

PARLIAMENT HILL.

"Right in the midst a hill fit throne for rule,
And crowning this were stately structures, towers
And domes and gothic arches, quaint with rich
Device of ornament."

"Eos; an Epic of the Dawn."

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.



O avoid disappointment, do not expect too much. This sketch is not intended as a review of Ottawa City. It will not contain even all that the writer knows about the subject; and what

he does not know would fill several large volumes. Its object is to call attention to a few of the places in Ottawa—ore in particular—of whose artistic merits so much has been said and sung.

The glory—the heart—of Ottawa, is the block of buildings erected on a bold bluff, which safeguards the city from the river. They are blessed with a site peculiarly happy, resting on a grand eminence falling almost precipitously to the water, covering an area of about four acres. They form three sides of a quadrangle, which is laid down in plats of grass, plants and flowers, crossed with broad paths. Towering above this square on either side, are Canada's National Buildings for the accommodation of Parliament and the Civil Service. Their erection was begun in 1859, the first stone being laid by the Prince of Wales in 1860, and completed at a cost of \$5,000,000, and in their offices 1400 public officials draw \$1,400,000 yearly for their services. The first session of Parliament was held on the 8th June, 1866, memorable as the time of the Fenian invasion. This permanent seat of Government was selected by Her Majesty in 1857, and in 1867 it became the Capital of Canada. On the 1st July, 1867, the confederation of the chief provinces of British North America was effectuated with a brilliant celebration, and the spirit that prompted that commemorative cere-

mony has since lived to honour the recurring anniversary of the greatest day in our history.

From whatever point Ottawa is approached the Buildings stand out against a cloudless sky in all their magnificent proportions and varied architecture. Lowell aptly describes them when he says: "Their splendour, their fine commanding site, together with the beauty of the surrounding scenery, place them in a very enviable position compared with other structures used for similar purposes, and must ever be objects of interest to the tourist and stranger, and pride to the people of Canada."

In all they number four: the Parliament House, the Eastern and Western Departmental Buildings, and the Langevin Block. The three first structures are on the "hill," the last stands on Wellington street, forming the fourth side of the quadrangle. Anthony Trollope, the novelist, describes the style of those on the "hill" as that of pure gothic, unsullied with fictitious ornamentation. These structures which are ranked among the glories of the architecture of the world, are based on the fashion of the XII. century with a simplicity adapted to this country. Age is fast adding fresh beauty to the cream-coloured sandstone used in their construction. The finishings are of Ohio freestone, while in the arches, doors and windows, red Potsdam is employed.

Chief among all is the Central Block, a noble structure 475 feet long, 370 feet in breadth, rising to a height of 180 feet, with a massive clock-tower 225 feet high. The depth from the entrance to the back of the library is 570 feet. Its distance from the street and great altitude from the river give it unusual grandeur. Here the Commons and the Senate chambers