrs. Paulin, Sorley & Co., negotiations which ended in nothing better than a very intangible kind of under-

standing to the effect that if the city would raise the percentage on the bonds by one-half per cent. they would offer such and such terms, and in the meantime lend at two per cent. any sum that might be required. Mr. Coady then returned to Toronto without communicating with the London houses and without giving them a chance to tender. Immediately on his arrival the Bank of Commerce put in a tender; but for reasons best known to the City Treasurer and his confrères, this tender was never opened. It is generally understood that the terms of the Bank of Commerce tender were exceedingly good and were jointly offered by the bank and its London correspondents. On Mr. Shaw calling for public tenders, the well-known banker of Montreal, Mr. R. Wilson Smith, put in a tender the terms of which were better even than those offered by the Bank of Commerce and its friends. But it was evident from the scant courtesy shown him and the way his tender was treated that he might, in common with the Bank of Commerce, have spared himself the trouble of making an offer for the bonds.

The pretence that the city's honour necessitates the carrying out of the scheme suggested by the Scotch brokers, a scheme into which the City Treasurer and Ald. Shaw had no authority whatever to enter, is a pretence which, as *The Globe* remarks, is "highly overstrained." We have no patience with this private bargaining business nor with vague understandings and schemes, the terms of which are too intangible to have any material existence. If the Scotch firm really offered to lend the city what money it required to go on with the public works at two per cent., why was the offer not accepted? Because they would not keep to the terms of this "understanding"? If one part of the scheme can be ignored with impunity why not the whole? We presume that Mr. Coady is subject to the instructions of the Council, though one would judge otherwise from the highhanded way he has proceeded in this matter. The Council should act promptly and prevent any more of this hole-and-corner way of managing the city's finances. Notice should be given both here and in England that tenders for the loan will be received and that these tenders must conform to the prescribed conditions. If the loan is taken up by local institutions, so much the better for the country. Moreover, the bonds do not require to be offered in London or Edinburgh to insure English and Scotch houses tendering for them. They will bid quite as keenly here as in Great Britain. The city does not want its bonds sold at a higher rate than they are worth.

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Pole Star or Maple Leaf?

THE WEEK comes to hand enveloped in the folds not of "the old flag" but of the new flag which, in an article therein, Dr. Sanford Fleming suggests be adopted by the Dominion. THE WEEK is to be commended on its enterprise. The flag proposed is a pretty one, but there will perhaps be some difference of opinion as to whether it is the most appropriate possible. An improvement on the Zoological Garden arrangement stuck on the fly of the British ensign which now does duty as the national ensign, though entirely unauthorized as such, is much needed. It is unartistic, without precedent and not easily distinguishable; and, moreover, when Alberta and the other possible Provinces are admitted to the Dominion and have quarterings upon it, the heraldic device will be so complicated as to be practically unrecognizable on bunting. What is proposed by Dr. Fleming in substitution is the British red ensign with a white star on the fly, the star to have as many points as there may be Provinces in Confederation. To the *Tribune*, another suggestion which has been previously mooted, that the Maple Leaf should occupy the place proposed to be given the star by Dr. Fleming, appears much more appropriate. The star savours too much of the "Stars and Stripes" of our Southern neighbours. We do not want a weak imitation of Yankeeism as our national emblem.—*Alberta Tribune*.