

John, were employed to prepare plans and specifications for the work. Without waiting till these plans were completed to place the preliminary work in the contract, the Government at once contracted for the work connected with the new foundations, which was now being vigorously carried on. The plans for the superstructure were not yet completed, but he believed they would be during the present or next week, and tenders would then be asked for in order to replace the buildings destroyed by the calamitous fire in the city of St. John.

MR. DOMVILLE said that before this motion was carried, he would like to make a few remarks. The hon. member for the county of St. John had that the amount up to the present date was \$200,000.

MR. BURPEE: I said about that.

MR. DOMVILLE said that the hon. the Minister of Finance had told them four or five weeks ago that the amount was \$200,000. Now, what he wished to say was this: that, in consequence of the fire in St. John, and the property consumed, the extra amount paid into the treasury would be something like \$700,000. He had the whole of the figures with him, but could not put his hand upon them at the moment. The Minister of Customs had referred to the natural increase of the trade in St. John, and partly accounted for the increase of revenue in that way, but he (Mr. Domville) did not think that was in accordance with the financial statement made by the Minister of Finance. It was admitted on all sides that trade had been bad and that the revenue was falling off. But immediately when he enquired about the extra money paid into the treasury of St. John, the House was asked to believe that part of that extra money might be attributed to the natural increase of trade in that city. That, he thought, was a mistake, and he hoped his hon. friend would withdraw the statement altogether. With regard to the insinuation referred to by the Minister of Public Works, he (Mr. Domville) made none. He said it was currently reported in the city of St. John that these works were kept back for political purposes. He stated that, while two thirds

of the city had been rebuilt, not a blow had been struck in connection with the Government buildings. He could not see how that could be accounted for on the ground that the architect could not get their plans ready, because if private individuals could build whole streets, there was no reason why the Government work should not be equally energetically pushed forward. From 1,800 to 2,000 houses had been erected by the citizens, and the Government might, therefore, have put up even a small building, four storeys high, as a savings bank. They might have done something also in the way of erecting a post-office even though the Custom-house had to be delayed. The people of St. John would have been content to do without the Custom-house for a time; it would have been some consolation to them to have seen at least one of the public buildings started. But nothing had been done, and the ruins of the Government buildings still existed in the midst of newly-erected buildings. He was willing to believe that the treasury was drained to the utmost, and that the Government could not see its way to carry out public works for the present, but he thought if \$200,000 had been collected, as was admittedly the case—that sum should have been expended at a time when there was no employment to be had and the people required some stimulus. If the new buildings were to be undertaken as soon as the plans were ready, they would not be finished this year, and he thought the Government were to blame that they had fallen short of their duty; but he attached more blame to the members for the city and county of St. John, and also the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. People could not expect much from some of the Ministers who represented them in the House, because these members were absent from duty month after month, evidently thinking that their own business was more important than that of the country. It was all very well to say to the House that the plans could not be got, but so long as some of the Ministers acted as they did, so long would it continue to be an impossibility to obtain plans. He thought it was a crying shame that

MR. MACKENZIE.