

seen that the Government at Ottawa was going to be defeated, that there was going to be a new Lieutenant-Governor appointed for Ontario, and that that Lieutenant-Governor was going to be the member for West Toronto, and had therefore felt that it would be desirable to get the Central Prison work into their hands. When the Government found the various works in the hands of sub-contractors, at prices which they then believed, and still had reason to believe, were the lowest prices, they were perfectly satisfied to let them continue in the same hands. The only work not in the hands of these sub-contractors was the bricklaying and mason work. The Government saw that there would not be time for them to advertise fairly for tenders, and they thought the best thing for them to do would be to have the work done under the officers of their own department. Mr. Wagner was consequently employed. Hon. gentlemen said that money had been lost to the extent of \$50,000 or \$100,000, because the workmen on the Central Prison saw fit to strike, and got an increase of wages. Did they mean to say that this was caused by the Government? The evidence of Mr. Wagner showed that when the strike took place he was paying men in his own private employ more than the Government was giving the hands at the Central Prison. If hon. gentlemen had read the correspondence which was brought down and laid here on the table, they would have found that Mr. Elliot had been endeavouring to get other workmen at the Central Prison and failed, no doubt because he would not pay them enough money. It may have been that he saw that he had taken the contract at so low a figure that he was going to lose on it, but for whatever reason the Government, after they took the work in their own hands, found that the men he had employed were working at lower wages than other men in the city similarly employed. This was shown in sworn evidence before the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. CAMERON—There is no such evidence.

Mr. FRASER said that he thought his word would be taken as readily as the hon. gentleman's, and he said there was such evidence. Mr. Hellam proved that the wages were not too high, and that it might have been expected that the men would strike on account of the lowness of their pay. The Central Prison was rather an out of the way place, and in order to get men to work there it would be necessary to pay them good wages, but it could not be proved that greater wages were given them at that time than were paid to men similarly employed in the city. It remained to be proven—and he did not think hon. gentlemen were treating the Government fairly in bringing up a matter like this before the investigation in the Public Accounts Committee was finally closed—that one single dollar of extra expense had been incurred by the Government since taking the contract out of Mr. Elliot's hands, except the increase in wages. He would have thought that hon. gentlemen opposite would have waited until the case was closed, and the whole evidence before the House; but this was of a with the fairness of gentlemen of the position. The hon. gentlemen, of course, tended the motion as one of want of confidence, and the Government accepted it as such. He (Mr. Fraser) would undertake to say that there was no gentleman in his private capacity in that House who could stand if he were subjected to the test laid down by hon. gentlemen opposite. These gentlemen went about prying and endeavouring to show that work given out for \$20 could have been got done for \$19. Let them try that test with any gentleman in this House, and see how it would work. But the Government were not afraid even of that test, because hitherto in all their investigations the Opposition had been utterly unable to prove that with regard to one single matter one dollar of unnecessary expense had been incurred. It was with very poor grace that hon. gentlemen, who had always been lauding Mr. Sandfield Macdonald for his prudent and economical management of affairs, got up and condemned this Government for doing something just similar to what he did. The hon. gentleman had referred to the work which Messrs. Dickey, Neill & Co. did on the new wings of the Lunatic Asylum. The fact with regard to this matter was, that two years after those gentlemen entered into their contract the work on the wings, with the exception of the grating on the windows, was given to them on a verbal understanding with Mr. Carling. If honourable gentlemen's views with respect to advertising and tendering were correct, this Government might advertise for tenders to-day, and wait two years before awarding the contract to any one of those

making offers. If there was any virtue at all in advertising for tenders, hon. gentlemen would not pretend to argue before the people that Mr. Carling was justified in accepting, in 1868, at the same prices, a tender made in 1866. Prices had changed, labour had changed, everything had changed; and, in accepting that tender, the Hon. Mr. Carling's only justification for so doing would be that, considering the prices around him, he could not do any better. In other words, he would be justifying himself on the same grounds on which this Government defended their course with regard to the Central Prison works in question. Between the two cases, however, there was this difference in favour of the present Government:—the latter advertised for tenders at the very time they wanted the work to be done, and got them not alone from Messrs. Dickey, Neill & Co., whereas Mr. Carling let the works out on a tender given two years before. This Government found that Messrs. Dickey, Neill & Co. did their work well, and knowing them to be competent men—the best men in that particular line of trade in the city, he believed—they asked for tenders from them and also from Mr. Currie. Mr. Currie went to every man in the city except Dickey, Neill, & Co., who did boiler-making, to get estimates, and thus the Government virtually received tenders from every man in that business in the city. And what was the result? That Dickey, Neill, & Co.'s tender was below that of Mr. Currie, notwithstanding all the advantage the latter had of getting estimates from the whole trade. The Government found Dickey, Neill, & Co.—competent men—foremost in their trade in this city; men who had been employed from time to time by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's Government—putting in a tender lower than all the other men in the same business in the city of Toronto, and they gave them the work, and if there was any work they should be particular about it was that on boilers and engines. With reference to the water supply of the Asylum and Central Prison, he said that it was found, after the contracts had been given out, that some improvement would be required in these, and all the models for the old works were, he believed, in the hands of Dickey, Neill & Co., the contractors for the old system. What the Government wanted done was in reality only a continuance and repairing of that old system. That work, too, was taken, he ventured to say, at a price far below what it could have been got done for by any one else engaged in the same sort of business in the city of Toronto. To prove this he had only to refer to the fact that the same work in connection with the Water-works now building in this city had been given to the same firm in the same way. He had already spoken to the House with reference to the artificial stone-work—a work which could only be got done by the patentee—and had

pointed out that the price was somewhat below what they could have got the same work done for if only the ordinary stone-haggings were used. The question with regard to the locks he had also explained to the House, and he need not go into that at any length. Tenders for these were not advertised for, but the Inspector of Prisons sent to the different lockmakers in the Province, asking them to send him some samples, and some seven or eight were, he believed, sent in, and from among them the best was selected. The contract with regard to doors was justified on the same ground as that relative to the patent stone. Mr. Currie had obtained much experience at the Penetanguishene prison with reference to the making of doors, and when Mr. Wukie came down here it was found that the work could be done under his supervision at as cheap, if not a cheaper rate, than it was at Penetanguishene. He was asked for a tender and did so. He got just twelve cents a pound for similar work done for Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's Government—similar except that it was lighter. Hon. gentlemen opposite had been willing to wait until the Government fairly they would have waited until the whole investigation had been made before the Public Accounts Committee (hear, hear), or at least they would not have brought this motion up without some notice.

Mr. CAMERON—You are violating the statute in your course.

Mr. FRASER said that hon. gentlemen did not observe that statute themselves when in office. They came there to-day and complained that certain work connected with the maintenance of these institutions had been given out to friends of the Government without tender, when the Government they themselves supported did the same thing. Another objection to the course of the Government taken by this motion was that the Inebriate Asylum had been contracted for virtually with-