

Mr. RINFRET: I understand there is no intention of discontinuing that work either. If I am informed correctly, the work done in these European capitals has been exceedingly advantageous to the archives.

Mr. CAHAN: As a matter of fact I think the reverend father who has been at work in the archives in Rome for many years, a very able man indeed, has reached the age limit and can be kept on only by special order in council. I believe I made application the other day in this connection. In Paris there is one man who, according to the age limit, should have been retired a year ago. I am sorry I have not my papers here, but he was employed on some very special work in reproducing some maps which were regarded by those interested in the public archives in this country as very important. Although he had reached the age limit a year ago I applied to have his services retained for another year, and recently I made a second application in his behalf. These people have been working for very small salaries and have not been able to save very much, and I have hoped to keep them on for special work as long as possible.

Mr. RINFRET: I should like to commend the minister for doing so. I think it will be agreed that an archivist can be kept at work longer than the average man in other activities. Unless he is so very old that he cannot carry on the work properly I think age only adds to his experience and ability in his work. I think the minister should be commended for keeping on these men whom we employ abroad, who are very excellent men, and for not being too strict in the application of the age limit. In this kind of work, as I have said, experience and age add to the value of the work done.

Mr. BROWN: I just wish to support the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for St. James. In my view the department of the archives is one of the most important, and the men engaged in it are, of necessity, men who have made a special study of their work. It has become a hobby with them. I can believe that men who have given their lives to this kind of work are more competent to carry on, despite the fact that they have passed the age limit. The minister should be commended for having taken the stand he has, and returning these men to service.

Mr. CAHAN: So far, if I remember correctly, we have not retired any person in the archives branch because of age. Of course,  
[Mr. Cahan.]

there are a certain number of temporary employees, young women who come and go, but they are on a monthly wage.

Item agreed to.

Public printing and stationery—salaries, \$37,602; contingencies, \$10,000.

Mr. CAHAN: In this item there is a reduction, due to the fact that under the age limit provision we have retired a considerable number who were employed in the public printing and stationery branch. The reduction in salaries this year amounts to \$12,888.

Mr. RINFRET: I should like the committee to realize that the detail of this item, appearing at page 91 of the estimates, shows only a very small portion of that which really constitutes the staff of the printing office.

Mr. CAHAN: Quite so.

Mr. RINFRET: While I acted as Secretary of State proposals were made by hon. members then sitting on this side of the house to change the system in the printing office. I shall not blame nor shall I criticize the present government for not doing so, because such a change would be a most involved and intricate matter. I should like however to say that the list of salaries appearing at page 91 covers but a very small proportion of what really constitutes the staff of the printing office, because the main group of employees at that point work at prevailing rates of salaries, and the expenditure necessary to meet those wages, combined with those of the printing officer proper, are charged to the different departments under an item for printing. If hon. members will go through the estimates they will find that in connection with every department there is an item for printing and stationery, including not only the material but also the work. The larger group of employees in the printing office are not included in the estimate now before us, but are spread through several items. At least, that was the system prevailing some years ago, and it is obvious that it is still maintained.

Mr. CAHAN: The annual report of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery gives the details to which my hon. friend has referred. The present item includes salaries of official heads of that department. On March 1, last year, there were 694 employees, all told, in the department, although that figure has been somewhat reduced since. They are paid out of the king's printer advance account. Their salaries, which last year amounted to \$1,700,000, are arranged according to the prevailing rates in neighbour-