

they must be satisfied that the work has been done in accordance with the agreement and that the expenditure is fair and reasonable. The certificate of the local engineer, confirmed by our engineer, is the certificate upon which we pay the money over to the Ontario Government.

Mr. CAMPBELL: No money is paid out by the minister's department until a satisfactory report is received from his engineers?

Hon. Mr. REID: That is correct. Our auditors audit the accounts and our inspector examines the roads.

Mr. CAMPBELL: If a road turns out to be unsatisfactory, the fault lies with the minister's department in paying out the money.

Mr. STEWART (Hamilton): It is very important that the people of Canada should know this. There may be many hon. members who do not know how roads are constructed. I built many roads in my young days, and there is something going on with these government roads that is certainly very hurtful to the Dominion. I am told that Mr. Biggs and the Ontario Government are building roads in the vicinity of Hamilton out of limestone. A limestone foundation is not so objectionable, but to put on a surface of limestone is merely throwing away money and is of no use whatever. A limestone surface will last, perhaps, a couple of years, whereas if granite or field stone or some other hard metal is put on the surface, twenty years' use might be got out of a road. If they are putting on a limestone covering, it is time that the Dominion Government should put a stop to that, because it is just throwing away money. I should like to know what the roads are being covered with.

Hon. Mr. REID: I understand that they are covering them with some bituminous covering. No road that has been proceeded with up to the present time has yet been completed. I understand a covering is to be put on them next year. They are trying to get a good solid foundation; then they will put gravel over that, and in another year they will put on a covering that should be permanent. Our engineers are endeavouring to watch the construction as best they can. I understand, of course, that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction as regards the location of the roads. Every person would like to have a good road as near as possible, and we cannot blame him for that. We have had to allow the local

[Mr. J. D. Reid.]

government to do a great deal of locating of the roads. While, perhaps, some fault may be found with my department for not having the roads located differently, if my information is correct, the Ontario Government are also having trouble as regards location, because they have laid out a programme three times as great as the amount of money available from this source, and I do not see how they can ever proceed with their programme. If they do not, they, as well as we, are likely to have some trouble regarding location of roads.

Mr. STEWART (Hamilton): The answer which I get from the minister is not at all satisfactory to me, because I know for a fact that the roads are being finished with limestone. I want to know what the minister says they are finished with. The two men with the minister know quite well what the roads are covered with. Why not tell us?

Mr. REID: I will say again to the hon. member that he is entitled to the information with regard to that particular road. My officials should have had right here before me to-night a copy of every one of the agreements so that I could pick up an agreement and tell what it calls for, the construction of the road, the kind of road, the total amount and so on; but I have not that information here and it is an absolute impossibility for me to give an answer to-night. For that reason, I have proposed to let the item stand. The next time I shall have all the information and I will not ask that the item pass until every member has the information which he desires.

Mr. CANNON: The minister says: "My officials ought to have had the information to-night." The minister lays the blame on his officials. I wish to remind you, Mr. Chairman, and through you the minister, that this discussion did not start to-night; it started this afternoon, and early in the afternoon when this item was called, I asked the minister for information regarding several roads. I asked him for information regarding agreements, and at no time during the discussion did we had this afternoon, did the minister offer to let the item stand, nor did he blame his officials for not having the information for which I was asking? To my surprise to-night, when the storm blows, not from this side, but from that side, the minister immediately veers around, lays the blame on officials who cannot answer, and says: "Let the item stand." The attitude taken by the minister is neither fair to the offi-