

The Ottawa Improvement Commission Has Done Good Work Along the Rideau Canal.



One of the Commission's Parks, and it is Certainly Attractive and Health-giving.

## Would Make Ottawa a Federal District

*Why the Dominion Capital Seeks Separation from Ontario*

By WILLIAM FINDLAY

OTTAWA people—a big majority of them—want their city and surrounding territory raised to the dignity of a federal district. Bytown has become Ottawa, and now as the capital of the country, Ottawa seeks a status somewhere between that of a simple Ontario municipality and of a province of the Dominion.

To meet special conditions at Federal headquarters, Ottawa is seeking separation from the Province of Ontario, and government by commissioners partly elected and partly appointed by the Federal authorities. It is desired to continue the representation of the district in the House of Commons. Such was the purport of a plebiscite carried by a large majority on New Year's day.

But why should Ottawa's municipal problems concern the rest of the Dominion? For one reason, because the people of Canada are large property owners in the capital city; for another, because they send a dele-

gation of precious senators and members of the House of Commons, besides numerous lobbyists, to Ottawa for six months more or less, in each year. They are therefore concerned in such domestic matters as water and sewage, in fire protection of their buildings and invaluable records, and in the improvement and maintenance of the city generally. But why should Ottawa be allowed to break loose from the Province of Ontario, where nature and the Confederation fathers placed her, and assume a position akin to that of one of the nine provinces? First, they say down in Ottawa, because the national capital should be a national asset. It should not belong to one province more than to another. Second, because the Federal authorities should be supreme at the headquarters of the Federal government. It is surely an anachronism that the very buildings in which the country's laws are made and enacted should be subject to civic authority and to the laws of a lesser state. Yet such is the case. Here are some words of the Prime Minister in the House of Commons the other day:

"It has also been held by the judicial committee of the privy council that a provincial legislature has authority as plenary and as ample within the limits prescribed by section 92 (of the British North America Act) as the Imperial Parliament in the plenitude of its power possessed and could bestow. Within these limits of subject and area the provincial legislature is supreme, and its jurisdiction exclusive."

The proper laying out of the nation's capital on lines of utility and art is surely a matter of concern to the whole people. To say that, in Ottawa, this has not received the attention it deserves, is but to state a truth. The men who built the three gothic piles on the crest overlooking the Ottawa River, planned big for fifty-five years ago. They were at least as far-seeing as that later generation of statesmen, or politicians, or whatever you like to call them, who planted a huge red factory building in a national park, and used it for a printing office, or as those successors of theirs who at a still later date set out to build a \$7,000,000 executive block in rear of an hotel and a department store.

A little of the modern town-planning and a few hundred thousand dollars spent at confederation, would have placed at the disposal of the government, property which is urgently required to-day and which it will, perhaps, take millions to buy.

Proper accommodation for executive offices is lacking; it has been for years. The situation gets more acute with each development of the departmental business. In making provision for these extensions, and for the consequent change in the topography which they entail, the closest and most harmonious relations between the city and the government are desirable.

The capitals of all federated countries are located in Federal districts. The most familiar example is the district of Columbia. And yet conditions at the capital of the United States are not similar to what is proposed here. There, the franchise has been entirely given over. The governing commission is appointed by the national executive. There is no representation in Congress.

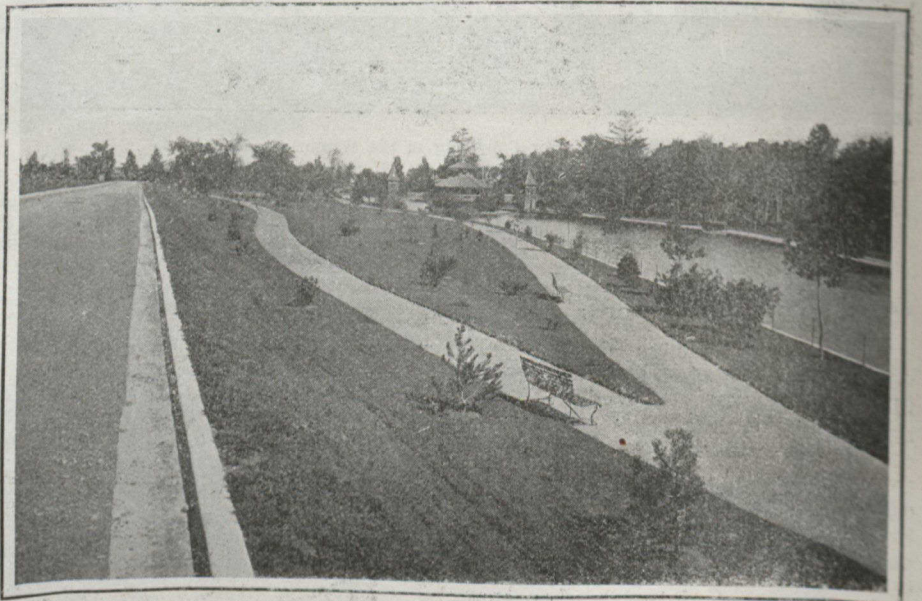
The capitals of Ger-

many, Mexico, Brazil and the Argentine are located in Federal districts, where the national government takes a direct hand in domestic affairs, and also contributes to the civil services.

In the South African confederation the question is already being considered. The Australian Commonwealth has set aside 900 square miles in New South Wales for a Federal district. In addition to the legislative and executive buildings, it will construct and operate the usual public utilities such as water service, gas and electric lights, street cars



Suburban Line From Ottawa to Britannia.



The Straight Roadway is Here Relieved by the Long Sweeping Curves of the Paths Which Divide the Boulevard.



Tree-bordered Streets Are Common in Canadian Cities, but Ottawa Residential Avenues Are Unexcelled Anywhere.