

The Capital of Canada—Its Future.

City About Whose Brow the North Winds Blow, Girdled with Woods
and Shod with River Foam, Called by a Name as old as Troy or
Rome, Be Great as They.—D. C. Scott.

The Canadian Club of Ottawa performed a service not only to Ottawa but to Canada (thereby living up in full to its name) on Saturday evening a fortnight ago when it announced a public lecture on "The ideal capital—How to plan it, and how to build it." The lecturer, Mr. Mawson of the University of Liverpool is perhaps the most distinguished of English experts on the subject of city-planning. It may be that Mr. Mawson did not furnish his audience with any cut-and-dried description of the model Ottawa that is to be. He suggested rather than stated. As he admitted, he came to criticise rather than construct. In fact he began by saying that it would require several months observation and reflection before he could venture a single recommendation. That alone was a salutary thought to leave in Ottawa. That and his insistence that city-planning is good business—that it pays, may be regarded as the two most important lessons he had to teach.

But the noteworthy thing about the meeting was not the lecture so much as the audience. It was large and it was thoroughly appreciative and sympathetic. It revealed not only the birth but the sturdy growth of Ottawa as a city among cities is no longer the concern of a voice here and there crying in the wilderness. There is in process of making on the subject, if it be not already made, that powerful thing known as public opinion. And it is an enlightened public opinion. And the question of all questions already is, what to do—what practical step to take to realize the splendid aspiration.

This is not a question for Ottawans alone. Ottawa is the capital of Canada, and must be built as

such. And therefore, speaking as the organ of the class which serves the whole people, *The Civilian* is not sorry that the commission idea, by the dexterity of the present municipal powers of darkness, was thrown away. What was cleverly devised for our bane may result for our good if it makes way for the larger and in the final event more efficient idea—the Federal District idea. For the Federal District idea alone meets the logic of the case, which is that Ottawa is first and last a capital city.

The notion has gone abroad that civil servants are opposed to the suggestion of a Federal District. This is surely erroneous. To no class should the proposal appeal with greater force, for no section of the citizenship of Ottawa has an equal opportunity of arriving automatically at the sane point of view in the matter. The servants of all the people love the place of their habitation, and with all their hearts desire that it should be made a worthy tabernacle of a great idea—the idea of Canadianism.

Mr. Mawson placed beauty second to practical utility in city-planning, where of course it belongs. Nevertheless the largest single element in the present wave of feeling is the thought that the policy of leaving things to drift or to uneducated effort will ruin even Ottawa's unequalled beauties of location. When the Federal District has been erected the cultivation of Ottawa's natural heritage will go forward under auspices that are impossible today. We will not then see the mass and sympathy of the group of buildings on Parliament Hill laid careless hands on. We will not see Nepean Point made over into a birthday