

PARLIAMENTARY PRINTING CON-
TRACT.

MOTION TO ADOPT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

MR. STEPHENSON moved that the 13th Report of the Joint Committee of both Houses be now concurred in.

MR. BLAKE: Is it intended that this motion should include the adoption of the Report of the sub-Committee.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: No; the Report of the sub-Committee is merely appended for the information of the House.

MR. ROSS (West Middlesex): The Report of the sub-Committee is a part of the Report of the Committee, by which it was regularly adopted.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: The hon. gentleman does not read the Report as I read it.

MR. ROSS: The right hon. gentleman will find the words appended to the Report: "All of which is respectfully submitted for the consideration of both Houses."

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: You submit it, but you do not approve of it.

MR. ROSS: I know the Report of the sub-Committee was adopted.

MR. BLAKE: It would appear that the Committee has imperfectly performed its work. They have only given a partial answer as to the point of cancellation.

MR. McDONALD (Pictou): We have the recommendation of the Committee to the House. Speaking for myself, I should say the matter should not be questioned for a moment. If these contractors have made themselves liable to the severe censure passed on them by this Committee, surely we cannot say with one breath, you have been guilty of gross fraud, and your contract ought to be cancelled; but, inasmuch as it would be slightly inconvenient to part with you fraudulent contractors just now, we will hold on to you a few weeks longer, until it is more convenient to part with you. That is a kind of thing I cannot personally understand. Therefore, I think we have only one question to consider, and that is, whether the contract ought to be cancelled or not.

MR. BOWELL: The remarks of the hon. the First Minister are strictly correct. The Report is not a correct Report of the proceedings of the Committee. Not only was the

Report of the sub-Committee adopted, but it was adopted on a division. There were three voted against it. I am surprised that that portion of the Report does not appear on the record. The sub-Committee went fully into the question as to the best mode of securing tenders, so as to prevent fraud in the future; they decided to advertise for contracts in the future, and to require the tenderer to deposit \$1,000, which he must forfeit on refusal to enter upon his tender. The manner in which printing is done in the United States, in France, and in England, was considered, but it was thought by the sub-Committee that there was no time to enter into it; they thought they ought to cancel the contract at once, and that none of the parties interested in the recent fraud should be permitted to tender again, but the difficulties of carrying on printing in a city like this presented themselves, and they did not consider it would be advisable to go to the extreme that they could have gone in a city like Toronto or Montreal, and, therefore, it would, on the whole, be better to defer the change for the present.

MR. BLAKE: I think after this frank explanation, it is quite impossible to act upon the Report as it stands. If there is any possibility of putting out the printing as it should be, it is quite clear that we should not delay the cancellation of the contract; but I think we ought to have evidence of what the deliverance of the Committee was, and deal with it.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: I think we have got the deliverance of the Committee as a Whole that the contract should be cancelled, on the ground that it was obtained by improper and irregular means. There is a Report of the sub-Committee that it should not be cancelled immediately; but I quite agree with the hon. the Minister of Justice that it should be immediate. The matter was brought fairly before the House, and the contract was to be cancelled without reference to consequences. My idea is that we should adopt the Report cancelling the contract, and send the Report back to the Committee on Printing for further consideration. If the House believes that the Committee was right, that there was irregular practices, and that, therefore, the contract