

which he now says should not be continued for a day. (Cheers.) He did not wish to charge that they had been doing what was wrong; but what he did claim was that the hon. gentleman was now taking an improper position. He had drawn much to support his position from the fact that a fund had been provided to pay the expense. Just because a fund had accumulated or been provided was one of the greatest reasons why it should be allowed to accumulate for five or ten years. If it were parliamentary to say subterfuge, that would be the term applied to the argument that the 80 acres was not needed. What difference did it make if the 80 acres were not needed, they would be increasing in value each year so that in five or ten years there would be enough received by the sale of the land to erect new buildings without drawing upon the public exchequer. He ventured to say that the argument would not be sufficient to deceive the public, but that when they looked at the matter in its true light, they would condemn the position taken by the Government. What was another proposition. Why nothing more than to erect a new Asylum at a cost of five or six hundred thousand dollars. The present Asylum has cost very nearly that sum, and complaints were made even now by the Superintendent, that the land was not sufficient. The hon. gentleman proposed to make it absolutely necessary to erect a new Asylum and to abandon the old. He was willing that the poor lunatics should suffer, provided the new Parliament buildings were only erected. Again he puts the value of the land now occupied in the neighbourhood of \$200,000. In the same ratio of calculation as adopted by the hon. gentleman in five years it would be worth half a million, and in ten seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars or perhaps a million. The true way to look at the matter was to take the \$25,000, said in 1873 to be sufficient, and erect a fire-proof vault to protect the public documents, and to keep the lands for ten or fifteen years when a very large sum would be realized by their sale.

Mr. FRASER—"We will not get a site for nothing to wait as long as that!"

Mr. MEREDITH, continuing, said he would venture the statement that the city of Toronto would be just as ready to give the land for new buildings in ten years as they are to-day. It had been said the present building retarded the progress of the city. The same argument would hold good ten years from the present. The people do not desire an unnecessary expenditure of money, and it was only just to the country that the present buildings should be continued to be occupied. The people had not been permitted to pronounce an opinion upon a question of so much importance, and the Government would be taking advantage of the people if they forced the question upon them at the present time, because it could not be justified. He moved in amendment that all the words in the motion after "that" be struck out, and the following substituted therefor, "While this House is prepared to assent to the appropriation of such reasonable sum as may be required for the protection from fire of the records of the Crown Land Department, it is of opinion that no sufficient reason exists for incurring at the present time the large expenditure involved in the erection of new Parliament and Departmental buildings, and that an opportunity should be offered to the electors of pronouncing upon the question before the Province is committed to so large an expenditure, and to that end that the consideration of the question should be postponed until after the next general election."

Mr. MOWAT expressed his surprise at the position which had been taken with regard to this question by the leader of the Opposition. Everybody knew, and admitted, that these buildings were inadequate to their purpose, and they had daily experience and observation of that fact. That they were unhealthy even the hon. gentlemen did not dispute.

Mr. MEREDITH said he did dispute it.

Mr. MOWAT said he believed that his hon. friend was the only person he had met who took that ground. Every traveller who visited these buildings in the course of his travels spoke of them as being disgraceful to a Province having the resources and prospects of the Province of Ontario. The Government thought the time had come when buildings so inadequate, so unsightly, and so disgraceful to the Province should no longer be the buildings in which the work of Parliament and the Departments should be carried on, and that their resources and means of paying for them were such as to justify the action which the Government were about to take. The hon. gentleman complained of the lateness of the time in which they had brought the matter before the House, but he should remember that the subject had been mentioned at the earliest possible moment, namely, in the Speech from the Throne, so that the House and the country were made aware that the appropriation was to be asked for, and the matter had been discussed by the newspapers and otherwise ever since. The hon. member said that the matter should be submitted to the vote of the people, but that had not been the course pursued by his political leaders with regard to the Parliament buildings at Ottawa. It was quite common

for the hon. gentlemen and his friends, as in the present case, to affect great enthusiasm over the principles which had been quite ignored when they were in power themselves. The hon. gentleman had referred to the opinion which he (Mr. Mowat) had expressed some time ago in favour of erecting new buildings. He had thought then, as he thought now, that they should be erected, but the ground he took at that time was that public sentiment was not then, as he believed it was now, in favour of the scheme. If the remarks of the hon. gentleman with regard to our financial position meant anything, they meant that we never would be able in this country to erect new Parliament buildings. As the people advanced their wants were increasing, and the expenditures were increasing, consequently, on the theory of the leader of the Opposition new buildings would never be erected. The position was one that no one pretending to sustain the character of a statesman would assume. If the finances of the country were diminishing, as had been alleged, in a few years they would certainly not be able to build new buildings. He protested against such an argument as that the Province of Ontario was not able to pay for new buildings. (Cheers.) He contended emphatically that the Province was able, and that the country would uphold the expenditure. They had been giving millions of money to aid the municipalities. Millions more had been spent in railways that had been a great benefit to the country, and millions had been laid out in public works, and the state of the finances would justify the expenditure of half a million for new buildings which the country would endorse. If the property was not already in the hands of the Government, they would still be able to erect the new buildings. The property when sold would nearly pay the cost, and only a small sum would be taken from the treasury. The time had arrived when the work could safely be proceeded with. Reference had been made to the \$125,000 for the erection of a wing, and that sum had been reduced to \$25,000, but the plan had been abandoned. There were many reasons why it should have been abandoned. If the sum had been expended, and the new wing built, it would have made the building a permanency, and it would be unjustifiable to erect a building at such a cost which would be abandoned after a few years. It was for that reason the project had been abandoned, and the fact that it was found afterwards that \$25,000 was insufficient for the erection of a fire-proof vault suitable for the wants of the country. The course to pursue now was to erect new buildings. The cost might exceed five hundred thousand dollars because mistakes had been made, but that was not very likely. The Opposition seem to think it was no disgrace to the country that the public documents were unsafe, and that the Government rented two buildings. If the question was submitted to the country he would not hesitate to say that such a position would not be endorsed by the people. No county council would be content unless they owned their buildings, and the people would certainly think the country poor indeed that was not able to own its buildings. (Cheers.) He apprehended that when the time came the House would not be in sympathy with the amendment, but that they would recognize the propriety of erecting suitable buildings for the business of the country without undue strain upon the finances, and that the pretence of economy would be repudiated by all. (Cheers.)

Mr. YOUNG could not comprehend why the opposition should grow up, because if there was no other reason than the inflammable condition of the buildings that would be sufficient to render necessary the erection of buildings. They have been used for barracks, Parliament buildings, and a lunatic asylum.

Mr. BOULTON—They are used for that now.

Mr. MOWAT said in his report that there was not a single fire-proof vault to contain the public documents. The opinion was that of gentlemen who had the good of the Province at heart. There were fifty-five stoves and forty-five grates going every day in the inflammable old rookery. In some counties the authorities were compelled by law to have the records protected from fire. He had been told that last session one hon. gentleman while the House was in session had to protect himself from rain drops by an umbrella. He referred to the insufficiency of the committee rooms, and mentioned that several gentlemen had come from a distance to give evidence before the Railway Accidents Committee, and a room could not be had to hold the meeting in. On sanitary grounds he contended that new buildings should be erected. He felt that by placing the buildings in the Park, in a comparatively short time, the buildings would be in the centre of the city because he believed that in twenty years Toronto would be the greatest city in Canada. He thought that after the expenditure had been made it would not exceed \$125,000 over and above the amount received from the sale of lands. He referred to the article in the Mail, wherein it was charged that supporters of the Government were opposed to the erection of the buildings because they were jealous of Toronto. This he claimed was entirely incorrect. (Hear, hear.) He created much amusement by reading the remarks of the Opposition organ with respect to those who really were opposed to the erection of new buildings. He would rather ask for a larger amount at the outset, than to have a bill for extras presented afterwards.

Mr. WATERS supported the position taken by the Hon. Minister of Crown Lands because he considered the erection of new buildings were an absolute necessity for the good of the country. He had been up among his constituents since the opening of the House, and had conversed with several Conservatives who were warm supporters of the hon. member for London, and the feeling was that the buildings should be erected. If the hon. member for London would go through the house as he (the speaker) had done, he would find the basement under the western portion of the building was not fit for human habitation. The timbers of the roof were rotten. The whole condition of the building was so bad that public documents were not safe. He supported the erection of new buildings because he believed that the people of Ontario were too sensible to object to the expenditure of a half a million on a building to be owned by a Province that had such a great future before it.

Mr. WHITE said his constituents were opposed to the proposition, and he was also against it. It was amply proven by the statement of the hon.

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Young