

28. And what is the total area of the new portion?—176,000 square feet entirely new, and 9,000 square feet proposed new story over existing portion: total, 185,000 square feet.

29. In other words, it is about nineteen times the area of the existing portion?—Yes.

30. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] I want to get that a different way; I want to ask Mr. Campbell a question for our guidance, because this proposal will be taken in conjunction with a gradual process of transfer of Departments from the Government Buildings below to the Molesworth Street and Hill Street portions. Can you tell us how many square feet there are in the Government Buildings?—100,484 square feet.

31. And how many square feet in the building suggested on the old Parliamentary Buildings site?—205,000.

32. How much greater is that than the Government Buildings?—Double, and 5,000 square feet additional.

33. *Mr. Izard.*] That is the floor-space?—Yes. Many portions of the one building are only three-story, whereas the other has four.

34. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] While we are upon this I might say that evidence will be given later on which will show you that we shall have to make provision for some Departments before long on the Molesworth Street frontage. Assuming that frontage was erected for the purpose of providing for Government Departments, what would be the cost of that portion?—About £20,000.

35. As far as I know, the only portion that we should require to go on with at present would be the Molesworth Street frontage, and that, you say, would cost £20,000?—Yes.

36. Of that proposed building?—Yes.

37. If we do decide to come here, we want to have a site whereby portions can be erected by degrees covering a period of years when accommodation is necessary. Is this proposed building fireproof?—It is estimated to be fireproof.

38. And suggested to be built of what?—Brick and stone, steel beams, and fireproof floors.

39. And in comparison with the wooden building, it would be a safe building?—Perfectly safe.

40. *Hon. Mr. Paul.*] What is the total estimated cost of the building shown on the plan?—£188,000. That is for the 185,000 ft. of new work.

41. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] We do not require to provide at present for more than £20,000—we are not suggesting the expenditure of the £188,000.

42. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] How far would the £20,000 go?—The frontage to Molesworth Street is 182 ft. by a depth of 50 ft. That is three-story in one portion and four-story in Sydney Street.

43. What relation does the pink part fronting Molesworth Street bear to the whole building?—Between a sixth and a seventh of the whole building.

44. The grey portion is a ninth of the whole lot?—It is less than a ninth. Eleven thousand feet is the ground-area of that building, and 20,000 ft. is about the floor-area, which is about one-tenth of the whole lot.

45. Out of how many?—205,000 ft. The portion at the lower, or Sydney Street, end has four floors, and the other part only three.

46. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] In any case, I suppose the frontage would be certainly a little more costly for the interior portion of this building?—Yes, it may be.

47. *Hon. Mr. Paul.*] In the ordinary course of events you must have a complete plan?—I might point out that this building will be much less costly—the building that is marked pink. I see one-seventh will cost £20,000, and the total cost is £180,000.

48. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.*] Have you got here the plan of the suggested Museum?—I have the original plans which were drawn up but which we had to abandon. This plan was drawn for the building to be built in conjunction with the Geological and Mines Departments. [Plan explained.]

49. Do you recollect what the cost of that was to be?—£14,000. The building for the Museum was only one block, but there were supposed to be three large halls occupying the whole frontage of Museum Street. The cost of the Museum portion was to be £7,000, and the balance was to be for the Mines Department and Health Department.

[Plan marked "B" produced.]

50. What is that plan?—A plan showing how the present Departmental Buildings site could be utilised for shops, warehouses, &c.

51. This portion is the whole of present building [indicated]?—Yes, that represents the present Departmental Buildings—the portion coloured pink on the plan represents a block of buildings which might be erected without disturbing the existing building except that we cut off the side wings and front, or otherwise they would come up too close to the new buildings. Shops and warehouses might be erected on all the frontages practically without disturbing the old wooden building. The blue portion denotes the warehouses and shops which would be erected when portion of existing building still remaining is removed.

52. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] What about the Telephone Exchange?—That would go up to the top of the new Post Office.

*Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward:* That is going there irrespective of this building.

53. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] Would not that increase the risk of fire with these buildings there and the wooden building in the centre? Supposing a fire took place in any one of those buildings, it would almost be sure to communicate to the others?—This building would be fireproof. The buildings are nowhere nearer than 40 ft. in any case.

54. Every section is a separate element of danger of fire?—A wooden building is a risk anywhere, but it is not a greater risk than you would find in any other part of the city.