

House and the House of Commons with a view to invite tenders for the said service in the Senate.

He said: There has been a great deal of discussion and controversy in this House in the past with regard to the cost of translation, and I think it would be well to ascertain what proportion it bears to the cost of the service in other departments of Parliament, with a view to deciding whether the work should not be let by tender. In order to have the matter investigated I would move that a committee consisting of Messrs. Boyer, Ross (Middleton), Daniel, Thompson and the mover be appointed for the purpose of investigating and finding out the cost of the translation in this House, with authority to make a report to the House on this question.

Hon. Mr. LA RIVIERE—It is rather late in the session to bring up a motion of this kind. When I was a member of the House of Commons, I had the honour to be chairman of the Debates Committee, and we studied the question at the time. It was found impossible to let translation by tender, because we could not find out beforehand what were the qualifications of those who tendered for the work. I believe it had been tried previously in this very House, and it was found that the service was unsatisfactory. Translation is not ordinary work, as my hon. friend from De Lorimier stated the other day; it is not every day you can find a good translator. For such work a man must have a great knowledge of languages, and must be quite a scholar. We must bear in mind that our debates and publications are exchanged with foreign countries and how would it do to send books to France, or to other European countries, even to Russia, that were not properly translated? It would be a disgrace to this country. I hope my hon. friend, now that he has drawn the attention of the House to this matter, will drop his motion for the present session at least.

Hon. Mr. DAVIS—In reply to my hon. friend, I would say that it does not necessarily follow as a result of an investigation that we should have the work done by contract. The object of my motion is to investigate and find out whether this House is paying more than should be expended for this work. If we find that it should be done under contract, I assume that the work could be done in that way just as well as it is done now and perhaps better. However, the object of this motion is to ascertain whether this House is paying more than it should pay for the work that is being done.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—I have no objection to this investigation taking place, but it should be done when Parliament is sitting and not during recess. I would suggest to my hon. friend that he renew his motion at the opening of next session, and then a committee—either one of our standing committees or a special committee—could be appointed to examine into the translation branch of our service.

Hon. Mr. LA RIVIERE—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—I might inform my hon. friend that there are two branches of the service in both Houses; there is the translation of speeches, which might possibly be done by contract, although we proceed on a different line, the idea of that work being done by contract having been dismissed after some experience in both branches of Parliament, I believe, before my time. Now there is another branch of translation which concerns our laws, Bills which come before this House, which surely cannot be done by contract, because the work must proceed from day to day as Bills pass from one House to the other, and be continued by these translators after the session is over. It is work requiring minute attention and a high degree of skill, and I am quite sure that investigation will disclose the fact that that part of the translation must remain in the hands of officials of both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL—To my knowledge, the Internal Economy Committee of this House have been working on this question for years. I do not see what great object can be gained by appointing another committee, or how they can arrive at a conclusion as to whether the translators are good or not. If our present translators are not qualified, let us apply to some educational institution where we can get qualified translators, pay the price for satisfactory service.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Middleton)—As I understand, the object of this committee is to discuss the question as to whether the translation is well done or not well done, and to secure and collect all the information that can be got as to the relative cost of translating in this House and in the House of Commons, with any other information there is to be had on the subject, with a view of seeing whether or not it would be better to have the work done by tender and contract rather than as we are doing it now: I do not think it is too