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FREDERICK WRIGHT

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The City of Ottawa and The Dominion Government

Mayor Fisher in a brochure—which appears in another part of this issue—presents in a very interesting and instructive form the relations of Ottawa as the capital city of Canada and the Dominion government. The evident reason for the pamphlet is that as the present agreement expires in June, necessitating new arrangements between the city authorities and the government, the case for the city should be presented fairly and squarely before the public. The City of Ottawa occupies a unique position. Being the capital of the Dominion it is looked upon as belonging to the nation, as in a certain sense it does, but if it does belong to the nation, even partially, the nation as represented by the government, is very niggardly in its contribution to the upkeep of Ottawa. According to Mayor Fisher the Government tax bill for 1918, in pro rata to other tax payers would have been \$886,453. What the government actually paid in 1918, as it did each year under the agreement, was \$15,000 direct to the municipality for special fire protection and \$100,000 as a contribution to the Ottawa Improvement Commission for park purposes. This is a heavy bonus for the citizens of Ottawa to pay for the privilege of their city being the capital of Canada, and Mayor Fisher is quite right in urging more generous terms to the city in any new agreement. Indeed, it is a question of justice, for every dollar that the government should, but does not, pay in local taxes has to be made up by the private taxpayers, and we cannot conceive the citizens of Canada as a whole objecting to the government paying their proper proportion of the upkeep of a city which they claim as their own.

Mayor Fisher in his pamphlet takes up the much

discussed question of making Ottawa a Federal district. He is against such a project and he has our sympathy. Outside the excessive cost of a Federal district as compared with a municipal district—the District of Columbia has the most expensive administration in the world—the citizens of Ottawa would never stand for their autonomous rights being taken away from them, which would be the case if Ottawa was turned into a Federal district. What is more the establishment of a Federal district would mean a complete change in our constitution which is very definite and limits even the power of the Federal Government; one limitation being that it cannot interfere with municipal government.

DAYLIGHT SAVING.

There seems to have been objections to the putting forward of the clock again this year, though the objectors, principally farmers, do not give any good and valid reason for their stand. There is no doubt that the extra hour of daylight is a boon to the workers in the cities. It enables them to get into their "war" gardens with benefit to their health and pockets, which in turn benefits the communities. Daylight and sunshine assures contentment and we cannot understand why any one class should object to something that will help another class so long as it does not hurt the first class. No doubt the farmers have all the daylight they require during the summer months so surely they cannot deny the right to the city and town dwellers to get a little more of the precious light and sunshine than they have done previous to last year.