

translation of laws is made by men who have not the requisite professional knowledge they have greater difficulty I think, in apprehending and rendering the exact meaning. I quite agree that this is a serious matter. I have called attention to the gravity of the question, and I believe that at the present time a committee composed of members of both Houses is considering the whole subject of the translating staff, and of any improvements that may be made in the system.

Mr. BUREAU: I notice on looking over the Bill that some of these corrections are not errors of translation; for instance, the first clause of section 3, in which we are asked to insert the word "et" before the word "d'une"; that must be an error by the proof-reader. Then section 10 is to be repealed by substituting another section. I have not read the French version of the section, but by repealing the old section and substituting a new section I cannot see that we are correcting any errors of translation.

Mr. DOHERTY: We are repealing the existing French translation and substituting a correct translation. Perhaps it sounds peculiar to state it in that way, but we are letting the English version stand. The English and French versions are both equally the law, but here we find one version is perfectly correct, while the other is not. The only method, it seems to me, by which we can make it clear is to strike out the incorrect and substitute the correct, and in that sense it is a matter of translation, as is also the first amendment the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bureau) mentions, in that the English version contains the word "and," while the "et" is missing in the French version. I understand that in validating the Revised Statutes the usual practice was departed from, and they were passed in English, then translated and a statute enacted making the translation law. It was certainly an extraordinary way to deal with laws that ought to be passed concurrently in both languages. But, as I have said, those who were in control at the time—I do not know whether my hon. friend had any share in that control—must be responsible for that departure from the established practice.

Mr. LEMIEUX: I was a member of the Government at the time the statutes were revised, and I remember that the French translation did not come in force at exactly the same time as the English version.

[Mr. Doherty.]

Probably my right hon. friend will remember that Sir Alan Aylesworth,—who was then Minister of Justice,—had to introduce special legislation in order to meet the general law which makes it obligatory that both versions should come into force concurrently. The translation of the Revised Statutes was entrusted to a well-known lawyer, the late Mr. Horace St. Louis, of whose ability there can be no question. He was absolutely proficient in both languages, and at the time no better man could have been selected for that work. It is quite possible, however, that as there are certain differences between the British Criminal Code and the French. Mr. St. Louis may have used expressions taken from the French Code Criminel which have no place in our Criminal Code. In glancing at the Bill I notice that there are many omissions which are rather in the nature of printers' or proof-readers' errors, and I see very few words or expressions which would indicate that the translation was poorly made. On the contrary, I think the translation appears to have been made as perfectly as possible, and I would like at once to remove the doubt cast by my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding) on the ability of the translator. On the whole I think the sooner we correct these errors the better for our practitioners.

Mr. BELAND: I do not wish to contradict anything that my hon. friend from Maisonneuve (Mr. Lemieux) has said. There may have been a number of omissions and errors in the printing, but we find from the Bill before us that about 300 corrections have to be made. I do not for one moment question the competence in French of my hon. friend the Minister of Justice, but I want to ask him if his translation is found to-day to be wanting to the extent this Bill would indicate, how is he satisfied that the translation of the clauses referred to is now perfect when it was previously imperfect? In other words, what is the composition of the Board of Translators that has passed judgment upon these amendments? The moment the minister declares that he is satisfied and gives the House satisfactory assurance as to the competence of the Board of Translators, I do not think we should go over every item.

Mr. FIELDING: If my hon. friend from Maisonneuve gathered from what I said that I had any desire to reflect on any individual translator, I can assure him that that was not my intention. I do not know who the translators were, and from my lim-