

London drill hall and armoury, \$60,000.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. The site has been purchased and is 252 feet on Dundas street, and 120 feet on Grenville street. It is to be constructed of brick, with stone dressing on a stone basis.

Mr. OSLER. Is there a drill hall there now ?

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. The deputy minister informs me that he doesn't think there is.

Mr. OSLER. You do not know; but supposing there is one.

Mr. HYMAN. There was a drill hall constructed in 1872, which got out of repair and became practically useless. Besides, the site of the old hall was not conveniently situated, and was altogether too small.

Mr. LANCASTER. From whom was the site bought ?

Mr. HYMAN. I fancy the site was bought from eight or ten different people who owned different portions of this land.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I have a memorandum that the site was purchased from seven different parties, and I will give the hon. gentleman the names: The Dominion Savings and Loan Company, Mr. Caravella, Mr. McKellar, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Crouch and Miss Durkin. The total cost was \$5,507. The total cost estimated to complete is \$175,000 to \$180,000, including the site.

Mr. OSLER. I think a city like London ought to have a good drill shed, and if the old site was not large enough the new one should be larger. In the case of Toronto, we paid a large amount towards buying the site before we could get the government to entertain the idea of building a drill shed. I think the same rule ought to apply to all cities. The Toronto building is in proportion to the size of the city, still I do not think it cost as much as it is proposed to spend in London. I am inclined to be very liberal with all these expenditures for drill halls, but I think the same principle ought to apply to all the cities. I do not begrudge the expenditure at all, but I want to see all treated alike.

The MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. I think it would be good policy on the part of the country to build these drill sheds on a somewhat less costly plan, and have good headquarters in all the counties for the militia. It is true that in the large cities they require a great deal of accommodation, and the buildings are expensive. I think the building in Toronto cost between \$300,000 and \$400,000. Even yet I know from applications I have received lately from the Militia Department that the local corps complain that they have not all the accommodation that they require. I believe the Militia

Department are considering a policy of providing accommodation on plans that will call for very much less money than we are expending now.

Mr. OSLER. Toronto paid \$150,000 for the site.

Mr. HENDERSON. I fail to see any reason why municipalities should be called upon to furnish the site for public buildings of this character. To my mind it is the duty of the government not only to furnish the building but the site. As a rule, I have no sympathy with the idea that municipalities should tax themselves to furnish the site of any public building. In the present case I have a pretty fair recollection that when this building was first proposed to be erected we had strong assurances from the Minister of Public Works that the cost would not exceed \$100,000, and quite a lengthy debate took place at the time the first vote was given. I see that some \$14,000 were expended prior to the 1st of July last, some \$10,000 were voted last year, which I presume will be expended before the 30th of June coming. Now we are asked for an additional \$60,000. Those sums alone would be somewhere within the estimate given us by the Minister of Public Works when he first asked for an appropriation for this building. I confess I am astonished now to find that the architect was so far wide of the mark in his first estimate that he now tells us he will want from \$160,000 to \$175,000, about \$75,000 more than the original estimate. But this is not the only occasion that similar mistakes have been made. From year to year this House is led to vote money for public buildings on the assurance that the cost will be limited to a certain amount. But, before these buildings are completed, we find that in many instances the construction of the buildings costs from 50 to 100 per cent more than was originally contemplated. Now, the objection I take to it is this: I am not so particular whether that building costs \$150,000 or \$175,000—the country can afford it—but I do protest against this principle of engineers and deputy ministers spending the money of this country contrary to the wishes of this House. We are the men who should say how much money should be expended. We are, as a matter of fact, not the men. It is the officials of the government, not the ministers—they do not control it—but they allow their officials to control the whole of this expenditure and I say the sooner we stop that system the better. I do not believe in coming here and taking the responsibility for the expenditure of money in this country year after year when practically the entire expenditure on these public buildings is brought about, not by the minister who is supposed to be responsible to parliament, but by his deputy or by his other officials. I think the ministers should