

If the two translators of the Senate have, as I believe, a sufficient amount of work to keep them employed for the greater part of or the whole year, and if one of them, Mr. Boucher, who is also Assistant Clerk, is kept at the table of the Senate, there would be only one who would be added to the amalgamated department, and therefore another translator would be required to replace Mr. Boucher. There could then be no economy and no reduction of work.

On the other hand, this system of having only one department for both Houses would probably work unsatisfactorily, because there would be conflicting orders from the Members of the Senate and of the House of Commons with reference to the precedence of the work to be done. The good working of such a department would require that it should be placed under one independent authority, from whom the chief of the department would receive his instructions; otherwise, if the work of one House was delayed on account of that of the other, there would certainly be dissatisfaction.

The same objection holds good with still more force against the proposition of making one general department of translation for all the departments of the Government and the two Houses, as in that case orders coming from the heads of the departments would be sure to conflict with each other, as the public reports are generally sent about the same time, and each would require his report to be translated without delay. Moreover, each department would require translations to be made other than that of the reports now submitted to the Houses, such as correspondence, etc., and therefore the staff of translators, which is already too small, would require to be considerably increased.

This system, I believe, could certainly not work so as to give general satisfaction.

If it is desired to have the Departmental Reports translated more expeditiously than they now are, I think the best plan would be to have special translators attached to each of the departments furnishing heavy reports—such as the Marine and Fisheries, Militia, Public Works, Railways and Canals, Internal Revenue and Agriculture—for in that case those translators could work at the reports before they are put into type, which cannot be done at present.

It has been suggested by a member of the Committee that the departments might send us the manuscript copy of their reports for translation; but I consider this to be impracticable, because I know, as a matter of fact, that the appendices to the Ministers' reports are sent to the printer as received from the officers furnishing them, and very much altered, either by adding to or expunging from them, when in print. Therefore the work of the translators would be doubled if undertaken on the uncorrected manuscript.

But if they were translated by an officer attached to each of the departments, they would be corrected and prepared for translation as soon as sent to the department, which would much expedite the work.

Another advantage of such a system would be that each of such translators, having only one subject matter to translate, would become a specialist, and, by procuring and studying the necessary standard works, would be able to make a more satisfactory translation than can possibly be done under the present system, the pressure of work being such, when all those reports are sent in about the same time for translation, that we have no time to study and master their different subjects as ought to be done.

I may be permitted to add that the present staff of the French Translator's Department of the House of Commons is now totally inadequate to the amount of work they have to perform. This is especially the case this year, for their number is less than it was a few years ago, and the work has been constantly increasing since Confederation. It may verily be said that, taking into account the extra hours of work and attendance during the Session, and the fact that they are also obliged to work after regular office hours during the recess, in order to complete their labours within the year, that they are employed for over fifteen months in the year.