

The Dominion Government and the Municipality of Ottawa

BY HAROLD FISHER, MAYOR, OTTAWA, 1918

The existing agreement between the Dominion Government and the City of Ottawa expires on the last day of June, 1919. It is, therefore, necessary that some new arrangement should be made at once and ratified at the next session of Parliament.

THE PRESENT AGREEMENT.

Under the expiring agreement the city provides water to all government owned buildings and also to all buildings leased and occupied by the government. The city supplies all municipal services to government owned buildings. The salaries of all civil servants are exempt from taxation.

In return for what is done by the City the Government makes a contribution to the Ottawa Improvement Commission for park purposes in Ottawa and vicinity of \$100,000.00 each year. The Government also pays direct to the municipality \$15,000.00, which is said to be paid for fire protection.

THE GENERAL IMPRESSION.

The visitor to Ottawa is shown some beautiful Government buildings. He is taken over a driveway which he is told has been constructed by the Dominion Government. He leaves the City with the impression that the residents of Ottawa are the recipients of special favors from the people of Canada by reason of what the Government does for the City. The impression which the visitor to Ottawa takes away with him has become the general view of the people of Canada outside of the City of Ottawa.

THE REAL POSITION.

Anyone who will take the trouble to read the existing agreement and to learn the facts as to its operation will at once see how erroneous is the general view that the City is greatly indebted to the Government. If instead of the Dominion Government we had in the City of Ottawa a factory or a financial institution owning the same amount of property and with the same pay roll the taxes and water rates paid by the factory or financial institution at the ordinary rate of taxation would amount to at least \$886,453.60. The fact is that the Dominion Government has been bonused by the City of Ottawa to an extent that has never been granted to any industry or business anywhere in Canada.