

Mr. EDWARDS. Is the minister able to tell me whether the building used for customs purposes in Kingston is a rented building or belongs to the government?

Mr. PUGSLEY. It belongs to the government.

Mr. EDWARDS. The reason I ask is that in many of these places you are putting the post office and customs house in one building, and I thought that if the building used for customs purposes at Kingston were not owned by the government, it would be well to follow that rule there.

Mr. SPROULE. How much is the building at Listowel expected to cost?

Mr. PUGSLEY. From \$20,000 to \$25,000 in addition to the site. The population in 1901 was 2,693.

Mr. SPROULE. Did the town supply the site?

Mr. PUGSLEY. No, we bought the site.

Mitchell—public building, \$15,000.

Mr. PUGSLEY. This building is for post office and customs purposes. The lot fronts on two streets—on one 75 feet and on the other 105 feet.

Mr. SPROULE. What is this building to cost?

Mr. PUGSLEY. This would cost about the same as the one in Listowel.

Mr. SPROULE. About \$25,000.

Mr. PUGSLEY. \$20,000 to \$25,000. In 1901, the population was nearly 2,000. It is a town which does quite a business. I see the postal revenue is upwards of \$4,000; money orders issued, \$22,549; money orders paid, \$14,548. It is quite a prosperous town. There are five mills there and two banks.

Mr. SPROULE. You can find towns by the dozen quite as large.

Mr. RUSSELL. Did I understand the minister to say that the department was going to spend \$25,000 on this building. I understood that he had decided to spend from \$10,000 to \$15,000 on these small towns.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I was figuring upon a more expensive building for Mitchell, somewhere about \$20,000.

Mr. BLAIN. Customs and post office?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. Is there a customs outpost there?

Mr. PUGSLEY. There is a customs office there at present. It is the outpost of Stratford.

Mr. PUGSLEY

Mr. SPROULE. What were the collections last year?

Mr. PUGSLEY. I have not the customs revenue.

Mr. SPROULE. What do you pay the customs officer there?

Mr. PUGSLEY. He is paid by the Customs Department. I would not have that information. We rent a building for him at present as well as for the post office.

Mr. SPROULE. It would be some additional information to enable one to understand the importance of the place. Now, you mentioned a place where the total collection in the year was \$26, and I take it that the customs officer would be paid \$300 or \$400 for collecting that \$26. It seems to me to be unjustifiable to establish a place like that as an outpost of customs, especially when you can find other places all over the country in large numbers where ten, fifteen or twenty times as much is collected, and where they have not the advantage of being outposts of customs.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I hope the hon. member is not applying his remarks to Mitchell.

Mr. SPROULE. I am not talking of Mitchell. I was talking of a place mentioned by the minister where they collected only \$26 a year.

Mr. PUGSLEY. The fact that we have rented buildings there would be some evidence that in the opinion of the Minister of Customs it is desirable to have a customs officer. I find that the building now proposed was asked for by the town council, also by the board of trade, who impressed upon me very strongly the inadequacy of the accommodation afforded to the public by the building at present used for the post office and customs office. The building occupied was, it was alleged, unsuitable, and the upper room for the customs house was also unsuitable. The London post office inspector visited the place and made a report to the conclusion that a public building was regarded by the people and also by him as very necessary in the public interest.

Mr. FIELDING. A comparison between the amount collected and the salary of the collector is apt to be misleading. There are points where it is necessary in the public interest to keep customs officers, though you would not collect a penny. So the mere fact that a small amount is collected and a considerable sum is spent in collection, would not necessarily convey the impression that the appointment of a customs officer is a mistake. I am not applying that to this particular case, but generally. There are points where it is necessary to keep a customs officer for the pro-