

of Ottawa, the original estimate was \$300,000, while the outlay upon the buildings in their present form has been over \$5,000,000,—clearly showing that Canadians are not a whit less enterprising than their republican neighbors when they get a fair opportunity.

The buildings stand well back from the street, forming three sides of a spacious square, which is laid out in velvet sward intersected by broad paths and drives, and dotted over with brilliant beds of fragrant flowers. The Houses of Parliament occupy an ample terrace, raising them well above the level of the other blocks and throwing their stately proportions out into bold relief. They are built principally of a cream-colored sand-stone found in the vicinity, which affords an appropriate setting for the warm red Potsdam and Ohio freestone wherewith the windows, doors and corners are adorned. To view this edifice aright you must stand on Major's Hill on some glorious summer evening when the swiftly sinking sun invests it with a halo of mingled gold and fire. Then, as one by one the dainty towers, pinnacles and buttresses fade softly, the "symphony in red" becomes a "harmony in gray," and so remains until the rising moon converts it to a "nocturne in silver and gold."

Capacious as the Eastern and Western departmental buildings seemed, they were not long in proving inadequate to the needs of the rapidly growing government service; and in 1893, what is called the Langevin Block was built on Wellington Street, facing Parliament Square, at a cost of three-quarters of a million dollars. Within these three blocks and several other buildings near at hand are housed the different departments of the Civil Service, numbering twenty in all, and including over two thousand officials, from deputy ministers down to junior messengers. As will be readily understood, the Civil Service constitutes a very important element in the city's population from both the economic and the social point of view. The salaries paid its members are moderate enough, the very highest being \$6,000 per annum, and the figures

ranging from that down to \$300 per annum; but in Ottawa rents are reasonable, food cheap, and education practically free, so that officials with a turn for thrift can get along very comfortably.

The sessions of Parliament usually begin in February or March and last three or four months. During this period Ottawa is at her best, and richly rewards those who then pay her a visit. Decked in the snow-white garb of winter, her stately buildings and innumerable cosy homes of warm red brick present a most attractive picture, while the surging tide of life that animates her streets, and fills to overflowing her commodious hotels gives one a vivid impression of her importance. From Nova Scotia to British Columbia the bustling members of the Commons and their potent, grave and reverend seniors, the Senators, have come together, and the intense feverish body-mind-and-soul-exhausting life of the session is in full swing once more. Then are the Parliament Buildings thronged with pompous politicians, sagacious statesmen, wily wire-pullers, pertinacious lobbyists and all that miscellaneous multitude of interested individuals who bear much the same relation to legislative assemblies that camp followers bear to an army.

After many years languishing in the cold shades of opposition the Liberal party at last succeeded in gaining power in July, 1896, and are still enjoying the sweets of office. Their leader, Sir Wilfred Laurier, than whom no finer type of French-Canadian has appeared in public life, is the first of his race to attain the Premiership since Confederation.

Associated with him in the conduct of affairs are the best and strongest Liberals the different provinces could supply, such as Sir William Mulock and Sir Richard Cartwright, Messrs. Paterson and Sutherland from Ontario; Fisher and Prefontaine from Quebec; Fielding and Sir Frederick Borden from Nova Scotia; Sifton from Manitoba, and Templeman from British Columbia.

The Opposition is led by Mr. R. L. Borden, of Nova Scotia, an exceedingly able