

struction of the very valuable national library—caused it to be abandoned also. Then was attempted that most remarkable system of alternately transacting the business of the country in Quebec and Toronto, resolved upon in order to conciliate the friends of Mr. Baldwin in Upper Canada and Mr. Lafontaine in Lower Canada, which prevailed for several years. It was found, however,—it could not very well but be found—that the frequent removal of all the paraphernalia of Government from one city to the other, was so expensive to the country and so inconvenient to the public service, that the choice of a permanent capital was absolutely necessary. There can be no doubt whatever, had the Legislature itself then settled the question, that a majority would have voted for Montreal. Ottawa was not even thought of. The choice, it was supposed, lay between Quebec, Montreal, and Toronto. As Confederation was then mooted, but looking simply to a union of old Canada with the Maritime Provinces, the people of Quebec seemed to think their city, being the principal fortress of British North America, would have been the most suitable place, and they were quite confident it would ultimately be so decided. The Legislature, however, referred the matter to the Queen, and Her Majesty, upon the representations of Sir Edmund Head, fixed upon Ottawa as the site. It was upon this question, it will be remembered, and upon a resolution moved by Mr. Dorion—"that Ottawa be not the Capital"—in amendment to the motion to confirm the choice, that Mr. Brown's two day's Premiership occurred. The "royal will" in the end became the will of Parliament. It is said the Duke of Newcastle, who shortly afterwards visited the country, expressed his astonishment at the selection, and his decided preference for Montreal. The choice of Ottawa he considered a bad one, and he compared the action of the

people of Canada, in removing the seat of Government thither, to that of a nobleman who would desert his mansion in order to occupy as a residence some out-building in his back yard. There was at the time "more truth than poetry" in the comparison. However, one Duke is "as good as another—and perhaps better;" and it is only fair, since the adverse opinion of one has been quoted, that it should be met with the favorable opinion of another. Mr. Charles Roger, F. R. A. S., in his *Ottawa—Past and Present* (1870), tells us that the site of the city was "pointed out by the 'most sagacious man in Europe' (as Lord Brougham styled him)—Arthur, Duke of Wellington—as the most fitting place to become the seat of Government, not for Canada only, but for British North America." "Few persons would have believed," says Mr. Charles Pope, in his *Incidents of Ottawa*, "that the present capital would have been so favored as it has been. When the question of placing the seat of Government at Ottawa was first brought up in Parliament, the spectators in the gallery will remember the speech of a Canadian statesman, who said, 'I tell you candidly, gentlemen, you might as well send the seat of Government to Labrador.' Yet, strange to say, there were not wanting those who, as far back as 1827, predicted that it would be what it is to-day. Sir John Franklin and Colonel By were the prognosticators."

To the construction of the Rideau Canal, as has been said, Ottawa owed its foundation; but, as is always the case with respect to the promiscuous crowd brought together by a great public work, the population for many years afterwards was not remarkable for the respect it paid to the laws of either moral or social order. The "Shiners," as they were called, for a long time made Ottawa a not over-desirable place to live in. Just as if to redeem themselves in the nick of time, however, and to