

of the past before he takes such a position as he has taken to-night. I find some other cases similar to this, and I would like to read them for the benefit of the House. At Alexandria, where it is proposed to build a post office, the gross revenue is \$2,664; the table does not give the cost of rent. At Alliston, in Simcoe, the gross revenue is \$2,434. At Aurora, one of the thriving towns in the riding represented by the hon. Postmaster General himself, the revenue is \$2,974, and the cost for rent, fuel and light is \$140. So that if you take the interest on \$15,000, if this post office only costs that, at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, it amounts to \$525 a year, besides which there are repairs, a caretaker at a cost of about \$400 a year, and all the other incidental expenses. Why should you saddle the country with a permanent expenditure of from \$1,200 to \$2,000 a year for what you can get for \$140? If the hon. Minister of Public Works desires to carry on a conversation while I am speaking, and the hon. member for Haldimand wishes to interrupt me, I would like him to understand we have rights in the opposition which we intend to exercise, and we expect to be treated with the courtesy to which we are entitled. I listened to him without interrupting him, and I ask him to extend to me the courtesy that is usually extended by one gentleman to another. I have heard the hon. Postmaster General years ago, in the time of the Conservative regime, saying that the principle we had adopted with regard to building post offices was that when we could get the accommodation necessary at a reasonable price by renting, we would not put up a public building. But he went further and declared it to be the policy of the government, when they proposed to put up a public building or to improve a harbour, to first ask the town or city where the improvement was to be made, whether it would be prepared to provide a site, or to contribute something towards the improvement. The hon. member for Haldimand says the town should not be required to do that, because this is the only opportunity we have of spending money in these rural constituencies. It may or may not be; but many of our towns would gladly give a free site if by doing so they could get a public building. They have offered it over and over again, towns of considerable importance, and the offer has not been accepted. In this case, what we complain of is that the Minister of Public Works does not inquire what the town will give, but purchases a very expensive site, probably from some friend of the government. Let me name some more of these towns. Blenheim has a gross revenue of \$2,310, and no post office. Brighton has a revenue of \$2,053, but no post office; Bowmanville, \$2,721; Burford, \$2,283; Campbellford, \$2,344; but I need not go over them all. They are here in large numbers in the hon. Postmaster General's own report, showing that in most cases the people are accommodated at an outlay

of from \$65 to \$150 a year for rent, fuel and light; and when we can obtain the necessary accommodation for such a small sum, why should we saddle the country with an expenditure of from \$15,000 to \$20,000, and a permanent outlay of from \$1,200 to \$2,000 a year? I do not think the country will endorse it or regard it as good business.

Mr. THOMPSON (Haldimand). I have to thank the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) for two things: First for having given me a lesson in manners. I must apologize to the hon. gentleman for having taken part in a short conversation with my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works while he was speaking. I think I listen to the hon. member of East Grey as often as any man in this House does. I find in his speeches very often a great deal of valuable information, which as a young member I am glad to obtain. I do not think in this particular case the hon. member should have called the attention of the Committee so pointedly to my case, because there were several gentlemen on his own side who were engaged in conversation; but they were behind his back, and probably he did not see them. Second: because he has called attention to some ancient history. That has always been a favourite pursuit of mine, and I have gathered from it that in the case of this very Cayuga post office, the hon. gentleman himself supported and voted for it. If so, how can he condemn the government for undertaking to do what he approved of in years gone by?

Mr. SPROULE. So far as my memory enables me to speak, I cannot say that I ever voted for it or supported it; but I am only pointing to the fact that the hon. gentleman is condemning his own friends so unstintedly when he cites that as an example to justify what is being done to-night.

Mr. LANCASTER. In view of what has been said by the hon. member for Haldimand, I think I ought to call his attention to a little modern history in the form of the Auditor General's report, which has been received only a few days ago. Looking into that report, I find under the head of Cayuga public building that the caretaker, G. A. Gibson, a name well known to me, got \$50.

Mr. THOMPSON (Haldimand). I may tell the hon. gentleman that he is also the postmaster.

Mr. LANCASTER. I understood the hon. member for Haldimand to tell the House very frankly that there was no caretaker in the Cayuga post office. Of course, I do not live as near Cayuga as my hon. friend, but I live near enough to be able to look up these things. As we are getting more information from the hon. member for Haldimand than we are from the Minister of Public Works, I think we ought to warn