

Of course, I am not going to object if the House takes the ground that that is the basis on which the extra employees should be paid; but, in all fairness, if that principle is to be applied to sessional employees, it ought to be applied to the permanent officials as well.

Mr. GIBSON. There is a great deal of truth in what Mr. Speaker says, but I still think that I am right in my contention that as these men have done three months' work in the two, some consideration should be given them. The permanent clerks are not put to the same expense as they are residents of Ottawa, but these extra men come from distances, and when they are only employed two months in the year and have put in a day and a half every day, that should be taken into account. There is quite a difference between the permanent clerks and the extra men, because the former get their holidays during recess and are paid all the same, which makes up for the extra duties they perform while the House is in session. On the other hand the expenses of the extra men are almost just as great during a two months' session as during a three months' session, and in all fairness, I think that you, Mr. Speaker, should adopt the suggestion of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Amyot).

Mr. TAYLOR. I may just say that I have placed in the hands of the leader of the House a petition signed by 149 or 150 members, asking that the sessional clerks may be paid \$300 for the session and the messengers \$250. These messengers and sessional clerks have to travel a long distance to come here and return home, and have to pay their fare both ways, so that paying these expenses and the cost of living in Ottawa, there will be very little remaining to them, if they are only to get \$150 for the two months. In all fairness to these gentlemen, they should be given the prices mentioned in the petition, which I presented to the leader of the House, and which just now has been placed in the hands of Mr. Speaker. Another petition signed by the same members on both sides of the House was hurriedly got up, as they learned that the first petition was addressed to the wrong party and this is signed by some seventy or eighty members, none, as I understand it, having refused to sign it to whom it was presented. I agree with my hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Gibson), that these gentlemen have put in from fifteen to eighteen hours a day since the session opened, and that to pay them the miserable sum of \$2.50 a day is not a fair return for their services.

Mr. LARIVIERE. We must not lose sight of the fact that our sessions are supposed to last 100 days, in fact our indemnity is based upon that basis at the rate of \$10 a day, and when the Estimates are prepared for the payment not only of sessional clerks and messengers, but also of pages and others, the amount is calculated also on the

Mr. SPEAKER.

same basis of 100 days. Therefore these people in accepting their positions and performing their work, do so with the expectation that they will get paid for at least 100 days. When our sessions have lasted five or six months, as has been the case in former years, we have been sufficiently careful of ourselves to increase our indemnity by \$500 and were very glad to accept the same as well earned. Of course we have done the same thing to the sessional employees of the House, but while we were adding six days to our own attendance to help ourselves with the public funds, I do not see why we should be so stingy about the payment of poor people who are faithful officers of this House. It may be said that we can have twenty or forty or one hundred applications to take the places of any of these who resigned, but I doubt if we could get as good and able men if we went on the cheap plan. I believe we must be more generous to these people who work sometimes not merely fourteen or fifteen, but sometimes eighteen hours a day, and I hope the House will express its opinion in this matter favourable to these people, the amanuenses and those who have sessional employment, even extending our favour to our young pages, and will do what is fair by them. Let us be generous to those who are living on small salaries when we are generous to ourselves, and I do not believe the country will blame us for such an act of generosity.

Mr. MASSON. I would call attention to one distinction between the permanent staff and the sessional employees which, it seems to me, the hon. the Speaker overlooked. He argued that if a change was made in reference to the increase of the pay of sessional clerks, the permanent staff were equally entitled to the same. But I submit that there is this distinction—the permanent staff are employed by the year; they know what their employment will be and they take chances on the length of the session. But the amount paid to the sessional staff was based upon a session of such length as would yield them \$250, and when the time was longer, that amount was increased. Now, the hon. the Speaker has referred to the fact that some of the permanent staff have to be here all the time the House is in session and for some time afterwards. I would point out that the messengers and sessional writers have to be here not only when the House sits but for many hours afterwards. When the House adjourns early, as formerly it frequently did, members expect to find messengers at their call during the whole of the day. I think that fact should not be overlooked. These men are entitled to the full time they serve and if the number of hours per day is higher on the average I think that should be considered.

Mr. METCALFE. I think we have very efficient service here and as my hon. friend from Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) or some other