

publish such a document. It conveys no information upon any question that it is important the public should be informed upon. Many of the questions are framed in such a way as not to elicit facts but to elicit opinions. Now, I venture to say that in the whole history of Parliamentary Government, no such document can be found. If you look at the old reports that have been collected at various times in England upon the state of agriculture, you find that enquiries were sent out to ascertain what the facts were. Why, Sir, when we wish to investigate any subject we don't want to know what the opinions of even a thousand men are; we know, as the hon. member for Hamilton said, that those men were either Conservatives or Reformers, and we know what their political opinions were; and if you ask any farmer his opinion upon those questions, you will get an answer in accordance with his political bias. But in order to enable us to come to a conclusion, we want the facts from which we may draw our own conclusions. We are not in the slightest degree better informed, after we have received such a report, than we were before, and I think it does no credit to Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN. The hon. gentleman is out of order. He is not discussing the question before the Chair at all. The question is upon the vote for printing, binding and distributing the laws.

Mr. MILLS. I am just following in the wake of the two gentlemen who spoke before me. However, I am not disposed to discuss the matter further at this moment. With regard to the publication of the Statutes, the hon. gentleman from Hamilton says that he received them very late. Well, Sir, I can say I have not received them at all, and I believe I was elected at the same time the hon. gentleman was.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It had not been found out at the time.

Mr. MILLS. Yes, it was; and it was because it was found out that I am here now.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It was a matter of opinion, merely; it was not a matter of fact.

Mr. MILLS. It was a matter of fact. There was no doubt as to the fact, but the hon. gentleman appointed a returning officer, who was so devoted to him and his party that, upon the condition that his expenses should be paid, and upon condition that he should be protected against all injury and loss, he returned the gentleman whom the electors refused to return.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. It is quite clear the highly favourable account which that report gives—I have not read the report, not a word of it, and, perhaps, I never shall—but the flourishing account it gives of the agricultural condition of the country, renders it very distasteful to hon. gentlemen opposite, who will not admit that this country can be prosperous or ought to be prosperous.

Mr. KIRK. So far as my own county is concerned, I will tell you what answers to these questions—

Mr. CHAIRMAN. The hon. gentleman is out of order.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. The hon. gentleman from Hamilton says that these Statutes were very sparsely distributed. In this connection I may mention that the free distribution of the Statutes last year amounted to over 20,000 copies. In Ontario alone, 6,000 copies were distributed to Justices of the Peace. The distribution to Judges, to public institutions, to clergymen, to registrars and to all other officers, is as liberal as can be made. Of course it is not the fault of the Government if hon. members of this House wish to provide each one of their constituents with a copy of the Statutes at the public expense; but I do not think the Government are really able to do it. I hope, if the project which is now be-

Mr. MILLS.

fore a Committee of this House is accepted, for establishing a national printing house, that the cost of the Statutes will become so low as that even a more liberal distribution may be made to the people than is made now. Every member of this House receives, I think, three copies of the Statutes, and if they choose to give them to their friends, they may buy some other copies for themselves.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Is it the custom to stereotype these?

Mr. CHAPLEAU. I think not. I think they are only printed and distributed.

Mr. LISTER. I only received one copy of the Statutes. But the complaint is not so much about the number of copies that are furnished to the members of this House, as about the lateness of their being furnished. I presume it will be several months before the Statutes enacted this Session will be distributed. People who have to obey the law want to know what it is, and the legal profession throughout the country want to know what laws are passed in this House. My hon. friend the Secretary of State spoke of the establishment of a national printing bureau. I trust a Government printing bureau will never be established in this country, if the experience of the United States, as to the benefits to be derived, be any criterion.

Mr. WELDON. Copies of the criminal law have been furnished to only a few libraries, and several applications have been made to myself for the volumes.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. We hope next Session to lay on the Table the Consolidated Statutes, and these will render the past Statutes comparatively valueless. A liberal edition of the Consolidated Statutes will be issued at once.

41. Printing, printing paper and book-binding \$70,000 00

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. The additional \$10,000 is asked by the Printing Committee.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. At the early part of the Session, I called the attention of the House to the question whether we could or could not supply former members of the House with copies of the various Sessional Papers. I should like to know what decision has been arrived at.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I think it is quite right, if any gentleman has sat in Parliament, although he may have retired, either voluntary or compulsory, that he should have these documents. Such gentlemen are not very numerous and the arrangements will not greatly add to the expense. I think that ex-members should have copies of the Bills, papers and documents issued during the Session.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I refer to the Sessional Papers and Journals more particularly. Some gentlemen file them, and would like to keep up the continuity. Of course, there will be some additional expense, but not enough to break us. I have received communications from several retired members, saying that they would be exceedingly glad to receive those documents. The Clerk has also received similar communications.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). The matter has been discussed two or three times in the Printing Committee, in regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for South Huron, but on investigation it was found that the proposal would add enormously to the expense. Very nearly half the members of the present House are new members, which means that nearly that number are retired members. Such was the case with the previous Parliament, and if we send the Sessional Papers, which are very expensive and are bound volumes, it will be found an exceedingly expensive operation, and increasingly so. To send those papers simply for