

Small, the then taxing officer in the Court of Queen's Bench?

Mr. McLELAN. I cannot give that information.

Mr. MULLOCK. Then, it would appear that the taxation under the instructions of the Department has never yet taken place.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. In answer to the hon. gentleman, I may say that when a property is chosen and is bought, the papers are sent to the Department of Justice, in order that the title may be investigated. The Department of Justice then investigates the title by appointing or selecting a barrister to do the work. When the Department of Justice sends a statement or a letter to the Department showing that the title having been investigated, the Department of Public Works, for example, may pay the amount; then the amount allowed by the Order in Council is deposited in the proper name, or in the proper hands, and paid over when the title is obtained. Therefore, from the moment we ask for the title to be investigated until the bill comes back taxed or allowed by the Department of Justice, the Department that has bought the land has nothing to do with this. Of course, I am not saying that to throw the onus on another Department; that is well understood; but I want to explain how the thing stands.

Mr. BLAKE. Quite so; that is understood.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. In two or three of these cases, I see that the instructions of the Department of Justice were not followed, and certainly my intention is to call again the attention of the Minister of Justice to this discussion, and to the facts that have been brought out by the hon. gentlemen on the other side, so that he may investigate the matter, and see what course he has to take in order to have these accounts properly overhauled.

Mr. BLAKE. Hear, hear.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. I have no doubt he will do that. Of course, hon. gentlemen know—my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition knows—having been at the head of that Department, that a Minister cannot go into all the minutiae and see everything in the Department; that abuses may occur, and that as soon as we see them we correct them. I have no doubt the Minister of Justice will look into the case.

Mr. BLAKE. Not merely was the hon. gentleman not improperly endeavouring to shirk responsibility by the statement he has made, but I believe the grossest abuses would arise if any other course were pursued by the Departments than that which he has indicated. The only proper and efficient check on legal charges is to see that they all pass through the crucible of the Department of Justice. I always insisted upon that when I was Minister of Justice, and not only so, but I insisted that, if I was to be responsible for the legal work of the Government, I should have the appointment of the legal agents of the Government throughout the country who were to discharge the business. But, while he has stated the only correct course which ought to be pursued, it is quite evident, on the other hand, that when the responsibility rests with the Department of Justice, it is an effective responsibility and has to be discharged. I do not accuse the Minister personally; I do not suppose he looks over every bill of costs, but I think there has been departmental neglect in this matter. The letters which have been read, so far as they conveyed comments, seem to have conveyed very proper comments to the intended officer who was to cause taxation to be made, but I did not hear the letter in so far as it dealt with the conveyancing charges. It seems to me that the letter might have indicated the extraordinary character of these charges, if it does not indicate it. What I complain of is: a direction being given to tax before a parti-

Mr. MULLOCK.

cular person, that the direction is not carried out; the bills are returned evidently only colourably taxed by another person, and are recommended for payment and paid. The hon. Minister has only done what is proper in going further than the original statement which was made, and saying that steps will be taken to overhaul the accounts. I think anything less than that would be less than justice.

Mr. MULLOCK. I may say that I am more than pleased at the attitude of the Minister of Public Works.

Port Arthur.

216 Port Arthur—Immigrant shed..... \$7,500 00

Manitoba.

217 { Lieutenant-Governor's residence and stables,
Winnipeg 5,000 00
New Parliament Buildings, Winnipeg 100,000 00

Repairs, Furniture, Heating, &c.

Parliament House, Ottawa—Works in connection with experiments for lighting the House of Commons and Senate by electricity; furniture, fittings, &c 16,800 00
Departmental Buildings, Ottawa—Western Block—Temporary offices in court yard for use of Post Office Department 1,805 00
Ottawa Geological Museum—Fittings, repairs, &c 1,000 00
218 Ottawa Post Office—Repairs and improvements 1,550 00
Removal of snow—Public Buildings, Ottawa. Victoria, B.C., Post Office—Furniture and fittings 800 00
Ottawa Drill Shed—Making good damage by storm of 12th November 1883 2,800 00
Victoria Chambers, Ottawa—Rooms occupied by Technical Branch, Department of Interior—Rent and improvements 130 00
1,300 00

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. Hon. gentlemen must have seen that, on both sides of the building, in the Senate and in the House of Commons, we have had a trial of electricity. On this side, we have had the United States Company, and on the other the Edison Light Company. The matter has been looked into. We had to have that light for a certain time during this Session, in order that the trial might take place. I have had an expert to look into the matter and report to me on the best light to be selected. I am not yet in a position to say what is the result of that test, because I have not had time to look into it, but as soon as the House rises we will see whether we had better keep two lights or only one, and which of the two will be the best; also, whether we will extend that light to other parts of the building. Hon. gentlemen must not be disappointed if we do not have the electric light next year, because I desire to wait until it has been tried elsewhere, either in Washington, Albany or London.

Mr. BLAKE. I observe that the next vote has some reference to this same subject.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. Yes; the next vote is for a number of matters which were suggested by hon. members at the end of last Session. We had a discussion, as hon. gentlemen will remember, about lighting this Chamber, the ventilation, the draft on both sides near the walls, and several changes were suggested. These changes have been made, both in this Chamber and in the Senate Chamber. While we were at work we found that the glass over our heads was very thin and we were in constant danger from its falling on our heads; therefore I had it removed and replaced by plate glass so that there would be no danger, in case of a light object falling on the glass of its breaking through and injuring anyone on the floor of the House. We did the same in the Senate Chamber. In our own Chamber we took good care to protect the Opposition side of the House, because, of course, we liked to see them sitting there and do not wish to disturb them in their places. I must also say that before the skylights had been arranged, we found it was much