

the course of ten years. The only possible way in which a new set can be obtained is by application to the Department. We are then in a position not only to receive \$7,500 from these firms for the first set of electrotypes, but also to receive from them constantly a revenue for any renewals of the same; and I expect that during the ten years the entire cost to the country will be made up in this way. Besides, when the ten years expire other firms will be allowed to publish, and their electrotypes must be purchased from the Department, and so the possibility of loss is clearly avoided. That the work was prepared at a reasonable cost may be seen from the statement regarding the cost of the books published by other firms. The series issued by the Canada Publishing Company cost \$31,843; the Royal Readers, \$25,000; the Gage Readers, one-third less in size than ours, cost \$19,175; and in each and all of those cases only two sets of electros were prepared, whereas in ours we had four. In asking the House then to ratify this agreement I feel assured that I am asking it to approve of an excellent bargain. The School Act confers the power upon the Education Department of making an agreement of this kind without the approval of the House. I have, however, so far conceded to parliament the right of review; and I am so confident that the arrangement made is in the interests of the country that I have no hesitation in submitting, as I have done, fully and unreservedly, the details of the scheme for your consideration. From those who honestly investigated the matter there is but one opinion in regard to the wisdom of our arrangement with the publishers; and although looking at it more closely, as perhaps I am better able to do, than those who have not had the responsibility of all the details, I may admit that my duty has not been discharged without shortcomings, still I can appeal to honourable members on both sides of the House for that approval which I am satisfied the merit of the work deserves.