

This applies of course only to the skilled labour : the unskilled labour, of which I employ necessarily a good deal, has been raised from 100 to 200 per cent. as influenced by special circumstances.

The effect of this threatened strike for a still further advance of wages—taking into account the heavy loss I have already sustained from these exceptional circumstances—will be, that, with every desire to fulfil my engagement honourably and satisfactorily, it will be impossible for me to do so.

I have therefore respectfully to ask you whether, under the circumstances—circumstances so unprecedented and unexpected—relief cannot be afforded to the extent that the price of labour has gone up.

I may mention that a large increase has been allowed in contracts for printing entered into subsequently to mine, although prices were obtained in those cases varying, I believe, from 33½ to 50 per cent. higher than I obtain by my contract.

Your obedient servant,

I. B. TAYLOR.

On Monday last I called on Mr Taylor to ascertain whether there was any truth in the rumour that he was about to close his establishment, but he declined giving me any information as to his future action, stating his inability, at present, to do so ; but at the same time, saying, that he had no desire to do anything that would cause embarrassment. All which is respectfully submitted.

HENRY HARTNEY,

Clerk,

Joint Committee on Printing.

C.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

COMMITTEE ROOM, (No. 46.)

April 5th, 1873.

Present :—Mr. Stephenson (in the Chair), Mr. Wallace and Mr. Church.

Mr. Taylor, the contractor for the Parliamentary Printing, being called in, the Chairman explained to him that he had been asked to be present to give what evidence he had to offer in support of his letter addressed to the Clerk of the Committee on 6th of December last.

Mr. Taylor explained that tenders for the Parliamentary Printing were called for by advertisement on the 9th or 10th of May, 1869,—that the tenders were delivered as required on the 17th of that month,—and that on the 2nd July following the contract was executed. The work, however, was not to commence, and did not commence, until the 1st January, 1870. In the interval between the time the tenders were sent in, (viz., the 17th of May, 1869,) and the time when work was commenced under the contract (viz., the 1st of January, 1870,) the wages of day-work men was raised from \$7 to \$9 per week,—a difference (as stated in the letter) of 25 per cent. On the 1st of Jan.,