

House of Commons Debates

SECOND SESSION, SIXTH PARLIAMENT.—51 VIC.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, 16th April, 1888.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Mr. LAURIER moved that Mr. Meigs be added to the following Standing Committees: Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines, Standing Orders, Banking and Commerce.

Motion agreed to.

THE OFFICIAL DEBATES.

Mr. DESJARDINS moved that the second report of the Committee on the Official Debates be concurred in. He said: The object of this report is to render justice to some officials who have been charged with responsible duties in connection with the Debates Committee and the publication of the Official Report. The first is in regard to Mr. Boyce, Assistant to the Chief Reporter, who is recommended to receive an increase of salary. Mr. Boyce has been employed the whole year, and his duties are very responsible and of a multifarious character. He has to see that copies are sent to members for correction, and that those corrections are made in the revised report; he has to keep track of matters connected with the printing, and in fact he is frequently compelled to remain two or three hours after the rising of the House. Every member of the committee is of the opinion that he fully deserves the increase recommended, and no one has found fault with the manner in which he has performed his duty. Moreover, he prepares the index of the Debates after the Session. The second recommendation is in regard to Mr. Brewer, who is accountant of the committee and charged with the performance of duties of a special and technical character. He has to measure the type and make up the accounts on which the printers are paid. This requires a special knowledge of printing, and, after enquiry by a sub-committee, it was found that his duties were of such a nature that he fully deserved the recommendation of \$100 a year and \$200 for past services. Mr. Hartney is also recommended to receive \$200 for past services and \$50 a year as clerk of the committee. He has to keep the records of the meetings of the committee, carry out the correspondence and everything connected with the meetings. We, therefore, considered it would be fair to acknowledge his services as well as the services of the others, and the

committee has therefore made the recommendation I have named. He has acted as clerk of the committee since 1878. These are the recommendations contained in the report.

Mr. LANDRY. As I have not the report under my hand at the present moment, I should like to ask if it contains anything respecting nominations to fill vacancies caused by the dismissal of three of the translators.

Mr. DESJARDINS. Not at all; it only contains a recommendation respecting salaries to be paid to old officers.

Mr. DAVIN. In rising to support this motion I may say that we went into the question of the claims of these gentlemen, not once but several times. We had Mr. Brewer before us, and I confess when I saw the responsibility that was cast upon him, I felt inclined, and other members of the committee felt inclined, to give him more than is recommended in this report. The responsible duties discharged by Mr. Brewer, that of measuring up the matter, are such—as any man who knows anything about printing will be aware—that if he was not a man on whom this House could thoroughly rely, the country might lose thousands of dollars in a year. In Mr. Brewer's case, therefore, there cannot be the least doubt that the recommendation of the committee is most moderate. I can speak, if I may use the term, with authority as to the claims of Mr. Boyce, because I had him associated with me on two occasions, during which I was able to measure his ability, his attentiveness, his accuracy and the reliability of the man to do any work he undertakes and to carry out with a skill, I have never known equalled, recommendations that might be made to him. Mr. Boyce was engaged with me in work requiring great care and great skill, and one had only to explain to him what was needed and he entirely carried it out. In connection with the *Hansard* his duties are of an onerous and also of a responsible character. He not only corrects the first proofs, but he sees that the corrections made by members are ultimately inserted in the speeches, and in addition to that he does work which is of the greatest importance so long as we have a *Hansard*, and that is to make an index. Unless that index is made well, I need hardly say that the value of that volume is greatly decreased, and one might go as far as to say that the index is so far like a chain, and as a chain is not stronger than its weakest link, so the index is not valuable unless it is altogether complete and accurate and a sure means of reference. It seems to me that Mr. Boyce discharges his duties thoroughly and well, and if he discharges them thoroughly and well the amount suggested by the committee is a small sum for