

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. Yes, \$500,000, and I expect to have to ask for something for the following year but nothing like so much. I cannot estimate what the whole thing will cost.

Mr. HENDERSON. When does the hon. minister expect to be able to give the population of the Dominion?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I would not like to give the date. It will be probably two or three months after the returns come in before we can give an accurate statement of the population. The returns ought to be largely in by the end of the month, and in the main centres of population we ought to be able to make them up within a couple of months. We have not come to any decision as to whether we would issue reports before the whole of the returns are in. I do not see any objection to issuing the reports for the various divisions when we can get them in, but that is a matter that has not yet been determined upon.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. I would like to ask the hon. minister how they expect to get a proper census of the population of the country unless they are quicker than they are at present. They wish to know the population of the country on a certain day, on the first of this month. To my certain knowledge there are dozens of places where no one has seen a census paper yet. It would be impossible for an hotel to tell how many people they had in the house at a certain date, if you ask them a month afterwards. I always understood that in former years the papers were left to be filled in by the householders.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. It used to be so.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No. The enumerators carry the forms around, and they ask all their questions with reference to the 1st of April. The forms are not left to be filled in.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. How could they possibly tell in a large hotel who were there on the 1st of April?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. That is one of the difficulties which is necessarily attendant upon a de jure census which has always been taken in Canada. The same difficulty has arisen in past census, and will in this. I understand, however, that the returns were fairly accurate in that respect in the past, and I trust they will be again on this occasion. It is well understood that in unorganized and thinly-populated centres the work cannot go on so rapidly as in older settled districts. The work has been going on as rapidly as possible, and I hear very satisfactory reports from the officers throughout the country.

Mr. HENDERSON.

While the hon. gentleman (Hon. Mr. Prior) may be correct, that in some of the outlying portions of his province—

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. I was speaking about the capital of the Dominion.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The enumerators have been at work here since the 1st of April, and they have been going as rapidly as possible from house to house.

Mr. WILSON. Does the minister pretend to say that there is one of these schedules left to be filled in at each house?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. No.

Mr. WILSON. I was not at home when the officer came around, and he left a paper, which I filled in on Saturday last.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The practice is for the enumerator to fill it in himself.

Mr. INGRAM. In this city the enumerators are leaving the papers at the different houses to be filled in. I had occasion to look over some of these papers, left by the enumerators at houses in Ottawa, and if there is any man in the employ of the government who can figure out the answers given in them, he can do more than I can. The questions are not properly answered at all.

Hon. Mr. PRIOR. It is a perfect farce.

Mr. INGRAM. It is a perfect farce. The proper way is for the enumerator to visit each house and put down the answers intelligently if he knows how, and I suppose he does or he would not be appointed. The way the work is being done in the capital of Canada is a perfect farce. In my own city the enumerators ask the questions and put the answers down intelligently, and when these papers are sent in to the department they will give an intelligent report as to that district, but I have seen some of the papers in Ottawa to-day, and I am sure the officers will never be able to make out what the answers are.

Mr. MONK. I am afraid that very much the same state of affairs exists in the city of Montreal, and I think the minister should look into it.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. I will make inquiries about it.

Mr. MONK. The minister spoke about taking up some of the smaller items.

The PRIME MINISTER. Is not this vote passed now?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, no.

The PRIME MINISTER. This was only a preliminary skirmish.