

Mr. FISHER. I find nothing in the information before me about a site having been purchased.

Mr. MONK. I do not think that system of voting money is a very satisfactory one. The committee is given no information to show where the building is to be or what kind of building it is to be. We have no means of judging whether the vote should be \$30,000, or \$40,000, or \$15,000.

Mr. FISHER. I will give my hon. friend (Mr. Monk) some information if he will allow me. The report is that St. Roch post office is absolutely inadequate for the wants of the place. St. Roch is a large manufacturing and industrial portion of Quebec in which centres a large retail trade. I have before me a copy of a petition from the people showing the need of additional post office accommodation.

Mr. MONK. To whom is it addressed?

Mr. FISHER. To the Postmaster General.

Mr. MONK. I know that St. Roch is a very busy locality. Would the minister let me see the petition?

Mr. FISHER. What I have before me is only a copy of the allegations and without the signatures. The signatures appear on the original petition, which, of course, we can bring down if desired.

Mr. MONK. I would give great consideration to such a petition, aside from any reasons that the minister has given. But when the government ask for such a sum as this they should be ready to show that there is some immediate need for it. There has been no purchase of a site, there is no recommendation from the Post Office Department, nor the report of any official showing the necessity for this building. The petition is the only thing we have to enable us to judge what amount should be voted.

Mr. FISHER. I can give the hon. gentleman (Mr. Monk) some further information if he will allow me. There are now two post offices one at St. Sauveur and one at St. Roch, both under rental, one at \$700 and the other at \$300. The population of the first to be served is a trifle under \$40,000. The postal revenues for the fiscal year ending June 30th last were, for St. Roch, \$11,775, and from St. Sauveur, \$4,824; a total of almost \$17,000 per annum. Money orders issued, \$77,000, and paid, \$20,000. Payments to postmaster at St. Roch, \$824; to postmaster at St. Sauveur, \$691. These payments are based on the amount of business done in these offices. Then comes a petition which was forwarded, endorsed by the Postmaster General to the Public Works Department.

Mr. MONK. Is that the information upon which this vote is asked?

Mr. FISHER. Yes. In addition to that, is the reason that the Public Works Department understand the need of a public building of this character at Quebec, and it is considered that \$30,000 could be properly utilized during the coming fiscal year towards the erection of such a building.

Mr. MONK. I think that a considerable expenditure of money is required, both at Quebec and at Montreal, for many purposes. These are the two most important places in the province of Quebec. If we have regard only to the recommendations of the transportation committee, and if we intend to carry out those recommendations, we ought to be spending a large amount of money to solve the transportation problem at Montreal and Quebec. It is not with any feeling of hostility to this expenditure that I must say that I consider the data is insufficient upon which we are asked to vote this money. The minister shows that a considerable postal business is done in that part of the city of Quebec, there is no question about that. But that is no proof that a new postal building is required there. It would be better to expend this money in carrying out the recommendations of the Transportation Commission in the important port of Quebec. We have no reasoned report from the Department of Public Works to show what this \$30,000 is specifically required for. No doubt there is a petition somewhere asking for this improvement, but we have not got it before us. It seems to me that where it is a question of initiating a large public work such as this which must cost \$100,000 at least, the department would proceed much more satisfactorily, and the committee would be more willing to consent to the vote, if we had such information as is generally laid before a board of directors of any business company when they propose to enter into a large enterprise of this kind. It is not because there is a large business at that post office that we should have a \$30,000 building; we should have to justify this vote a statement from a responsible official of that department to the effect that a new building is absolutely necessary, and what will be its approximate cost. It seems to me we ought to have before us the petition asking for that expenditure, in order to understand the grounds upon which they ask it. Speaking generally, there is no doubt that improvements of this kind are required in the city of Quebec and in the city of Montreal. But I would object to a large vote, for instance, to enlarge the post office at Montreal without having before us all the necessary information to justify it.

Sherbrooke drill hall, \$20,000.