

short shrift from the press, and ended having to subsidize the *Ottawa Times* in order to get any effective account of its proceedings at all. As for the Commons, the big daily papers in Montreal and Toronto did it fair justice, the best accounts being in the *Toronto Globe*, *Toronto Leader*, and *Montreal Gazette*, in about that order. The *Ottawa Times* is a special case, since it was trying hard to win an exclusive arrangement, but it was never quite able to cut out the competition from the big metropolitan dailies.

This edition of the Debates of the House of Commons is a collation of the debates in the *Ottawa Times* (Conservative), sometimes called the "Scrapbook Debates", (from their having been pasted up by an enterprising librarian), and the debates reported in the *Toronto Globe* (Reform). Several other newspapers were canvassed for the purpose, but these two papers turned out to offer the most comprehensive reports, and this has been the principal criterion in choosing the two papers, or deciding, in the case of a particular speech, between the two papers themselves.

I have tried to avoid intruding too much editing into these reports, fearing distortion, and have let them stand as they were, but the brevity of a report, or occasionally a long speech reported verbatim (doubtless paid for by the members concerned), is a weakness inherent in the system used. In truth, there is really no other system. Invariably I have chosen the longest report of a speech I could get, since the longer the report, the less the compression. Where the *Times'* report and the *Globe's* report was roughly equal I have taken the most literate and salty version. By and large the *Globe's* reports had more colour and vitality than the *Times'* which leaned more often in the direction of officialese—perhaps a reflection of the *Times'* hopes to become official reporters. When one report has something substantial that the other has not, I have interleaved reports, and there is no indication in this edition of where one report stops and the other begins. As the session went on into 1868, and perhaps as hopes for an official report began to dim, the *Times'* reports tended to shorten, and the debates from the later part of the session tend to be, increasingly, from the *Toronto Globe*.

It was disappointing to discover that French Canadian papers gave very short reports, even of speeches that were originally given in French. *La Minerve* of Montreal, *Le Pays* of Montreal, *Le Journal de Québec*, *Le Canada* of Ottawa, all, despite the parliamentary interests and commitments of their owners, can not be relied on for speeches in French. The English papers were, unfortunately, no better when it came to reporting speeches that had been given in French. It is clear from this, and from other evidence, that if an MP wanted to make any substantial impression at all on Parliament or public, he had to speak in English. The gist the English papers gave of French speeches was so thin as to be nearly useless. It is a pity in this respect that the French papers were not of more help; but it is fair to add here that they seem to have had a more substantial interest in the proceedings of the Quebec Assembly than did the English in their provincial assemblies (except in Nova Scotia); this, too, is reflection of the different appreciations of, and attitudes to, the new federal system.

One might have suspected political bias in the Parliamentary reporting of the newspapers, and doubtless one might be able to uncover it, but I have discerned very little. Occasionally a long speech of Macdonald's or Galt's was slightly shorter in the *Globe* than in, say, the *Toronto Leader* or *Montreal Gazette*, but there were other occasions when the report in the *Globe* of a Macdonald speech was longer than that in the Conservative press. There seems to have been no rule except that of reasonable reporting, and the space limits of the paper. This last was no inconsiderable limitation, especially with evening speeches, which could be heavily abbreviated as printing time approached.

The session of 1867-1868 was the longest session of the Parliament of Canada until the session of 1903. The session was in two parts from November 6th to December 21st, and from March 15th, 1868 until May 22nd. It dealt with a vast range of business, but its great fascination lies in its being the meeting ground for Nova Scotians, New Brunswickers, and Canadians from the old Province of Canada, now at grips with the problems of a new political dimension.