

ed much more valuable by the construction of this fence. Let the First Minister be good enough to take this into consideration, and when the matter comes up again, we can possibly furnish some further data. I will not refer to the peculiar manner in which a contract was let to friends of hon. gentlemen opposite without any tender being called for. These are all very suspicious circumstances from first to last. I trust that the Prime Minister will look into them, and give us the result of his mature deliberation when the matter comes up again.

Mr. JOHN HERRON. In reference to this fence along the boundary line, I may say that the Americans have about sixty miles of fence, built about eight rods to the south of the boundary line. On the Canadian side a number of ranches have about seventy miles of fence built about four rods north of the boundary line. It is reported that the government are about to purchase or take over the fences on our side of the line. Whether that is so or not I do not know; it is only common rumour in that part of the country. If tenders are to be let for the construction of this fence, there are a large number of men in that country who do that kind of work and have machinery for the purpose; and if tenders were called for in the ordinary way, we could get the fences built at very much less than the figures mentioned here. I think the fence built on the American side of the boundary line has posts one rod apart, with five barbed wires, and is worth about \$150 a mile. The fence built on the Canadian side has cedar posts two rods apart, with four wires, and is worth about \$120 or \$125 a mile. These facts show that there are people in that part of the country who make a business of building this class of fence, and if the government contemplate building a fence along the boundary line for a considerable distance and will call for tenders, I hope they will give the people in that part of the country an opportunity to tender for the work.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE. There is one thing plain, that there is a large sized Ethiopian in this fence. In the first place, the answer given by the premier, I take it, was the answer of the department. Why should the department give him an incorrect answer? Either the department knows or it does not know. If the department knows, why should it send that answer to the House to mislead both the premier and the House? There are one of two things apparent in this whole transaction; either there is very bad business management in the department that would not do credit to any business firm in the Dominion of Canada, and the people know very little of what is taking place in the department, or it is deliberately playing into the hands of friends. I do not care which is the fact, it is reprehensible and bad, and I think it is the duty of the Prime Minister to look into it. If the de-

Mr. SAM. HUGHES.

partment is running a business of its own for the purpose of playing into the hands of friends and misleading both the premier and the House, the sooner there is a little insurrection in that department and a little punishment given, the better it will be both for the department and the House. There is a strong suspicion that the department desired to play into the hands of friends, no notice having been given inviting tenders; but a son of an ex-member of this House, who is always in close touch with the House, and politicians in that part of the country seem directly interested in the concern that is furnishing the wires. When this matter is followed up, I think you will find that a good round figure has been given for the contract, perhaps very much more than would have been given if public tenders had been invited and every one had been allowed to tender. I think the First Minister cannot move a moment too soon in looking into this matter, and, whoever is at fault, setting it right. I think it would be well, in the interest of the country, to know who is the delinquent party, how an explanation comes to be given that misleads the House, and how others are prevented from tendering for a work that could probably have been done at a great saving of money to the country if it had been publicly advertised and tenders accepted after due notice.

Mr. J. G. H. BERGERON. There arises out of this incident another question, for I understand that the answer given at the time was not put in 'Hansard.' I think the whole House will agree that that is a very serious matter. I want to take occasion to remind the House of another thing, that the unrevised 'Hansard' is mutilated when it comes out in the revised edition, which the right hon. leader of the government knows, is entirely against the spirit of 'Hansard.' That is bad enough, but if things said in the House are not put into the unrevised edition, we are paying an immense amount of money for nothing.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. That is a new feature of this question. If the answer which I gave here has not been published, the Debates Committee should look into that. My hon. friend is a member of that committee and can attend to that. It is a matter as to which there should be some inquiry, in order to find out who is the guilty party or whether it is simply an accident.

Mr. BERGERON. This is the first time I have heard about it.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. This is the first time also that I have heard about it.

Mr. E. B. OSLER. It seems to me that there is more in this question than the mere matter of letting a contract. If it is a fact that individual members of the government or heads of departments let important