

it was fundamentally necessary that special documents of the House should be simultaneously issued in both languages. The Speaker is imbued with the idea of economy and efficiency, and I agree with him on those matters, but there is a danger of going too far in this direction, and there might as a result be some further disturbance in the country—and we have enough disturbances now without inviting more trouble.

I would respectfully submit, Mr. Chairman, that the leader of the Government and the Speaker take steps to have this matter referred to a committee of the House. Then that committee can go into the question why some clerks have lost their promotion, why they have been placed in positions where they cannot hope to become chiefs of their staffs, and so forth. Of course, the House of Commons is supreme as to its own staff, and it should maintain its independence regardless of all other committees and act as it thinks best in the interests of the country and of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I should correct one statement made by the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. Currie). The change in the practice of the House respecting the publication of the Journals and the Votes and Proceedings was made after a conference between the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the then leader of the Government, a special committee was appointed, the matter was inquired into, and a unanimous report was brought down that \$11,000 a year could be saved—not by amalgamating the Journals and the Votes and Proceedings, but by so arranging the type of the Votes and Proceedings that it could be made available for printing the Journals, and thus save a large amount of labour and paper without in the slightest degree sacrificing efficiency.

I know there are objections to the proposed organization on the part of certain officials of the House, but it will be found in ninety-nine cases of a hundred that those objections have solely to do with the question of remuneration. It must be borne in mind that the House, by its own act, has divested itself of the right to say what pay its servants shall receive, unless it chooses to do so by a special Act, and in the present instance we are concerned solely with the plan of organization.

Mr. CURRIE: Mr. Chairman, I submit there is really little difference between us. The fact remains that the two staffs that

[Mr. Currie.]

I referred to have been amalgamated, and the type set for the Votes and Proceedings does for the Journals. But when the matter of having the French language put on the same status as the English language so far as these documents and the staff are concerned is brought up, it is for us to decide, and it seems to me that the best course to pursue will be to refer the whole question to a special committee to thresh out.

Motion for postponement of this item carried.

COMMITTEES BRANCH.

Chief of Committees and Private Bills Branch.

Assistant Chief of Committees and Private Bills Branch.

Five officials.

Sessional assistance as required.

Mr. CANNON: Can we find anywhere the salaries attached to these positions?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, for the reason that the matter of salary as well as that of who shall fill the positions is left with the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. CANNON: Do I understand that when the House adopts this plan of organization the salaries of the employees of the House will be determined by the Civil Service Commission and that Parliament will not know in advance what those salaries will be?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the law. Section 34 of the Civil Service Act, 1918, as amended by the Statutes of 1919, provides that so much of the Act as relates to appointment, transfer, promotion, salaries, increases and classification shall apply to the permanent officers, clerks and employees of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. CANNON: I understand that such is the law, but I should think that in connection with the employees of the House of Commons as well as those of the other departments the law should be applied in this way: In the Estimates of each department there is an item entitled "Civil Government," in which the salaries given to the different employees are set forth. This item is brought down and members can take cognizance of the amounts before voting them. But here we are giving a blank cheque to the Civil Service Commission; we are enabling them to give whatever salaries they like, and we have nothing to do with the matter. I do not think that is according to proper parliamentary procedure.