

the public. they are published in an authentic form, after being revised by the hon. gentlemen who speak. The change in this respect really makes the suggested arrangement a little more unsatisfactory to me than I had supposed, for, after all, what is the proposition? It is that the speeches shall be reported and sent to the world, then, after they have been published, they may be revised and republished in book form. I think that will not be a satisfactory arrangement. It will lead a great many gentlemen to say that if their speeches are to be sent to the world without an opportunity for revising them, they will scarcely take the trouble of going through them afterwards. At the same time we have been making experiments on this question from year to year. We have been endeavoring to combine correct reports with prompt publication at the least expense, and now it appears we have got on the ascending scale, and we are proposing to expend \$500 a year more, besides the amount that is to be paid in addition after the limit of five hundred pages is reached. Feeling, as I do, that I have been opposed to these reporting arrangements of the past, it is but fair that I should say that I have no fault to find with the manner in which the reporters have discharged their duties. I think the reports have been marked by a wonderful degree of accuracy, and the single objection I should make to them is their diffuseness. That is an objection that is not likely to be removed under the present proposition. Therefore, while I cannot express my satisfaction with the report which has been submitted by the Debates Committee, I think, on the whole, I should not be justified in setting my will against the opinion of the Committee and the majority of the House.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT.—The Committee in making the report are quite aware that it could not be received with unanimity by the House. It has been a vexed question, and here I might observe that if it is the opinion of this House that any better system could be adopted I should hope they would not, out of any sentimental compliment, hesitate to express its opinion. We feel the difficulties to be overcome as much as hon. gentlemen do. The hon. Senator from

*Hon. Mr. Dickey.*

Prince Edward Island thinks the publication in a newspaper has advantages over the proposed system. That is quite true, and if we could secure prompt publication in the columns of a newspaper we would continue the present arrangement. But it is because it was impossible to get a paper here to publish heavy reports with reasonable promptitude that we were forced to adopt the only alternative, which is contained in this report. How does the present system work? If any gentleman will take the trouble to read the *Citizen* three weeks hence, he will be inclined to think that the Senate is still sitting. I have often been chaffed by people who have seen the reports appearing day by day after prorogation, and asked if the Senate had not yet adjourned. This year they are much better up; they are within a week, but still a delay of a week is entirely too long. Bills come up here and are discussed, and it is very well known that after they pass the final stages the public cease to take any interest in them. It is only while public opinion can affect the legislation of the country that the people take an interest in the debates. As it is now, if the public were to rely for the information they get of our doings on the only channel through which they are officially communicated, the business would be passed and gone before they would have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. That is the great defect of the present system. I am quite prepared to say that the contemplated change is not one which meets my entire approval, but we are forced to adopt it, unless we appropriate a much larger amount for the service. The only way in which we could meet the views of the whole House would be to secure the publication of a report in some of the leading newspapers promptly after the speeches are delivered. We cannot obtain that under the present financial basis, but we are promised that the speeches will be published within twenty-four hours, and that a portion of the first edition will be distributed to the newspaper press of the country. They will go all over the Dominion within two mails after the speeches are delivered, so that the newspapers can publish them if they choose.

Hon. Mr. ALKINS — If I understand the report, it will be the unrevised edition.