

order to have a report of its debates strictly impartial, it has instituted a committee, wholly special, withdrawn from the influence of the Ministry, to watch over the publication of the report and controlling, itself alone, the translation thereof. This committee submits to the House, without regard to political color, the names of those whom it desires to set over this work. Thus it was that my colleagues and I were appointed to the positions we hold. We have held them until now without meeting with the slightest reproach. Every time our position has been discussed in the House, the doctrine which I am here enunciating was proclaimed, while not one single voice was raised against it. Our right, even to discuss militant politics, either through the press or by word of mouth, was recognized. Thus Mr. Bergin said in 1884—I quote the English text:—

“We felt it was not the duty of the committee to inquire into a man’s politics, but into his qualifications, and that politics had nothing whatever to do with a man’s qualifications as a servant of this House.” (*Hansard*, 1884; p. 1272.)

The Honorable Mr. Chapleau said in English:—

“We are not to judge of the political qualifications of the reporters and translators of *Hansard*. We should not call up any unpleasant reminiscences of the past, when the question is a competent officer of the House. The only questions that we should consider in the choice of reporters and translators for *Hansard*, are those of knowledge, ability and general qualification.” (*Hansard*, 1884; p. 1272.)

Mr. Charlton said, when there was a question of increasing our salaries:—

“I felt myself that there was no justification for granting an advance to the translators, most of whom are here acting as newspaper correspondents and would be here whether they held translators’ situations or not.” (*Hansard*, 1884; p. 1273.)

Mr. Charlton therefore recognizes in the translators of the Debates, the right to act as political journalists, even in time of Session. The employment is indeed too overwhelming to have rendered it possible for me to use the privilege. Nevertheless the House by no means rejected the proposition of Mr. Charlton, but by the unanimous voice of its members recognized the right of which I have availed myself sometimes during the recess, but never during Sessions. All are agreed on this point. Thus *La Minerve* said on the 15th of July, 1884:

“The position of translator of Debates does not hinder any members of the staff from concerning themselves with politics and writing thereon in the newspapers, out of Session.”

On 21st July, 1886, *Le Monde* said:

“As regards the question of right, *La Minerve* has itself decided it.” Then *Le Monde* quoted from *La Minerve* the words above cited and, approving them, even appeals to them in opposition to a passage, contrary to this pretension, that had slipped into *La Minerve*. *Le Monde* adds: “We repeat, therefore, that our contemporary was led into error, or that ill intentioned parties availed themselves of the absence of the regular editors of the journal to insert the erroneous note.”

*La Presse*, also, on 20th July, 1886, replying to *La Minerve*, said:

“With bad grace, therefore, does *La Minerve* reproach the translators of *Hansard* with exercising a right which was recognized by the House of Commons.”

*Le Sorelois*, a Conservative journal, published and edited by Jean-Baptiste Vanasse, one of my colleagues in the translatorship of the Debates, said, the same day, 20th July, 1886:

“Mr. Vanasse repelled victoriously the disloyal attacks of which he had been the object. He explained that he did not, in any way, depend on the Government, that he had been appointed translator by a committee of the House of Commons, consisting of Reformers and Conservatives, and that the Government could not deprive him of his position, having no control over the office, but that it could only be done by a vote of the House of Commons.”

It is one of my colleagues, and note this well, I beg of you, who thus speaks. I had the pleasure of meeting him on the hustings on the 10th February last, 1887, in a great assembly held at St. Roch, County of Richelieu. The *Sorelois* of next day thus reports the incidents of that meeting.