

# THE CIVILIAN

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*Centre Block of Parliament Buildings as it appeared before the fire.*

## A National Loss.

Until the evening of February 3rd, 1916, there stood on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, a magnificent structure, the central dominating building of all those which for a half century have been the home of Canadian federal legislators. There was no more beautiful example of architecture among the public buildings of this continent, and there it promised to stand, a sacred and magnificent edifice for centuries to come.

The House was in session, and apparently all was well, when the dread cry of "Fire" caused immediate pandemonium and was signal for the beginning of the end, and now the commoners—glad to have escaped with their lives, except one—meeting in a modern building, large, but without beauty or historic associations, for Canada's business must go on, mourn for that which is gone,—for the one of themselves who lost his life, the ancient historic mace destroyed, and the assistant clerk of the house among the dead.

In this temporary home they met with all the dignity of the occasion the next day, saddened by the realization of the calamity that had befallen, and Premier and ex-Premier united in tributes of condolence to those who had been bereaved and in touching reference to the stately buildings which had been their home for so many years.

It was also the office home of many civil servants and some of them lost