THE CITIES OF THE DOMINION.

THEIR BUSINESS INTERESTS, PROGRESS AND ENTERPRISE.

THE PAST AND PRESENT OF CANADA.

The Capital.

OTTAWA CITY, taking its name from the Ottawa or Grand River of Canada on which it is situated, the *Outaois* of the early French pioneers lies about 120 miles above the Island of Montreal. The latter, some seventy-five years ago was the *ultima thule* of Canadian civilization, and, save rarely by hunters or fur traders, the waters of the Ottawa were undisturbed by the white man; the birch bark canoe of the Indian was the only vessel that navigated its waters. Celebrated as this river is, especially the upper part of it, for its numberless and varied falls and rapids, amongst which the most striking and grand is that named by the early French pioneers the Chaudiere, or as it is generally called, the "Big Kettle." For some miles above this there are numerous chutes or rapids, which indicate how great is the incline of the river, which narrowing at these falls to about four hundred yards is precipitated wildly over a bluff limestone rock, through a gap about 200 feet wide and 300 feet long, within which as in a kettle, the waters foam and boil, surging in large yeasty masses back and forth from side to side, until eventually it escapes in a mountain of foam, and directly expands into about a width of half a mile just below. The scenery below the heights on the south side where the limestone rocks rise perpendicularly two or three hundred feet, covered with waving hemlocks and dark pines, the undulating banks on the north shore, the abrupt precipices on the south—is very beautiful and only equalled though in a different style by the aspect of Quebec. Here the hunters or traders had in earlier days to pause, for it was impossible to attempt the navigation higher, and here they tramped out a *portage* on the northern shore, of eight miles in length, across which they carried their canoes, etc., to the quiet waters above the Chaudiere and its rapids, to what is now the Town of Aylmer.

About the close of the last century, a Mr. Wright, of Boston, who was either tired of his native town, his native State, or possessed of a desire of gain, wandering in search of "a location," came with his party to the portage of the Chaudiere, and here he determined to settle. Land was cheap in those days, and Mr. Wright easily obtained a grant to large tracts of land upon both sides of the river from the Canadian government.

With the aid of a couple of Indians he explored the land, and decided that that on the south side (the present city) was unfit for town or farm; that on the north side was pronounced better, and about a mile from the *portage* landing, close to the Chaudiere Falls, Mr. Wright planted his village, and called it Hull. The site once determined, no time was lost by the sturdy pioneers in building their log huts and necessary buildings upon it.

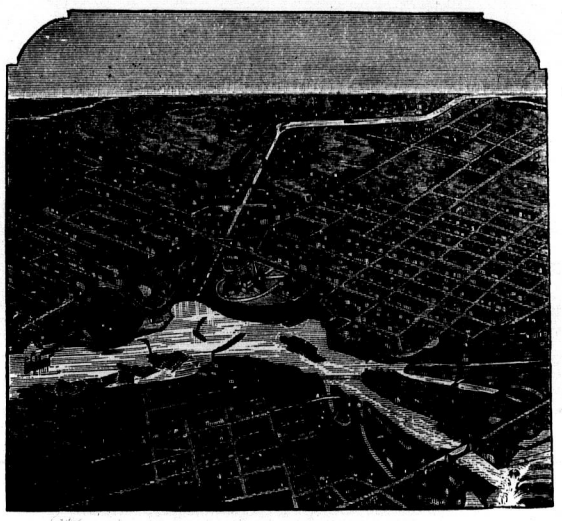
Much privation and continuous toil are usually the lot of new settlements, and Hull, or Wrightstown as it was often called, was no exception to the rule. Its nearest market as well as settlement was Montreal; and although this might be easily reached, the current carrying the canoe easily down stream, yet the return trip required a long and a strong pull to get home again. Mr. Wright and his followers did not require[d] to assign all the trees they felled in their clearings to the fire; they were remembered, and thus became as well as farmers, dealers in pine, as are taken [by the] majority of settlers on the Ottawa to this day. An impetus was thus recei[ved] given in this quarter to the timber trade of Canada, and each year immense rafts were floated down, through many dangers, to Quebec in the spring, which were disposed of for necessaries required at the settlement. With the growth of trade, came an increase in immigration, and Hull soon became a "fixed fact;" as before stated. Hull steadily grew. The lumber trade was not now confined to the old pioneers. Voyageurs sent by Quebec merchants, French Canadians, English, Scotch and Irish, intent upon cutting pine, thronged up the Ottawa. The trees fell before the vigorous blows of the new-comers, who plied their axes right and left, and behind the town of Hull, untouched, uncared for, and almost unnoticed, towered up the southern hills in sullen dignity. Cash was scarce in Hull, but there was any amount of credit; and Mr. Wright—or rather the Wrights, for by this time a family had grown up, paid the lumberers in either of three ways for their labor—"store pay," or goods—rum—land. Three-fourths of the labourers preferred the two first; the more prudent, one fourth, took the latter. A legend, which, however, has no foundation in fact, has been related regarding the purchase of land by Mr. Sparks, to the effect that in the course of time, Mr. Wright came to a settlement of accounts with a sober, steady workman, who had been for many years one of his ox-teamsters, and on so doing, it was found that two hundred dollars was due to this employee, one Mr. Nicholas Sparks. Negotiations ended in Mr. Sparks purchasing a tract of land on which a portion of the capital now stands. The truth is Mr. Philomen Wright owned no land on the Ottawa side of the river, Mr. Sparks purchasing a tract of land from Mr. Burrows, one of the early settlers.

Years afterwards, the Canadian authorities, wishing to find a channel in the interior of the country for the conveyance of munitions of war to the Upper Lakes, as the St. Lawrence was too much exposed to the assaults of the Americans in event of war ever occurring, inaugurated the scheme of the Rideau Canal. In the year 1823, Mr. Sparks, looking down from one of his high precipices, was astonished by seeing a crowd of engineers, soldiers and labourers advancing towards the bluffs. The hills were taken possession of as the ordnance property of the British Crown. The Chief Engineer charged with the construction of the Rideau Canal and its attendant works, was Colonel By. The work went on fast, huts and labourers appeared in due proportion, as did shops and other necessary buildings, and these were built on either side the hills, and, by way of joke, were called "Upper Town," and "Lower Town," names retained to the present day. In time, as the straggling "towns" became more united by their buildings, they obtained a single designation, and in compliment to the Chief Engineer, were called "Bytown," not a very high sounding name, but one that gave hopes to Mr. Sparks, who owned all the land beyond the fall of the hills inward. A bridge was thrown across the Chaudiere, connecting Hull or Wrightstown with Bytown, and as the latter slowly grew the other remained stationary.

Years passed away, and still Bytown grew larger and more populous, and by act of Parliament the name was changed to that of the noble river which foamed and roared at its base; money flowed in upon Mr. Sparks, he sold lots, went into a successful business, and was presently said to be worth half a million pounds sterling, his town "looking up," and Hull, the place of early promise, being dead.

In 1851, Ottawa had a population of 8,000. In 1854, having a population of 10,000, it was incorporated a city. In 1861 it numbered 15,000. It is now the chief seat of the timber or lumber trade, there being upwards of seventy firms engaged in cutting that article of commerce on the banks of the Ottawa River and its tributaries, and transporting it to Quebec and the United States. A railway soon connected the city with the St. Lawrence at Prescott, the canal connecting it with Lake Ontario at Kingston, greatly facilitating means of transport. Till those means of communication were provided, all that was not required for local consumption was taken to Quebec.

In due course of time the question arose as to which of the towns of Canada should be the chosen site for the new houses of Parliament.



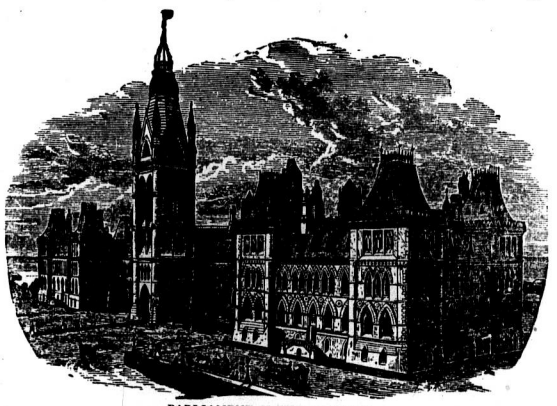
CITY OF OTTAWA.

The claims of Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, were each strongly urged, and it was at last determined to refer the decision to the Queen. Her Majesty quickly and definitely settled it. The long despised hills, it was decided should sustain the Parliament buildings of United Canada. For the erection of these the sum of £75,000 was voted by the Legislative Assembly, and a premium of $1,000 offered for the best design not to exceed that amount; Fuller & Jones were the successful Architects, and although the design was considered by many as too costly, responsible contractors were found who tendered within the Government vote. Upon examination, however, it was found from the inequality of the ground, that immense excavations were necessary, which, made in the solid rock, added enormously to the original cost. The Government, finding no provision for this work in the grant, and fearing it would cost a large portion of the original sum voted, stopped the works, and for a considerable time matters seemed at a dead lock. A commission of enquiry was appointed, fresh contracts were signed, and the present handsome structure was completed under the superintendence of Mr. Fuller.

In 1861, the Prince of Wales, on his visit to Canada and the United States, laid the corner stone with great ceremony, on which occasion the rejoicings partook of the nature of the place, the lumber arches, and lumberers, being a novelty to most of the visitors, bullocks and sheep were roasted whole upon the Government grounds, and all comers were feasted. The Prince expressed himself very much pleased with the locality chosen, and with the welcome afforded him, evincing as it did, the loyalty of the Canadian colonists to Her Gracious Majesty, whom he in his visit represented.

The Parliament Buildings stand on a high plateau of some 30 acres in area. The buildings form three sides of a quadrangular figure, and are widely detached. The Parliament, or main building, facing Wellington street; and the Departmental Buildings facing inwards to the square and forming the other two sides of the figure.

The style of the Buildings is the Gothic of the 12th and 13th Centuries, with modification to suit the climate of Canada. The ornamental work and the dressing round the windows are of Ohio sandstone. The plain surface is faced with a cream-coloured sandstone of the Potsdam formation, obtained from Nepean, a few miles from Ottawa. The span-



PARLIAMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA.

drils of the arches, and the spaces between the window-arches and the sills of the upper windows, are filled up with a quaint description of stone-work, composed of stones of irregular size, shape and colour, very neatly set together. These with the Potsdam red sandstone employed in forming the arches over the windows, afford a pleasant variety of colour and effect, and contrast with the general masses of light coloured sandstone, of which the body of the work is composed.

This Building, as one approaches from Wellington street, presents a very imposing appearance. The central of the seven towers, which is very rich in design, projects its width from the front of the Building, and completed in 1877, is about 180 ft. high. The body of the building in front is forty feet, above which rises the slanting roofs of slate, surmounted by lines of ornamental iron cresting. The building is 472 feet long; and the depth from the front of the main tower to the rear of the library is 570 feet, covering an area of 82,886 superficial feet. It stands at a distance of 600 feet from Wellington street, so that the quadrangle formed on three sides by the buildings and on the fourth by the street, is 700 feet from east to west, and 600 feet from north to south; thus affording a very spacious square. The ground upon which the building stand varies somewhat in elevation, that forming the site of the Parliament Building being the highest. The basement floor of the buildings is assumed to be 160 feet above the ordinary summer level of the river, while that of the Eastern and Western blocks is 135 and 142 feet respectively. The increased elevation, however, improves very much the general effect of the buildings.

The main entrance is through the principal tower, the spacious arches of which admit of a carriage way under them. The piers which support the tower are ornamented with pillars of polished Arnprior marble. Passing through it we enter a large hall, paved with tiles, and all surrounded with marble pillars. Ascending and moving towards the left we come to the Chamber of Commons. The Room measures 82 by 45 feet, the ceiling being over 50 feet high, and formed of fine open work. The skylights above this intermediate ceiling, with the stained glass windows at the sides, throw a plentiful soft light over the whole place. The room is surrounded by large piers of a light greyish marble from Portage du Fort, surmounted just above the galleries by clusters of small pillars of the dark Arnprior; the arches supported by these pillars being again of the light coloured marble. The galleries can accommodate about 1,000 persons. The Gallery for the Reporters is situated above the Speaker's chair.

On the right of the main entrance, is the Senate Chamber, alike in every particular to that of the Commons. Along the corridors you see numerous Rooms for Committees, Clerks, Reading and Smoking.

The Library is situated in the rear of the Parliament Building, and the plan is of a polygon of sixteen sides, 90 feet in diameter; outside of the main room is an aisle of one story high, which is formed of a series of small retiring rooms, where persons desiring a few hours of uninterrupted study can secure it. A corridor connects the Library with the main building. The floors of this building, as well as those of the Departmental Buildings, are made of concrete, perfectly fire-proof; an invention not long since adopted in Europe.

The Eastern Block of the Departmental Buildings is of an irregular and picturesque shape. The west front, or that which faces the square, is 318 feet, and 253 feet on the south front or that which faces Wellington street, and covers an area of 41,840 superficial feet. In this building are found the Governor General's Office, the Privy Council room, the Minister of Justice, the Secretary of State, the Finance and Audit Offices, the Department of Interior, the Inland Revenue Department and the Department of Public Printing and Stationery.

The Western Block as originally built was similar in style to that of the Eastern Block, but more regular in its construction, being 211 feet long, facing the square, and 277 feet on the south looking on Wellington street, with a small wing, 77 feet long, fronting the west. In 1874-78, a very considerable addition was made to this wing, it being extended to a total length of 230 feet, and a very massive tower placed near the junction of the old and new portions. This tower, which is 274 feet from ground to top of finial, contains the principal entrance and vestibule, both of which are very handsome. The Public Works Department, the Customs, the Railway and Canals Departments, the Post Office Department, Militia Departments, the Marine Department, the Fisheries Department, the Bureau of Agriculture, and the model room connected with the Patent Department, are all located in this building. The west front of this building looking upon the upper town and beyond it towards the Chaudiere Falls and Hull, gives a fine view of the wooded lands on the shore of the Ottawa River and the distant range of hills beyond, including a far view of the river and its banks stretching to the south-west in the direction of Aylmer. Similar or still more extensive views are obtained from the west side of the Parliament Building.

The ceiling of the passages and of many of the rooms of the Parliament Buildings are made of pine wood, varnished, which being wrought into ornamental cornices and panels produces a rich and very fine appearance. The same material has been used for the doors. The fillings around the grates and mantle-pieces are of polished Arnprior marble; it is greyish blue marble of very fine grain, and capable of being polished to a high degree. All the floors are supported by rolled iron girders, and filled in between with cement. The stairs in the building are all built of blue Ohio stone, and constructed with hanging steps.

The system for heating and ventilating is on the most approved principle. Under the central court of the Parliament building is the boiler room, in which are six boilers, each twenty feet long and five feet in diameter, furnished with a steam drum, safety-valve, &c., and a steam engine of sufficient horse-power to work the pumps and throw 250 gallons of water per minute into tanks placed in the towers, from whence the water is supplied to all parts of the buildings. The heating is effected by steam conveyed in pipes from these boilers to the Senate Chamber, the Library, and the rooms adjoining, by means of duct sufficiently large for the introduction of an abundant supply of fresh air, situated immediately under a vault in which steam pipes are placed to warm the air on its entering the vault from the duct, through a perforated floor, and before it passes into rooms proposed to be heated. These ducts enter on all sides of the building, and range in size according to the position in which they are placed. Of the ducts, there are 3,600 lineal feet, generally of 2 feet 4 inches high, with sides built of dressed stone, and formed with slight descent where they pass out of the building. The other parts of the building are heated on what is called the coil system, or by direct radiation. For the rooms heated by this system there is an area of 4,308 feet of hot air flues, 24 by 19 inches sectional area, formed in the wall adjoining the committee rooms and other parts of the building heated, exclusive of ninety feet of others of greater dimensions for the larger steam pipes.

In the internal arrangement nothing appears to have been spared to make the buildings as perfect as possible. The wants of the Government and its officials have been most carefully studied by the architects, and the beauty of the situation, combined with the elegance of the buildings, enable the capitol of Canada to compare with any in the world.

One of the most remarkable features in the history of Ottawa, and which has tended materially to add to its commerce and wealth, is the work or works constructed to overcome the difficulties that lumbermen lay under in passing their timber over the Chaudiere Falls. To obviate the destruction and damage, which a considerable portion so passing annually underwent, a contrivance known as "Timber Slides," was introduced by the late Ruggles Wright. Above the Falls, a certain portion of the river is dammed off, and turned into an artificial wide channel or canal, down which most rapid of all rapids in America, the waters of the Ottawa rush with terrific speed. The head of this slide is placed some 300 yards above the Falls, and terminates after a run of about three-quarters of a mile, in the still waters of the river below. As, however, a raft on such a steep incline and hurried along by such a mass of water, would attain a speed which would destroy itself and all upon it; the fall of the shoot is broken at intervals by straight runs, along which it glides at comparatively reduced speed, till it again drops over and commences another headlong rush. Some of these runs terminate with a perpendicular drop of some four or five feet, over which the raft goes headlong and wallows in the boiling water beneath, till the current again gains the mastery and forces it on faster and more furiously than before. More than 20,000,000 cubic feet of timber come down the shoots of the Ottawa in this manner each year. The rafts are generally made of from 15 to 20 logs, with two traverse ones to secure them at each end, and a kind of raised bridge for the lumberers to stand on, who, without such aid would be washed off it, as the mass drops, from shoot to shoot, down these rapids and disappears some few feet under water each plunge.

To go down the rapids of a Timber Slide, is the most exhilarating adventure in all the *repertoire* of European and American travel. The immense speed of the whole mass—the rush of the water—the succession of shoots stretching out before you like sloping steps of stairs, the rough, long straits, in which the raft seems to dive and founder, letting the water up beneath and over it behind, till it is again urged forward, whirling madly as if in a swing; the timber snapping and groaning and working like a bundle of reeds, getting a momentary rest with each incline, and again thumping over the straits with sharp uneasy struggles,