

AUTHOR OF THE RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT RESOLUTIONS.

SIR John's memory fails him when he attributes to Mr. Draper the introduction of the Responsible Government resolutions. The year was not 1843, but 1841, and Mr. Draper neither moved nor seconded any of the resolutions or amendments; but, as the amendments were all moved by one of his colleagues, he must be held to have shared the credit or responsibility of their introduction. The subject was introduced by Mr. Baldwin, whose first resolution, seconded by D. B. Viger, attributed to the Provincial Parliament the "right to exercise a constitutional influence over the executive departments of the Government," and to legislate "upon all matters which do not, on grounds of absolute necessity, constitutionally belong to the jurisdiction of the Imperial Parliament." On motion of Mr. Harrison, this resolution was so amended as to make the right of local legislation co-extensive with "all matters of internal government." Mr. Baldwin then moved that the head of the Provincial executive, within the limits of his government, is responsible only to the authorities of the empire; and Mr. Harrison again offered an amendment which, in different words, accepted the averment of the original motion, and added "that, nevertheless, the management of our local affairs can only be conducted by him, by and with the assistance, counsel and information of subordinate officers in the Province." Mr. Baldwin, having reached the vital point to which his previous motions were intended to lead, moved that the advisers of the representative of the sovereign, constituting the Provincial administration, "ought always to be men possessed of the public confidence," and to be in opinion and policy in harmony with the representatives of the people. Mr. Harrison accepted the substance of the resolution, which, by something more than a verbal alteration, he made affirm that the Provincial administration "ought to be [composed of] men possessed of the confidence of the representatives of the people." For the amendment there were forty-six votes; against, seven. But when Mr. Baldwin moved that "This House has the constitutional right of holding such advisers practically responsible for every act of the Provincial Government of a local character," Mr. Harrison, on behalf of the Government of which Mr. Draper, as well as himself, was a member, parried this declaration by a motion in amendment "that the people of this Province have a right to expect from such Provincial administration the exertion of their best endeavours that the Imperial authority, within its constitutional limits, shall be exercised in the manner most consistent with their well-understood wishes and interests." The amendment, which might have been ruled out as foreign to the original motion, was, by some strange freak, unanimously adopted. With Mr. Baldwin, who had ceased to be a member of the Government, the Responsible Government resolutions originated. Some of them were accepted by Mr. Draper with verbal alterations; but the last quoted, not the least important, was got rid of by a side-wind. At an earlier date in the same session, Mr. Draper, while recognizing the desirability of harmony between the executive and the people, had declared that his responsibility was due only to the representative of the sovereign. This statement, far from being satisfactory to the Reform members of the House, caused the enquiry to be made, whether the ministry, if it failed to obtain a majority to carry its measures, would resign or have recourse to a dissolution. The answer was that, in the event supposed, one of these alternatives would be taken. The advantage gained by the advocates of Responsible Government was followed up by Mr. Baldwin's resolutions. The part borne by Mr. Draper was confined to accepting, with slight modifications, resolutions which originated with the Opposition.

M.

CANADA'S CAPITAL.

THE new world must not be measured and appraised by the rules of the old. Here history is as yet in its infancy, and we are therefore not amenable in certain matters to the principles of criticism and valuation sanctioned and adopted in the old world. Nevertheless, if we have no venerable cathedrals nursing the past in their "dim religious light," no battered towers or ancient senate-halls eloquent with the memories of the mighty and gifted dead, there are yet certain ordinances of nature to whose observance we are amenable as applicable to both hemispheres. We do not build our cities in quagmires or upon mountain tops, and the site of our capital, as well as its buildings, industries and inhabitants, are matters of fair criticism to our visitors—may be of profitable study to ourselves.

The Dominion comprehends an extensive territory, and it may not therefore strike a stranger as surprising that the capital should be so far

afield. Yet if he first explores the great St. Lawrence from Quebec to the Lakes, he can hardly miss thinking that a fitter choice of a city to represent the nation to the outside world might have been made upon the shores of this noble stream. Here, too, he finds cities with principles of growth and greatness which would at once recommend them as centres of national life, and probably the majority of suffrages would be given to Toronto as the fitting capital of the great Anglo-Saxon nation which is spreading from ocean to ocean over this vast northern continent. The selection, however, for reasons unnecessary to discuss here, has been made, and, it is to be presumed, finally made, and Ottawa is the Capital of the Dominion of Canada.

There can be no second opinion upon the unquestionable beauty of Ottawa's Governmental Buildings and the scenic advantages of its site; but perhaps the first thing which strikes an observant visitor is the strange fact that so much boast should be made of the magnitude of an industry the proximate exhaustion of which is by its very nature inevitable, whose character is to a certain point decidedly pernicious to the interests of the land at large. Ottawa's great industry flourishes on the destruction of the forests, and when the destruction is completed the industry must finally collapse. The farmer is the pillar of the commonwealth, and the lumberman is the enemy of the farmer. The sterility resulting from the deforesting of the country will be the only lasting and visible memorial of Ottawa's present prosperity. What other sources of commercial greatness are available to the city on the extinction of the present one, must come from her abundant water-power and the fortunate incident of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Ottawa does not seem to be a city signed by nature or circumstance with the mark of promise. The site is fine if remote, and the accident of remoteness will be modified to some extent by the completion of the great trans-continental railway; but it does not therefore follow that the city will become an objective centre of trade rather than a mere point of transit. The city has grown within the last twenty years, but to look at it one fancies that a good deal of this growth lacks the principle of solid permanency, and the idea is suggested that Ottawa is exceeding her powers of sustenance. Were the lumber industry extinct, as things now are, she would be little more than purveyor to the Civil Service.

There may have been political wisdom in the choice of Ottawa as the seat of Government; but it would still seem that, in a land whose greatness must be the result not of foreign conquest but of domestic growth, it might suggest itself as desirable that the official centre should be within touch of the centre of its commercial activities. On the principle that observation is better than report, Government should work in as close contact as possible with the forces which are building up the greatness of the country, and which, therefore, it is the duty of Ministers to make their constant study. No doubt there are disadvantages in the sitting of the Legislature in the centre of the national life; but possibly the advantages of secluded deliberation are in a great measure counterbalanced by this condition of isolation. A great business centre demands more than mere popular representation in Parliament—it demands, in the interests of the country at large, that it should be known and seen and felt, as well as represented in the Assembly.

As far as can be seen at present, the principal permanent importance which Ottawa seems likely to possess arises from its being the seat of Government. The city is too young as yet to justify us in requiring from it a decided character; but it is not too young to be examined as to the nature and tendency of such development as may be going on. From what has been said it will be inferred that the chief influence at work in the formation of the tone of social life in the capital is official. It is during the first three or four months of the year that Ottawa is to be studied in its character as a Capital. At this time it wears its coat of many colours; the rest of the year its aspect is rather russet. Out of the parliamentary season only the patient and persevering politician, the calculating contractor, or the shadowy and mysterious frequenters of official backstairs, are to be seen. Government House is closed, and the weary Viceroy and his Ministers are alike absent in quest of rest and quiet. From January to May the hotels and other places of refuge are crowded with visitors, who throng from all parts of the Dominion, and even from the States, for "the season." What do they come for? Members of Parliament come to legislate, presumably, and to dine in alphabetical batches at the Government House; and their wives and daughters, as well as other men's wives and daughters, crowd up also to catch and carry away all the direct, reflected, or accidental social glory they can obtain.

The simplicity of taste and character, and the healthy and admirable dignity flowing from competency won by honest industry which make an old world ideal of colonial character, are lamentably absent from Ottawa.