

don county council purposed erecting new buildings they offered an enormous prize, and I understand the designs submitted provide for buildings quite worthy of the purposes for which they are intended. What has been done in connection with this competition? Have the prizes been awarded, and is the successful competitor to be entrusted with the new building?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Prizes were awarded by the committee entrusted with the consideration of the plans and awarding of prizes, but the department did not decide to accept any of the plans, and plans have been prepared by the architectural staff of the department under the direction of the chief architect.

Mr. LAKE. Are these designs to be submitted to a body of experts before tenders are called for, as indicated by this article?

Mr. PUGSLEY. No, except to the experts of the department.

Mr. LAKE. This is a most important matter, and it is due to this House and this country that some more inspection should be made of these plans than apparently is proposed by the Minister of Public Works. However good, and however able his architects may be, I do not think it is sufficient simply to put this matter into the hands of one body of men, we ought to have these plans on exhibition, so that the public at large may see them, may criticise them and a body of experts should be appointed to look into them. The members should also have an opportunity of seeing the plans and understanding the nature of the building for which they are asked to appropriate this enormous sum of money. As I said, it seems to me, that the last buildings constructed in this city entirely from the designs of the department are not of such a character as in my humble judgment the great public departmental buildings of the Capital of Canada should be.

Mr. PUGSLEY. As I have explained, some years ago, before I became minister, competitive designs were invited from Canadian architects. A number of designs were submitted and the committee of architects to whom the plans were referred, decided upon three sets of plans to which the first, second and third prizes were awarded. The plans were all exhibited in the Railway Committee room. After careful consideration, the department decided to adopt none of these plans for reasons which seemed good to the department.

Mr. FOSTER. Was that on the question of style or of cost?

Mr. PUGSLEY. On the question of style of the plans. In the opinion of the department, and I and other members of

the government who saw the plans, entertained the same view, none of these plans were the best that could be devised and it was decided to direct the chief architect to prepare new plans. These plans were exhibited last session.

My hon. friend has referred to an article in the 'Citizen' about an alteration in the plans. An alteration has been made, and I regretted this, but it was necessary, in view of certain improvements in the nature of a driveway by the Ottawa Improvement Commission. Owing to this driveway it was thought better to preserve Mackenzie avenue as a public highway. In the previous plans, a building was provided to encroach upon or entirely take up Mackenzie avenue. Upon consideration and after hearing the views of the Ottawa Improvement Commission, the government decided that it would be better to leave Mackenzie avenue open as a public highway, as a part of the driveway. That necessitated narrowing the building. Then came the question whether we should leave the building of the same height. It will be understood that in erecting a departmental building of that size, it was desirable to have a well in the centre to afford light to the inner offices.

Mr. FOSTER. What is the width from Mackenzie avenue to Sussex street?

Mr. PUGSLEY. About 200 feet. As we had to narrow the building by about 40 feet in order to leave Mackenzie avenue vacant, it became necessary, in order to give sufficient light to the offices on the well, to reduce the height of the buildings by at least one story. This will greatly improve the building so far as the lighting of the inner offices is concerned. The original plan provided for 7 stories on Sussex street and 6 on Mackenzie avenue. Under the changed plans there will be 6 stories on Sussex street and 5 on Mackenzie avenue.

A word in regard to the architecture of the buildings recently erected by the government. I do not profess to be any more skilled in architecture than by hon. friend, but I think I can safely say that opinions differ very much if my hon. friend's opinion reflects the views of any considerable number of people, because I have heard a good many people speak in terms of high praise of the Archives Building, of the Mint, and more especially of the Victoria Memorial Museum, which is spoken of as being of very beautiful design and one of which the country may well feel proud. My hon. friend speaks of the Grand Trunk hotel, which I think is a very fine building. But I am sure that if it were a public building it would receive a lot of criticism. Many people would say that there is not sufficient ornamentation about it, that it is too plain, and altogether unattractive, and yet