

Aside from that, however, the sewerage of these buildings is not connected with the sewerage of the city. The drains from these buildings go out to the river, and I do not believe it can be said with truth that the absence of those who are unable to attend the House at present has been caused by the bad ventilation or bad sewerage of these buildings. It is, perhaps, the gas that is generated in this House by the member for Niagara, and others, that hurts us. I believe the atmosphere of this room is as pure as that of any room occupied by so large a number of persons. For my part, on entering it from the outside, I do not experience any disagreeable sensation. In the corridors the air is less pleasant. I believe this Chamber is as well ventilated as any could be. I know the Minister of Public Works has paid a great deal of attention to this matter, and brought about a great improvement in the ventilation since the question was first raised by Dr. Brouse. I think it is a mistake to suppose that the cause of the illness of certain members is the bad ventilation of these buildings.

Mr. PLUMB. I only wish to say that I have heard many of the remarks of the member for Ottawa (Mr. Currier) from him once before, and if I had any memory of having excited his ire on a previous occasion, I probably should have excepted him now from the number of gentlemen who have sensitiveness or smell to discover whether this room or any other part of this House is well ventilated or not. As he has elicited cheers from those gentlemen likely to cheer anything reflecting on me, I congratulate him on his feat. But I still insist that the hon. gentleman may be of those who, though acute in many ways—who may have the sense of hearing and taste, and very capable sight—cannot vouch for their nose. I am not in accord with him in saying that this is one of the best ventilated rooms in Ottawa, and that Ottawa is one of the best drained places in the country. It may be in the neighborhood of his residence, and that those who cross the Rideau have not discovered any foul odors in that neighborhood. It may be that in the lower part of the town there is no foul smell arising from the sewers; but those who are unconscious of those odors are peculiarly constituted. I congratulate the hon. gentleman on his superiority to me and other people in this respect.

Mr. CURRIER. I must confess my hearing is rather acute and sensitive, and that it has often been shocked by the long speeches of the member for Niagara.

Mr. CHARLTON. The importance of having this Chamber properly ventilated can be hardly overestimated. It is a question to which I have given considerable attention. I confess I have suffered somewhat in health for some years past, in consequence of the imperfect ventilation of these buildings. But I do not consider that the ventilation of this Chamber at present is as defective as in former years. Under the supervision of the present Minister of Public Works, important changes for the better have been made in the ventilation of this Chamber. I do not know that it is fair to attribute all the illness of which members complain to the ventilation of this House. It must be borne in mind that when we come to Ottawa our habits of life are, in a great measure, revolutionized. We turn night into day, and those of us accustomed to outdoor lives, are without that amount of exercise we are in the habit of taking, and that itself greatly influences our health. Besides, many members attend entertainments two or three times a week, and often eat heavy dinners, and all these things affect the health. The only wonder is that not more members are sick in consequence of this great change in their habits during the Session. The provision for the ventilation of this Chamber is such as to secure better air than we have. If an attempt is made to bring in fresh air, a protest is instantly made by many hon. members that there are draughts. You cannot have a movement of air without draughts, which keep the air in proper condition

for breathing. If hon. members would bear in mind that draughts of fresh air are less injurious to health than sitting in a stagnant, fetid atmosphere, we can have the air much improved by using our present means and appliances for ventilation. The room where the Public Accounts Committee meets is not one where a person can remain with comfort ten minutes, there being no provision for ventilation. The air of that room, where fifty men often sit for two hours, is enough to make any one sick. The entrance to the air ducts might be examined often and regularly, as they may be letting in impure air. If there is any suggestion with regard to improvement in this direction, let us have it. If this matter could be investigated by a Special Committee, the appointment of one is highly desirable. We could have an abundance of fresh air let into this Chamber, which is practicable, if hon. gentlemen would cease their protests against draughts.

Mr. ORTON. I am glad to see this matter brought up. There can be very little doubt of the truth of what the hon. member for Niagara said, that the House is not ventilated properly. The fact that the air comes in tous every evening from the bed of the Ottawa is sufficient in itself to account for the illness of certain hon. members. We all know that the foul air from Ottawa and Hull must naturally get to the bed of that river, being heavier than pure air, and that in the evening more especially it descends. By the arrangements for the ventilation of this Chamber this impure air from both Ottawa and Hull is drawn into the House nightly. I think the evil could be very easily remedied by building a tower so that we may obtain the fresh air from a higher elevation. The system of ventilation which is practised in the General Hospital in the city of Toronto is the best that I have noticed, and I think it would be well if the engineer who has charge of these buildings would pay a visit to that institution and make himself acquainted with the means there adopted for the purpose of ventilation. I am sure he would be able to obtain information which would be valuable to him, and I know that the surgeon of that institution would be glad to show him around the building and explain the workings of the system, which, by the way, was adopted by the advice of the first medical men of Toronto. The air enters by ducts in the upper part of the room, and aspirators are placed two or three feet above the floor by which the foul air in its natural tendency to descend escapes, and allows the pure air to take its place. Here the cold and the hot air enter by the same channels, so that sometimes we have a current of hot air and then, by way of variety, we have a current of cold air, causing an eddy here and another there, just as are produced to a body of water by the meeting of currents. I think that with very little attention, and not a great deal of expense, these difficulties might be obviated and the ventilation very much improved. But I think what we really require is a radical change—I mean with regard to the position of this Chamber. This part of the building is most unsuitably located; it should, instead of being placed in the very centre of this block, be more exposed both to the air and the rays of the sun, for, as hon. gentlemen know, the admission of sunlight is an important consideration in a question of this kind. I offer a suggestion which, perhaps, may not be received with very much favor by the Government, or by leading members on the other side, but I believe it is one worthy of consideration nevertheless; and that is, that the library, which would be admirably adapted for the purpose, should be used as the Legislative Chamber, and that the present Chamber, with the adjoining corridors, should be transformed into a library. If that is too much to ask them, would it not be well to consider whether a new Chamber ought not to be built at the rear of this building, accessible by air and light, for the purposes of a Legislative Chamber.

Mr. BLAKE. The subject is one which, in view of the state of health of several of our most respected members,