

readings, and, with the exception of a few questions by members, and one or two minor measures, the business on the paper has been practically cleared off. A question by Mr. Whitney to-day elicited from the Provincial Treasurer a straight denial that any investigation is in progress in connection with the Government printing contract, but the hon. gentleman took advantage of the opportunity to intimate that the specifications would in accordance with the practice of the Government be overhauled before new tenders are invited, with a view to obtaining a still more favorable contract for the next five years. The Attorney-General introduced a bill providing that municipalities may, in case of necessity, spend their money outside the limits of the municipalities for the purpose of preventing floods.

Mr. Garrow presented the report of the select committee upon the bill relating to a certain by-law of the Town of Clinton, which was adopted, and the bill was read a second time, after Mr. Pattullo had received an assurance from Mr. Garrow that the bill did not endorse anything in the way of a bonus at all, but merely sanctioned a loan.

An Explanation.

In summarizing Mr. Hardy's reply to Mr. Miscampbell when the latter asked if the Government had the power to change the existing timber regulations by means of an order in Council, The Globe credited Mr. Hardy with saying in effect that the act having had the sanction of Parliament, it would be impossible to alter it without the consent of that body.

"What I did say," explained Mr. Hardy, "in reply to the hon. member for East Simcoe, was that some legal gentlemen had taken the view that the regulations having had the sanction of Parliament, it would not be possible for the Government to modify them or change them, but that my own view was somewhat different from that. I was of opinion the Government could make the change because the act merely approved of the regulations, and did nothing more, but it was an open question, however. Another point to which I may draw the attention of the House for a moment is that I spoke just a moment before that of the fact that it had been urged last winter while the House was in session by hon. members opposite that there would be cut during the lumber season something like 500,000,000 feet of lumber, and that this would be taken away in logs. But our returns bear out the statement we then gave, namely, that the cut would not exceed 200,000,000 feet."

The Printing Contract.

Upon the motion to go into committee of supply, Mr. Whitney drew attention to an article in this morning's Mail and Empire stating that the Government was about to renew the contract for printing, and that an investigation was being held in connection with the preparation of the specifica-

tions for the new contract, and containing some references to the profits which the present holder of the contract is alleged to have made. Mr. Whitney said that he had no excuse to make for bringing the matter before the House at this stage, as it is of more importance to the Government and to the people of the country than to hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the

House, and he hoped that after bringing it before the notice of the Government they may be able to say something that may relieve the public mind of that anxiety which may exist with regard to this matter. Remarks had been made quietly for a long time past with respect to what is stated in the article in question in regard to the favorable contract these gentlemen have, and therefore the statements were no surprise to him. He would like to ask without any further preliminary story whether there is any truth at all in the statement that he had read, and also specifically whether or not an investigation has been made or is going on on behalf of the Government as to the basis for new specifications under which the existing state of affairs as outlined in the article can be improved.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt said he scarcely knew what object his hon. friend could have in directing the attention of the House to sea-serpent fiction, which people expected in the month of August every year. The article referred to was filled with inaccuracies; in fact there is scarcely an accurate statement in it. He assured the hon. gentleman that every member of the Government and every member of the House is desirous that the new contract shall be more advantageous if the trade conditions permit, and he assumed they did permit, than any other preceding contract. In the past twenty years, he pointed out, the work has been well done, whether it be the press work or the binding or the composition, but as to whether enormous prices have been given to different contractors or not is a big question, and perhaps it will require expert knowledge to answer it satisfactorily to the House. Lest his hon. friend be inclined to pay too much attention to articles which are not well founded he reminded him that what is now being said of the present contractors has been said of every firm which has had a Government contract. For want of accurate information the suggestion is made that parties are getting rich very suddenly out of the contract, and in order to prove that the three or four contracts which have been entered into during the last twenty years have each of them been in succession more favorable to the Province than the preceding one. He then enunciated them, as follows:—The contract for the past five years was 60 per cent. more favorable to the Province for composition than was the Hunter, Rose contract of 1868. Complaint has also been made with regard to the charge for folding and stitching, which is an important item. Compared with Hunter, Rose & Co.'s contract the Province has in the Rutter contract a reduction of 58 per cent. In the remaining item, of binding, the price paid during the last five years was less than half that of the Hunter, Rose contract. He ad-