Mr. WILSON (Lennox). Is this just for a post office?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Yes. My instructions to the chief architect are to keep the cost of this building in the vicinity of $13,000 or $14,000. It will not exceed $15,000.

Mr. CROSBY. Does that include the site?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Yes.

Mr. CROSBY. Has the hon. minister had any requisition from the Post Office Department for this building as being required for the work of the department?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Not from the Post Office Department. I may say, however, that my attention was called by the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Graham), in whose constituency this town is situated, to the very great need of post office accommodation there. My hon. friend no doubt is aware that the department allows a small amount to the postmaster to enable him to secure accommodation. The people of Athens have been urging, so the Minister of Railways informs me, that increased accommodation be given them, and he hoped it would be possible to make an arrangement with a banking company which was going to erect a building there so that my department should pay a portion of the rent necessary to get increased accommodation. However, the matter fell through, and I decided to ask for a vote for a building not to cost a great deal of money but one that would be suitable to the needs of the town.

Mr. FOSTER. Here is a post office erected solely for the business of the Post Office Department. After it is erected who pays for the renting expenses of that building ?

Mr. PUGSLEY. The Department of Public Works.

Mr. FOSTER. Is that the case all through ?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Yes.

Mr. FOSTER. The Department of Public Works does not require a building, but the minister, without consultation with the Postmaster General erects a post office building for post office business and then assumes the cost of that building after its erection. Does the rental now paid for post office accommodation there fall into the revenue of the post office?

Mr. PUGSLEY. No, that rental will cease. I have sometimes thought it might not be undesirable, certainly it would not be from the standpoint of my department, if the other departments would pay the Public Works Department a rental for buildings which we erect for them.

Mr. FOSTER. Under the present system when the Postmaster General goes before the country and presents his accounts, saying this is my revenue, and this my expenditure, he is not making a fair exhibit to the country.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I would not like to say that.

Mr. FOSTER. He is shouldering a portion of the expense of his department on another department, and concealing it, in effect, in that other department. I have no hesitation in saying that, in my mind, the Minister of Public Works ought not to undertake to erect a building for another department until requisitioned by that department. This slipshod method is carried on simply for patronage purposes. Two ministers who have nothing to do with the post office decide to build a building for the Postmaster General and the carrying out of his business.

Mr. PUGSLEY. Rather for the public accommodation.

Mr. FOSTER. I think that is bad policy

Mr. PUGSLEY. No, in this case, it is for the public accommodation.

Mr. FOSTER. If the Minister of Railways should some morning find the Minister of Public Works building a station somewhere on the Intercolonial railway, and on its completion this should relieve the Minister of Railways of the cost of maintaining that station, and then when the Minister of Railways presented his balance sheet to the country, he omitted the cost of that station, he would be giving a wrong account of part of the expenses of his department. I think the minister of post offices, the Postmaster General, ought to pursue exactly the same course as the Minister of Railways in this matter, and that he should not have the Minister of Public Works bearing the cost of part of the accommodation required by his department.

Mr. PUGSLEY. My hon. friend makes two points, one that we should not erect a building for another department without a requisition from the minister of that department, and the other, that if we do erect a post office the Postmaster General should pay a rental for it. Since when did my hon. friend entertain these views.

Mr. FOSTER. For a good many years.

Mr. PUGSLEY. Certainly not before 1896.

Mr. FOSTER. For the last 7 or 8 years I have advocated them steadily in the House.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I used to have a good deal of respect for the views of my hon. friend and have now, but I cannot find