

lish free libraries in Baltimore, George Peabody donated \$1,400,000; the Astors gave \$700,000 for New York, and Walter N. Newberry left \$2,000,000 for a similar purpose in Chicago. Philadelphia received from Dr. James Rush \$1,000,000 to maintain a library, and Asa Packer left, by will, \$500,000 to the library of Lehigh University. These are large sums from large-hearted and long-pursed men. Let our men of means do their proportion. Never before was there such a chance to live in the hearts and memories of their countrymen as now offers, and though the city may, and undoubtedly will, establish a library, yet something more than the proceeds of a fractional assessment will be required to put our city in the same grade that cities of a like size and importance occupy in other countries.

#### A PRACTICAL SCHEME FOR TORONTO.

Coming down to figures, we propose to ask the Government to pass a Permissive Act empowering municipalities to assess, as a maximum, half a mill on the \$ for library purposes. Such an appropriation would give us a start, and if supplemented by private donations the year 1882 will see this desirable boon an accomplished fact in Toronto. Thereafter, and within five years, I venture to say that every city in Canada will boast of its free library affording full access to the "heritage of the ages"—works on mechanics, applied sciences, and the endless benefits resulting from the "art preservative." There are two feasible methods of establishing a library from municipal funds. One plan—advanced by my colleague in the Council, Alderman Hallam—is to forestall and fund a portion of the rate so as to erect handsome and suitable buildings at once and fill (or partially fill) them with say 60,000 or 80,000 volumes the first year. The other plan would be to commence on a more moderate scale and spend the money in books, etc., as it is granted. Either way would secure a grand result for any corporation availing itself of the Act. I would advocate such an establishment that the maintenance thereof would not exceed \$5000 a year for Librarian, Assistants, Caretaker, gas, &c., so that the purchase account for new books, periodicals and newspapers may be as large as possible. Once it is a *fact accompli*, the substantial donations already promised by wealthy and generous citizens can be accepted, and we will have an institution to which we can point with pride—a pride all the more pardonable because it will be the pioneer free library in Canada. We must not stop at books, however, valuable as they are, but see to it that a comfortable and well-supplied reading-room is attached, where the scientific and illustrated journals now so indispensable to the progressive artisan, may be consulted. It is through such periodicals that the triumphs of the inventor reach the eye and ear of the waiting public, in the same way that the master thinkers of the day reach their audience through the magazines. Magazine literature is confessedly the most brilliant writing of the present generation, yet how many thousands of our citizens never read one? Simply because our city has never provided the facilities elsewhere to be had. Moreover, in the near future

#### A CITY MUSEUM

will be added, and it will astonish the antedeluvian hard-heads amongst us to see how rapidly a collection will grow, even by voluntary gifts of curiosities, coins, etc., There are now objects of interest in scores of houses in the city and neighbourhood ready for contribution to a free library and museum so soon as it may be established.

Should any timid ratepayer fancy he can see in this movement civic ruin, let us see what it amounts to. Take the case of a small householder, assessed say at \$500. The annual charge to such a man would be 25c.—the cost of one dinner at a farmer's hotel! Hence it can be no burden to the poor man, and the rich man will surely not betray his ignorance by raising his voice or his vote against it.

JOHN TAYLOR.

TORONTO, October 25th, 1881.