

1875, the number increased to eight by the 31st March, 1876. On the same dates respectively, the total number of all classes of prisoners in confinement was sixteen and sixty-six. Before the enlargement of this gaol only thirty-two prisoners could be suitably lodged in the eight rooms it contained. Between the 1st July, 1873, and the 31st March, 1876, when, as I have already stated, sixty-six were confined—the largest number of prisoners on the return is shown on the following dates—thirty-eight on the 1st January, 1874; thirty-one on the 1st July, 1874; and thirty-seven on the 1st January, 1876.

"Thus it will be seen that the increase both in the number of convicts and other prisoners from the 1st July, 1873, to the 31st March, 1876, was so great as to compel the Government to make the enlargement which like the new gaol at Summerside had been very much wanted, even before the 1st July, 1873.

"The enlargement added forty more cells to the gaol, thereby giving accommodation to a total of 72 prisoners.

"There were nine convicts transferred from Charlottetown Gaol to Kingston Penitentiary on the 15th December, 1879.

"Had the Queen's County gaol afforded sufficient accommodation for the convicts confined there, without any expense for enlargement being incurred, I contend that the amount (\$16,589.25) already paid by the Dominion Government, beyond year or nay, amply compensates the Government of Prince Edward Island for every expense connected with the maintenance of all the convicts, including prison lodging, from the 1st of July, 1873, to the 31st December, 1879. But as the convicts were left in the hands of the Provincial Government to take care of and provide for, as the gaol appears to have met the requirements of the Local Government until 1876, as the number of convicts and other prisoners suddenly and largely increased, and as the enlargement of Queen's County Gaol has been on the part of the Prince Edward Island Government, avowedly made to meet the demand for increased accommodation for convicts whose maintenance and safe-keeping are the concern of the Dominion Government, I am of opinion that this particular part of the claim is entitled to favorable consideration.

"I deem it proper to add that I have failed to learn whether the Prince Edward Island Government notified the Dominion Government of their intention to claim compensation for the enlargement of Queen's County Gaol before the work was commenced."

In regard to the proportion of the expenditure incurred in the extension of Queen's County Gaol, which the Dominion should bear, the Inspector reports as follows:—

"I beg leave to report that in view of the fact, as stated in my report, that between the 1st July, 1873, and 31st March, 1876, the number of convicts increased from one to eight, and of the other prisoners from fifteen to fifty-eight, and that the total new accommodation provided by the extension was forty cells, and that the gaol as extended is the property of the Government of Prince Edward Island, I am of opinion that if the Government of the Dominion should pay to the Government of Prince Edward Island one-fourth of the total expenditure incurred for extension, with interest at five per cent, they will be assuming their fair share and proportion of the expenditure."

The undersigned, therefore, recommends that nothing be paid on account of the Prince County Gaol at Summerside, but that upon the Prince Edward Island Government giving a full discharge of all claims in connection with gaol extension as aforesaid, there be paid to them the sum of four thousand and seventy-five dollars and twenty cents, being one fourth of the sum of \$12,539.10 certified as the cost of the extension of Queen's County Gaol, and interest thereon for six years at five per cent.

That is the report of the Minister of Justice. This sum closes the whole account.

Mr. BLAKE. Do the Island Government accept this settlement?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Yes.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

263. Public Buildings—Ottawa..... \$24,000.00

Mr. FAIRBANK. I have waited in the hope that some member of the Government, or some older member of the House, would call attention to what I believe is almost a universal feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of hon. members with the condition of this Chamber, in some respects, and I believe it is a subject proper to introduce in connection with this item. It is the general feeling that the room is not suitable in its present condition in many respects for the purposes for which it is used. It is forced by the rooms surrounding it away from the outer walls, and windows are rendered impossible except at an elevation some 30 feet over our heads, and particular pains seems to have been taken to prevent the coming in of the slightest ray of pure sunlight by stained glass. Not a solitary ray

of the light of heaven is admitted here until it is so changed as to become unrecognizable, in flagrant violation of that very ancient command: "Let there be light." It is certainly not carrying out that command to light gas, as we have to do here for three or four hours before sundown. The necessity of sunlight to successful vegetable life, or vigorous animal life, is admitted on all sides. A short time ago we heard in one of our Committees the statement that the fruits of the North-West were unusually sweet owing to the unusual amount of sunlight there, and perhaps the occasional undue acidity of our debates may be attributable, to some extent, to the want of sunlight. A Bill for the admission of sunlight, duty free, would, I believe, be passed without amendment. Air, no doubt, we have in abundance, but the manner in which it is distributed is very unequal, and, at times, too vigorous at the back benches. Those upon the front benches have, perhaps, not experienced the disadvantages of this to anything like the extent they would if they occupied the rear benches. Indeed it is questionable whether the proper outfit for members on the rear benches would not be an over-coat, a night-cap and an ear-trumpet.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. And a blanket.

Mr. FAIRBANK. I believe it is not putting it too strongly to say that one-half the hon. members do not know one-half of what is going on at the time it transpires. Now if the object is that the hon. members should take a practical part in legislation, it is almost entirely defeated by the miserable acoustic properties of this Chamber. If the object be to have the rank and file know but little and do but little, except answer the division bell, then this Chamber might be considered nearly a perfect success. It is no uncommon thing to see the hon. gentlemen occupying the front seats use their hands as ear-trumpets on asking for a question or an answer to be repeated. If this is the case on the front benches, in what blissful ignorance must hon. members on the rear seats remain as to what is transpiring. The practical result is that hon. members coming here anxious to learn and to serve, for a time, exert themselves to know what is going on. After a time they find this is impossible and they surrender at discretion, and consequently we see that nearly every day a great many of seats are vacant. Now, I believe it is a matter of no small consequence that the 200 men who assemble here should know more of what is going on, that they should be more educated in the system of Government. If we were to introduce military tactics here, I believe this evil would soon disappear. Suppose we placed the skirmishing line in front, and the occupants of the front benches, the heavy artillery, the great guns, in rear, obliging them to fire over the heads of the light infantry in front, I think that very soon there would be a change in the battle field in this respect. Nothing but guns of the greatest calibre could stand the strain for any length of time. Ten years ago a Committee was appointed to consider the difficulties which then existed to a greater extent than now. They called to their assistance four experts, of whose assistance the Committee expressed their high appreciation. But their appreciation was not so obvious in practice, as very few of their suggestions were adopted. In relation to air they said:

"It is allowed to fail to the exhaust flues, along the windows and sides of the walls, producing a dangerous cold current upon the heads of those in proximity thereto."

This evil still continues to an extent that has rendered quite a number of members unfit for duty a considerable portion of this Session. The report also suggested that "to get pure air it should be taken from above the surface of the ground by letting down galvanized iron tubes into the present hot air vaults;" and "to take the air for the fan from the skylight above instead of from the puddle below." The air is