

Mr. Mitchell of Pembroke endorsed Mr. Reid's sentiments in regard to the Minister of Education. He said they did not approach the question from a political stand-point, nor in the interest of the booksellers alone but in the interests of the country at large. He spoke at some length, and adduced facts and statistics in support of his position.

Mr. W. C. Campbell, said he wished to call the attention of the Minister of Education to the fact that the Act of 1874 was intended—as the members of the Government had then expressed it—"to give booksellers an opportunity of competing with the Department and to show they could do in opposition to it." That Act had been accepted by the booksellers as a boon; they had thought that under such a measure they would be enabled to enter into a fair competition with the Department. But just as soon as they had begun to carry out such a competition certain restrictions had been placed upon them. The old catalogue, which had been used for years in the Depository at the rate of twenty cents on the shilling sterling, was at once changed for one at the rate of nineteen cents on the shilling. When the Depository found, however, that the booksellers were supplying some schools with books the rate was reduced on the 12th of February, 1876, to eighteen cents on the shilling, so that if the Depository had been supplying books at cost for twenty years at twenty cents on the shilling they were now selling at a discount of ten per cent. They must either have been making a profit at the old rate or they were selling at a loss now. When it was intended that booksellers should supply prize books, &c., a catalogue was presented to them as one that was authorized. In going over that catalogue he found that there was not a single book on the whole list issued since 1868. The booksellers of Canada were not so far behind the times as to keep their shelves loaded with such old stock, and they were not allowed to supply the new books to schools or Mechanics' Institutes. He had gone very carefully over the catalogue, and he found that there were, out of the two thousand books on the list, five hundred which were now out of print. It had frequently been said that the bookselling in connection with the Educational Depository was carried on without

expense to the county. He begged to call the attention of the Minister of Education to a few figures which he thought would show the incorrectness of that statement. The salaries of the officers of the Depository for 1874 were \$4,855; contingencies, \$3,587; or a total of \$8,442. In those contingencies nothing was allowed for several items which booksellers had to pay—such as interest on capital, taxes, rent—and nothing for a share of the executive officers' salaries, who had to do a great deal of correspondence in connection with the Depository. Taking, then, the interest at seven per cent. on \$40,000, which would be \$2,800; rent and taxes, \$1,000; and a portion of the salaries of Departmental officers at \$1,000; they would have a total of \$13,442 as the expenses of last year's business \$50,000. This would be twenty-four per cent. on the amount of business done. If the business of any ordinary bookseller was carried on that rate it would be ruined in twelve months; ten per cent was the usual estimate. The intimate relations between booksellers and publishers enabled them to know pretty well the rates at which the Depository obtained their books, and taking the rate of 18 cents on the shilling there would only be shown a profit of \$5,851 in the year. They therefore argued that by abolishing the Depository altogether the country would save about \$5,800 per year, and besides that the work would be better performed.

Mr. Crooks thanked the gentlemen who had spoken for their kind words with regard to himself, saying that he felt the responsibilities of the office to which he had been appointed, but would endeavor to discharge its duties in a manner that would do justice to our educational system. He referred to the reasons which had led him to believe that the time had come when the people of the Province should exercise a more direct control over their central educational body than they had enjoyed in the past. It was not from any fault in the past management of the Department, but as the natural consequence of the great progress of our educational system during the last thirty years that he had believed such a change advisable. They had not assumed to introduce a change, but were simply giving proper action to that which had been built up by Dr. Ryerson. The presence of the deputation