

of that kind of work to be obtained. A system of law reporting by official stenographers has now been established in the courts both of Ontario and Quebec, and I suppose in the Lower Provinces, but I do not know how that is—and a good deal of the work which the official reporters at this table might formerly have done they are now precluded from doing. Then it has been complained by the regular newspaper reporters—and I think that complaint is not altogether foundationless—that the official reporters who are engaged in this House during the Session were in the habit during the recess of taking work at really a mere nominal cost, greatly to the prejudice of the regular newspaper reporters and greatly to their injury; and I think that that complaint has very good ground to rest upon. I am quite well aware that this means a considerable increase to the cost of official reporting, but if we are to have official reporting at all it is quite clear we must secure the best possible talent, and I have no hesitation in saying—and I say it as having some practical knowledge of matters of this kind—that I do not believe that there is to be found a staff anywhere in the world, in any legislative body, who have done their work better than the staff we have at the table at this time. It must be remembered that mistakes will sometimes occur, but it must also be remembered that many members do not speak very distinctly or loudly, and that sometimes they speak in the midst of noises in the House, which render it very difficult for the reporter to catch precisely what they are saying; but speaking of the reports as a whole I believe they will compare favourably with similar work done anywhere.

Mr. BLAKE. Hear, hear.

Mr. WHITE. I think we cannot do better, if we are to have these official reports, than to adopt this report. I may say, Mr. Speaker, that the question as to whether we should have official reports or not is, of course, an entirely different question; but we have to remember that unless we have official reports, sitting, as we do, in the city of Ottawa, we must make up our minds to have no full reports of the proceedings of Parliament at all. Certain hon. gentlemen, leading members of the House, might be able to get their speeches published in full in the party newspapers on either side, and tolerably full reports of the proceedings on particular occasions might be made; but so far as the House at large is concerned, we would practically shut ourselves off from having reports of any kind whatever—whether that would be an unmixed evil or not is, of course, another question. But it does seem to me that, building up as we are the history of this country, our discussions in Parliament from year to year, forming the record of our doings, it is worth to the people of the country the sum of money involved to keep up these reports. In the report which was presented a statement made by the stenographers themselves was embodied, as that contained in fact the whole argument upon the subject. It will be seen that the amount now proposed to be given is rather less than the salaries prevailing in most of the States of the American Union. The House of Representatives have seven official stenographers, each of whom receives \$5,000 a year; and in the United States, as everyone knows, the House of Representatives does not sit at night as a general rule, and the practice prevails there of gentlemen handing in their speeches, which does not obtain here, thus relieving very much the actual labour of the stenographers. I move the adoption of the report.

Mr. COURSOL moved in amendment:

That the report be not now adopted, but be referred back to the Committee with instructions to amend it so as to ensure to the translators of the *Hansard*, salaries more in accordance with the work they have to perform.

He said: In proposing this amendment to refer the report

back to the Committee, my intention is not to advocate a repeal of the suggestion contained in the report respecting the stenographers salaries—far from it—and it is also not my intention that anything should be said or deduced from my language or motion that might be considered as unfavourable to the present staff of reporters. Everyone knows the admirable manner in which the reporters have done their duty. They are all men of intelligence and education, they are perfect gentlemen, and well up to their duty, and the work they have given to the House and the country is a credit to themselves and those who employ them. So far as regards the augmentation of their salaries, I have full confidence in the judgment of the members of the Committee selected to deal with this question, and I am willing to support them. I am always prepared to pay whatever amount is fairly earned; and my object is not, as I have said, to oppose any recommendation regarding the reporters, but to secure justice to other employees in the performance of their duties on the *Hansard*—I mean the French translators. On the 17th of this month, while presenting this report, the hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White), chairman of the Committee, made this remark:

“I am quite satisfied that some other method will have to be adopted, because the present method is going to be expensive. I think the Committee will probably see whether something cannot be done before the close of the Session, and to recommend some other method to the House.

This is the first year in which the staff of translators have been regular officers. Let us see what the staff will cost: one chief translator at \$1,000; four translators at \$800, \$3,200; two translators, appointed lately, who are to receive \$500; proof reader, \$400; in all eight employees receiving \$5,400. This means an increase of \$400 if we look at it from the standpoint of the amount paid in 1881. Since that year it has been found that by the contract system the work was not properly performed, that the *Debates* were not regularly issued, and it was therefore decided, and I believe judiciously so, to have the work done by an official staff. If it was proper to have the work done by contract we might as well say at once that nearly all Government work might be so performed; for there are very few offices in the Civil Service, the work of which might not be done by contract. Why was that not done? Because though money might be saved the service was inefficient. In 1875 the reporting of the *Debates* was given out by contract at a cost of \$4,500. An official staff was afterward appointed and that system of reporting the *Debates* of the House has given satisfaction and no one probably is willing to ask for its repeal. But the expenses of that staff have been increasing, and they amount, as I will show presently, to \$18,130. As regards the translation the increase is only \$1,400, and yet it is considered enormous by those who would be prepared to give up the system. This year the cost of the reporting will be as follows: Chief reporter, \$1,500; six reporters, \$1,300 each; one at \$1,100, eight amanuenses at \$150 each; proof-reader, \$800, making a total of \$12,400. The proposal before the House is to have eight reporters at \$2,000 each; eight amanuenses, at \$150 each; one proof-reader, at \$800, one machine repairer, \$130, making a total expenditure of about \$18,130, being an increase of \$5,730 or \$330 more than the whole cost of the translation. If you deduct from the \$20,000 which is voted for the expense of the *Hansard*, \$18,130 to be paid to the reporters, very little will be left for the translation work. The petition presented by the reporters in their legitimate desire to have an augmentation of salaries, contains the following statement:—

“It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that our work is of a character commonly described as ‘skilled’ or ‘expert,’ and bears no comparison whatever with ordinary clerical or departmental work.