

OTTAWA.

OTTAWA, CANADA WEST.

THE notoriety which this city, in embryo, has received lately, first as being fixed upon as the seat of government for Canada, and then decided against as such by the provincial legislature,—although it had been acquiesced in by Her Majesty as the most advisable locality—has invested it with a significance which, otherwise, it would not, in all probability, have obtained.

Ottawa is the new name given to the town of Bytown, by which it has long been known, as the centre of the immense lumber district of the River Ottawa. It is situated on that river, where the Rivers Rideau and Gatineau, and the Rideau Canal, all meet.

The town is intersected by the Rideau Canal and bridge, and forms three districts, viz.: that of Lower Town, on the east; Central Town, on the west; and Upper Town, on the north-west; all of which, however, are on the south side of the River Ottawa, and in Canada West, the River Ottawa, as is well known, forming the boundary line between Canada East and Canada West. The town was laid out under the command of Colonel By of the Royal Engineers, who constructed, also, the Rideau Canal. Hence the original name of the town being called Bytown—although now called Ottawa, after the magnificent river on which it stands.

The streets are all wide and regularly laid out, and, so far, reflects great credit on the engineering skill employed. Lower Town is the most important portion of the town, and, in all probability, will become the chief business part, as the population and business increases. The two principal streets of Lower Town are Rideau street and Sussex street. In Rideau street there are several substantial, stone-built stores and dwellings. In Sussex street there are also a few; the majority, however, are wooden erections, both old and new. In Central Town the buildings are almost all of stone, presenting one excellent street, called Spark street; whilst Upper Town exhibits a mixture of both stone and wooden buildings in its Wellington street. All the buildings in the town are exceedingly plain, but substantially built, and, being built of gray limestone, resemble very much in appearance some of the streets of Montreal, as well as in the granite city of Aberdeen (Scotland). On "Barrack Hill," the highest elevation of the town, are situated what are termed the government buildings—the remains, however, we should say, rather than of actual buildings. There are a few small out-houses and offices—which certainly do not deserve the name of government buildings—with sundry small cannon, taking their ease on the ground alongside of carriages, which have evidently seen service of some sort. These are the "dogs of war," which are intended, we presume, to protect the town against all invaders. On Barrack Hill is, however, also the residence of the chief military authority of the place. The "location" of these buildings and the "gun battery" alluded to, is certainly one of the finest we have seen any where, either in Canada or the United States—equal, in some respects, even to the famous citadel of Quebec. In the rear is Central Town, whilst Upper and Lower Town are completely commanded by it on each side, whilst in front is a precipitous embankment running down, almost perpendicular, to the river, several hundred feet, thus completely sweeping the river and opposite shore, north, east, and west; so that, in a military point of view, Ottawa certainly occupies one of the finest natural positions any where in Canada; and, in that respect, is the key to an immense territory of back country, valuable for its wood and minerals.

The stranger, on visiting Ottawa for the first time, is apt to be disappointed that he does not find a larger "city," and one more advanced, in many respects; but it must be recollected that it has been forced into public notice from the cause we have already alluded to, and obtained a publicity, with which parties at a distance are apt to connect wrong or exaggerated ideas; and if the town is not larger than it is, the fault rests as much in the imaginations of individuals, as with the inhabitants, generally, of the town itself, who, in the short time, since Bytown became a place of note, have been doing their utmost to make it "go a-head." In the desire to do so, however, some of the landholders there, we fear, by putting very high prices on their lots, and landlords refusing to give