

## THE UGLIFICATION OF OTTAWA AND QUEBEC.

We hear a great deal of talk about the beautification of Ottawa, but to an old inhabitant of Ottawa, visiting it again recently, after some years of absence, the first impression is that the general beauty of Ottawa is less than it was. It has received irrecoverable injury from the entrance of the C. P. R. into the middle of the city from across the river. Formerly the view from the bridges over the canal was agreeable on the side of the "deep cut;" and, on the side towards the river, there was a view which would be a possession for any city; looking down the wide descending ravine with eight locks connecting the canal with the river; a high bluff on each side; the Parliament Buildings on one, the trees of Major's Hill on the other; the wide river at the bottom, and, beyond, the range of hills on the Gatineau. Here was a noble composition which though viewed from the very centre of a city had no note of the ugly necessities of city life. A saw mill on the opposite side of the river had pictorial value as a distant object. The descending locks were picturesque in themselves and interesting as a spectacle when in operation. The ravine, with the locks running down the bottom as a central object, was a natural composition. But all that is changed. On one side the ravine is ledged to let the C.P.R. come in from across the river. The ravine, the fore ground of the view, is thus ruined for ever, and a large cantilever railroad bridge dominates the whole scene, crossing the river in the middle of the view. We have been trying hard for a generation to acquire a taste for iron as an architectural material; but it is of no use. Iron is not an architectural material. Whatever it may turn out to be as a material for use in concealed construction, as a visible object there is no doubt about its objectionableness. Iron is ugly, and an iron bridge is an ugly object. Its only merit is size, which puts it out of scale with the rest of the landscape. All this change—drawing ugliness across the scene on one side of the bridges, and making a shunting yard of the old canal basin on the other—is in order that a railway, that has already entered the city not far from the centre, may have a new entry and another station. Whatever the convenience of the present station, it is not enough to make up for the disadvantage of its position. There is always a precisely right way of doing everything. It requires only two conditions—thought, which people are sometimes willing to give, and money which they cannot always find. But in a case concerning the beauty of Ottawa, somebody ought to have supplied the thought; and, if a station in another spot—a Union Station avoiding all the inconvenience of the present double arrangement, cost more money—which is doubtful—there would be no great hardship in requiring the C. P. R. to spend it.

Both thought and money are being spent now in beautifying Ottawa by details. The details may be beautiful when one gets to them, but the one point where everybody gets to every day was beautiful enough if it had been merely preserved from ugliness, and that was been allowed to invade it.

Another railway is threatening Quebec. The C. P. R. got in its work there too, in getting for its hotel a site that impinges upon Durham Terrace, if it does not actually invade its area. By great good fortune the hotel building is not amiss. Its scale is a little over-

powering for the Cape, but scale is increasing all over the town and whatever the total effect may be, the size of the hotel is likely to be balanced. It may also be said with truth that the great view from Durham Terrace gives pleasure to more eyes and does more good to Quebec when the Terrace site is occupied by an hotel than if it were occupied by a public building. But this is a happy accident. These benevolent purposes are not likely to have directly actuated the C. P. R. in getting possession of the site nor of the party—the party in power—who gave it to them. The public needs to beware of the railways. Their service is necessary but it is not necessary that they should be our masters. They are concerned only with making money. The amenities are nothing to them; and, when they are taking steps to destroy beauty in order to save themselves money, they do not first lay the matter before the public who value beauty. They lay the matter before some one who will get it "through" for them with the least disturbance, and, before the public know anything about it, the thing is settled beyond recall.

It is probably news to most of our readers that the Champlain Market at Quebec, the foreground of the view from Durham Terrace, (or Dufferin Terrace as it seems to be all called now,) is doomed, in order to serve the purposes of the Grand Trunk Pacific. That railway will have its station right under the terrace; and instead of the Champlain Market—a respectable building, in the right scale, sufficiently imposing without attracting too much attention to itself—we are to have a passenger station which is sure to be big and must be either truthfully ugly or falsely and painfully fine; and, seen from above as it will be, will probably show up as both ugly and false. But the building is only an item in the change. The exchange from the human interest of the market to the ugliness and noise of a train yard is painful to think of. Who will want to hang over the railways of the terrace when this substitution is made? It will be no more all delightful. The distant view will remain, but one will shrink back from the edge to look at it and try to forget the existence of the railway.

Is this necessary for the prosperity of Quebec? Not a bit. The prosperity of Quebec is bound to come with the increase of the tonnage of steamers, which makes it difficult for them to go up to Montreal. When commerce was carried on by sailing vessels, which could not get further than Quebec without the aid of steam tugs, Quebec was an active port. With the increase of steam and the decrease of sailing vessels its importance declined, until now, as a port, it is almost dead. But its turn is coming again. Already the large C. P. R. steamers have to make Quebec their terminus. The Grand Trunk Pacific is building the biggest steel bridge in the world in order to get there in time for the trade; and it would get there all the same if it had been forced to go round behind the town and enter at St. Roch's. There are docks there and room for more, so that it could do some of its freighting business there as well as the delivery of passengers—which is all this article is intended to advocate. For passengers, the hills on this side of the town are far the more convenient for coming and going to a station. Mountain Hill is too steep for a loaded cab. It would be really less strain upon a horse, drawing a load from Champlain Market, to go round to Palace Hill. Ocean