

with his own political circle; although he poses as the first lieutenant of the leader of the Opposition, and although it is said that he is not without ambition and not without hope of sitting on this side of the House, considering all these circumstances, yet he has never been able upon a motion of this character to induce one single member of the Opposition to vote with him. And I doubt whether he ever has attempted to make a single friend vote with him.

Mr. MORRIS—May I ask the hon. gentleman if a vote has been taken on the subject?

Hon. C. F. FRASER—Yes.

Mr. MORRIS—When?

Hon. C. F. FRASER—In 1880. It is true he himself voted for it, but it is also true that he and Mr. Bell, then representing West Toronto, were the only two members of the Opposition who voted for the Bill and joined hands with us in declaring that new Parliament Buildings were necessary. It has been charged that we have been dilatory, and that we have not taken action, when the fact is that we have taken the stand that the buildings are necessary, and this, under the circumstances, is the only thing we can do without further action by the House.

Mr. MEREDITH—You are shirking your responsibility.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—I deny that. The only responsibility resting upon us was to secure the erection of new Parliament Buildings if they could be put up for half a million dollars in a manner suitable for the wants and position of the Province. No one thing in my Department has caused me more care, and anxiety, and concern than I had with reference to carrying out the sanction given by the House for the erection of these buildings. The Government advertised a competition for plans; plans were received, tenders advertised for, and step after step taken with the greatest care. All information possible was obtained, the advice of experts was obtained. The experts advised that the plans could not be carried out for the money appropriated. The plans were re-modelled, specifications prepared with the utmost care, revised yet again, and at the end of two years' constant work we found

THE CONVICTION FORCED UPON US

that we could not go on with any hope of completing them for the amount appropriated. And yet you talk about shirking responsibility! When have we shirked responsibility? Our responsibility, with respect to the action of the House in voting money, ceased when we found out that the plans could not be carried out for half a million dollars, and it will not commence again until we ask the House to devote more money for the purpose. So far as this resolution is concerned I must say that I cannot see why anyone should have any difficulty in voting for it. It is a repetition almost in terms of the one voted on in 1880; it is a repetition, almost identically, of the solemn act of this Legislature, and therefore every gentleman in this House who voted for that measure will find no difficulty in voting for this, and I cannot understand how any fair minded man can vote against it. The resolution now before the House consists practically of three propositions: first, that the present Parliament and Departmental Buildings are unfit for occupation by the Legislature, and I ask how can any candid member of the House say that they are fit for occupation by the Legislature? I am not now dealing with the question of the cost of new buildings, but I ask how can any member who has been in this House for any length of time, or, indeed, anyone who has only recently come here, vote against this proposition? Are they fit for occupation? Are they decent buildings for the deliberations of a body of Provincial representatives from the great Province of Ontario? I confess that any man who can answer yes to these questions has quite different ideas as to what is fit and proper for this Legislature from those held by me. The next proposition is that they are inadequate to the requirements of the public service, and that, I think,

NEEDS NO PROOF.

The mere aspect of the buildings is sufficient demonstration of that proposition. Without reference to the state of the rooms in which the public business is carried on, they are not adequate, and we have been compelled to rent additional premises in which to carry on two of the most important of the Departments of the Government. I allude to the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Public Works, so that it must be admitted, that even as far as capacity is concerned, they are not adequate to the requirements of the public service. And then the third proposition, that they are not in keeping with the resources and position of Ontario, as the premier Province of the Dominion of Canada follows as a matter of course. Now, for myself, I have no hesitation in voting for this resolution, but what course the Government will take after the resolution is voted on is quite another thing. It is quite clear that whatever course be taken now, the course that has been taken has demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt that half a million dollars will not be sufficient. We have decided that beyond all question, and the probability is that three-quarters of a million will be required, and I have no hesitation in saying that if we are to have new Parliament Buildings, let us have buildings fitted to the business, and worthy the position, of the Province of Ontario.

Mr. MEREDITH—Wait till after the next general elections.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—I can well understand the position of the leader of the Opposition. He reasons with himself:—"If I am successful in the next election the position will be changed; I shall take the place of those Grit fellows across the floor, and then I shall be able to consider this question from my own standpoint. If I decide to do it as they have put themselves on record, they cannot go back on it." This is about the effect of his resolutions. This is about the effect of his amendment last session. He does not say that it is not a proper thing to do to build new Parliament Buildings, he does say that these are adequate; he only says that it is not the proper thing to ask him to pronounce upon the abstract question, and that the Government should take the responsibility and bring down the plans.

Mr. CLARKE thought the Government were unreasonable in asking the two members for Toronto to make an attack on the leader of the Opposition for the course he had pursued. The Government ought to be satisfied by their voting for the resolution. For his part he should vote for the resolution, and he would like to see what member of the House could conscientiously say that these buildings are adequate for the Parliament or in keeping with the position of this Province. He proceeded to formulate a terrible indictment against the buildings; they are "an old rookery, mean, petty, and niggardly," and he pitied the taste of the man who can say they are sufficient for the Province.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—Point that to your leader.

Mr. CLARKE—Point it where you will. He proceeded to describe the buildings in the various Provinces, very much to the discredit of Ontario. He pledged the votes of himself and his colleague for Toronto on all divisions relating to the new Parliament Buildings. And in conclusion he characterized the present buildings as the dirtiest, dingiest, and meanest buildings in the Dominion.

Mr. YOUNG did not consider the Government were shirking their responsibility, and instead of this they were to be commended for not going on with the buildings when they found that they would cost more than the amount voted. He had not changed his views on the present buildings. They are half a century old, dilapidated, and objectionable from a health standpoint. Then, while he would not take the ground that the records of the Province were in great danger, yet they were in some considerable danger. And it is not in keeping with the wealth, importance, and character of the Province that the Parliament should meet in such a House. Whilst he had said this yet he would not force the hands of the Government, and in voting for the resolution he did so because it expressed his opinion, and not with a view of compelling the Government to precipitate action. His estimate of the cost of suitable buildings was \$1,000,000, and this had been arrived at from a consideration of the amount spent on similar public buildings.

Mr. ROBILLARD understands that resolution to mean that it will be giving the Government *carte blanche* to go on and spend what they please. Let them come down with a plan and submit it to the House. This was the reason why he would vote against the resolution.

Mr. GRAY had come to the conclusion that the sooner Parliament Buildings were erected the better for the Province of Ontario. In supporting the motion he did so from an entirely different standpoint from that of any other member who had spoken—he regarded it as a vote of want of confidence in the Government. The Commissioner of Public Works might laugh, but he understood that the Minister's health had suffered from the state in which the buildings are.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—I vote want of confidence in the buildings.

Mr. METCALFE, after full consideration, had come to the conclusion to vote for the new Parliament Buildings. Neither the hon. member for West York nor those for Toronto had converted him, but he had regard to humane principles. He hoped the Government would take the vote as an expression of the opinion of the House and have the buildings erected at once. He did not think that any member on either side of the House should have any hesitancy in voting for the motion. What is the use of being in the House if he could not launch out and vote as he chose for once.

Mr. MEREDITH, in dealing with a question of this kind, admitted that the Government were met with greater difficulty than they ordinarily were, and he wished the House and the people to take this into consideration. So far from acting from motives of jealousy to Toronto, he asserted that there could not be two opinions as to

TORONTO BEING THE FITTEST PLACE

for their erection, and with regard to the character of the buildings, he contended that they should be in keeping with the position the Province holds. He proceeded to review the history in the House of the question of the erection of new buildings, and read a former resolution of the House to the effect that \$25,000 would be sufficient to erect a new fireproof wing at the west end of the buildings for the Crown Lands Department. He admitted that the Government was right in not proceeding with the erection of new Parliament Buildings under the Statute of 1880, when it was found that they could not be built for \$500,000, but he contended that the declaration then made by the House that the present buildings were not in keeping with the

Province must be sufficient before a definite scheme was brought down. He was not prepared to vote for the resolution; but he frankly gave his assurance that as far as his party was concerned, or as far as he was concerned, that he would give a proposal from the Government a fair consideration on its merits. No further could he go, and in stating this he was going further than he was called on to go, and taking also a different course than usual. He was also opposed to the issuing of terminable annuities for providing the funds, and he was certain that the country was against such a manner of raising the funds. He concluded by moving the following amendment:—

"That all after the word 'that' be struck out of the resolution and the following inserted:—The question of the propriety of, and the necessity for, the erection of new Parliament and Departmental Buildings, as well as of the providing of the moneys necessary for their erection, is one that ought to be dealt with in the first instance on the responsibility of the Government, and this House, while declaring its readiness to give its careful consideration to any proposition submitted by His Honour's advisers dealing with it, is of opinion that it ought not to be called upon to express any opinion upon an abstract proposition as to the erection of such buildings or until a definite proposition is submitted by His Honour's advisers for dealing with the question."

MR. MOWAT'S VIEWS.

Hon. O. MOWAT—I am glad that my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition has made such an advance in this matter. On former occasions he attacked the necessity for new Parliament Buildings, but he does not make such an attack now. He does not dispute the necessity for their erection and makes no attack upon the arguments brought out in support of the necessity for new buildings; he makes no attack upon the resolution, indeed he does not dispute one word in the resolution which he is going to vote against. He does not now dispute that the present buildings are unfit for occupation. He indeed says that this Chamber is fit for the purpose, but he cannot dispute that it is the only part of the buildings at all fit for its purpose. He has not one word to say against the proposition in the resolution that the buildings are not adequate to the purposes of the public service or against the proposition that they are not in keeping with the resources of Ontario as the premier Province of the Dominion, but still he refuses to vote for the resolution which embodies these propositions. He tells us, however, that when the Government comes down with a proposal he will do, as he has done before, deal with the matter on its merits. I am afraid that my hon. friend would find some ground for acting against any proposition which we might lay before the House just as he found ground for resisting any scheme which we laid before the House for dealing with any question on its merits during the past twelve years. My hon. friend wants the House to think that he and the Opposition are not under responsibility; but their responsibility is just as definite, as positive, and as emphatic as that of the members on this side of the House. Why haven't we proceeded with the erection of these buildings? is asked. Well,

THERE HAS BEEN NO CONCEALMENT

about it. We recognized in this that the constituencies were not prepared for a larger expenditure than half a million. We believed that the constituencies were prepared to sanction the spending of half a million, but we didn't think that they were prepared to sanction a larger expenditure than that. It is part of our duty as a Government to ascertain the state of public opinion, and act up to it, and as the exponents of public opinion we have been able to pass a large number of measures which have promoted the prosperity of the country. Whenever public opinion is prepared for this larger expenditure we shall be prepared to deal with it whether it is this session or not. So far there is no shirking; we have been doing what we ought to do, and we are not prepared to do more until public opinion is ready for it. We believe that it is a good thing that the buildings should be erected and any one who attempts to lead public opinion in a direction different from that which he knows to be right is responsible for what he does. My hon. friend often tries to mislead public opinion, and sometimes he has been successful in doing so.

Mr. MORRIS—Are you going to vote for the motion?

Hon. O. MOWAT—Undoubtedly I am going to vote for the motion. I vote for all good motions. My hon. friend the member for London is going to vote against a motion which he believes in. Until now we have had a furious opposition to the proposition of new Parliament Buildings. My hon. friend has given a statement of only a part of what took place at Chatham, but he will not deny that at various places in that campaign he used the proposal of the Government to build new Parliament Buildings as a means of creating political capital against the Government. His leading organ in the west declaimed against the erection of new buildings, and urged the rejection of the Government's candidate because we had favoured the erection of these buildings. Though there is not a member of this House who says that these buildings are not needed or that they are not

NEEDED HERE IN TORONTO.

yet in order to make political capital against the Government the whole Tory party have been doing their best to prevent this good Tory city