

confess frankly that it is not absolutely accurate. It is as complete as possible, but not absolutely so.

Mr. BERGERON. Is it costly?

Mr. FISHER. No, it costs simply the salaries of the people here and the printing of the forms.

Mr. LALOR. Do the people who give the information receive anything?

Mr. FISHER. A few dollars are paid to the local secretary-treasurers who give us the lists of persons to whom to apply, but the people who fill in the forms get nothing.

Mr. BERGERON. That would not be much.

Mr. FISHER. It is \$2 or \$3 in each case. The whole thing practically costs very little more than the salaries of the officers here to whom my hon. friend the leader of the opposition referred, and some printing. We have the use of the mails for nothing and the returns are brought in free, and the result is we shall be able in a few weeks to place before the country a fairly accurate census of the agriculture of Canada for this last year. The whole of this cost amounts to \$30,000 this year, but that includes all the statistical work of the department which, before this kind of work was begun, cost from \$15,000 to \$18,000. We imagine that at a cost of \$15,000 for the statistical branch every year, apart from census year, we shall be able to issue these interim statistical statements of the production and trade of Canada. The work is being done in such a way that it will not cost nearly as much as it is worth.

Mr. BERGERON. That will no doubt be of advantage in taking the next census.

Mr. FISHER. Yes, we are able to take the censuses in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta much more cheaply in consequence of having a permanent staff. We did all the preparatory work in the office without employing extra men. We only employed extra men during the compilation. We used our permanent officials as commissioners. The chief officers were all taken from our permanent staff.

Statistical Year-book, \$6,000.

Mr. BARR. Is the present Year-book any improvement on last year's? Last year's book was very defective. Three years ago the Year-book had a lot of valuable information, but last year a great deal of information given in former years was left out. I hope the hon. gentleman will return to the former custom and give us a Year-book which will contain valuable information.

Mr. FISHER. I hoped to lay the book on the table before Christmas, but I am sorry that I cannot bring it down before early in

January. The only difference is that I have omitted information about foreign countries. The information about Canada is as complete and very much the same as it has been for years.

Mr. BARR. That will depreciate its usefulness very much.

Mr. BERGERON. Who prepares the Year-book?

Mr. FISHER. The staff of the census.

Mr. DANIEL. Last year the minister promised he would alter the Year-book in certain respects so as to remove the objections which some of us made. But from what he has just said, I presume he is not going to make any change.

Mr. FISHER. What were the points of objection?

Mr. DANIEL. When Mr. Johnston had the making of the Year-book there was a great deal more information in it especially with regard to foreign countries and other matters which I cannot recall just now. The hon. gentleman promised he would have the book improved so as to make it as useful as the former one. In last year's, a great many of the tables were simply extracts from the census, and it did not contain the variety of useful information which we found in the former publication. From what I heard, that seemed to be the general opinion.

Mr. FISHER. My hon. friend is quite right in saying that last year's book had a good deal of census in it, but that was because it was the first Year-book published after the census was taken. What was taken from the census however consisted of compilations, in which the striking and main facts were put together in such a way as to make them comprehensive in their relation to one another. That having been done last year, it will not be repeated this year, and the tables will be on different subjects, except that certain things are put in every year and brought up to date so as to give the information which it has been customary to give for many years.

Mr. DANIEL. Will the information for the year be to the end of the present fiscal year, the 31st March, or as before to December 31st?

Mr. FISHER. I must confess that I do not know. I should think however it would be to the end of our fiscal year, because the information in the Year-book is taken from the departmental returns largely, which are made up to the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. I do not agree with the minister that we should cut down the statistical Year-book and not give the information given in former years, particularly