

then paid to the sessional messengers was \$250 per session. That was the basis upon which they had been paid for a number of years. It will be remembered that the session of 1891 was a very long one, extending, I think, over five months. When one hundred days had elapsed, the messengers made a representation to me, through a deputation they sent to interview me, that \$250 was too small a sum for a session of the length which the session of 1891 promised to be, and they asked that, in addition, \$2.50 per day should be paid to them after the hundred days had elapsed. I thought there was a good deal of justice in the proposition they made; but I thought also that if they were entitled to \$2.50 a day for a long session, they would not be entitled to the full \$250 for a short session; and I made this proposition to them: I said that I was prepared to continue the payment of \$250 per session if they chose to accept that sum for every session, no matter what its length might be; or that, if they were not willing to continue on that basis, I would recommend to the Committee of Internal Economy to put them on the basis of \$2.50 per day, which would be paid to them no matter whether the session should be 100 days, or 150 days, or 50 days. I understood from the representatives of those gentlemen that they were willing to accede to that proposition. I made that recommendation to the Committee on Internal Economy, and it was adopted; the resolution providing for the payment of \$250 per session was rescinded, and they were put upon the same basis as the sessional clerks; and I will show the Committee the justice of adopting that course. In the session of 1887, the sessional clerks were paid \$3 per day, the messengers received a considerable sum in excess of that paid to the sessional clerks, and it seemed to me that that was not a fair basis upon which to place these two classes of officers. It may be quite true, as the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Amyot) has stated, that these men have to wait during the recess to be at the call of the House whenever the House meets, and perhaps they may lose some other employment in the interval, or may have to give up employment in which they are engaged in order to come here and attend to their sessional duties; but I am quite sure every member will agree that there are twenty applications for every vacancy that occurs, with the full knowledge on the part of the applicants of the amount they are going to receive, and I am unable, from my point of view, to agree with the proposition which the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Amyot) submits to the Committee. It seems to me that for the kind of work that is to be done here by these sessional messengers, \$2.50 per day is pretty fair pay. It is as much as the higher class of mechanics get in any part of the country.

Mr. GIBSON. As an employer of labour in this country, I say in all fairness that Mr.

Speaker loses sight of one fact. I quite agree in what he says with regard to paying men by the day, but he loses sight of this fact, that during the first month of previous sessions we were in the habit of simply meeting and closing, so that these men have had to put in more hours during the last two months, or as many, inside this building as they would have done in an ordinary session of three months. I know, and the Speaker knows, that when he employs men beyond a given length of time per day, they are entitled to some consideration, and I think, in all fairness to the men, seeing that this has been a business session and that they have been putting in about fifteen hours a day, some consideration should be given them on that account. The principle laid down by Mr. Speaker, however, is the correct one, that the number of days should be taken, but it seems to me there is no rule which may not at times be departed from; and I think in justice to the men, some consideration should be given to the fact that they have been steadily employed since the session started about a day and a half for every day, and, therefore, I think we should be a little lax in enforcing the rule which the Speaker has laid down.

Mr. CASEY. I am not sure that this is the proper place to discuss this matter, but as it has come up, I must say that I think the men, seeing they have worked harder than usual, and have had to incur expense coming here and returning, should receive pay as for an ordinary three months session.

Mr. LISTER. I would ask the Speaker whether the salaries of these men have been fixed either by custom or express agreement up to any particular period?

Mr. SPEAKER. The salaries were fixed by the Board of Internal Economy at \$250 per session. In the session of 1891, they claimed that amount was not a sufficient remuneration, and we considered their claim a just one. Everybody will agree with me that it is not fair to pay those men \$250 for five months instead of \$2.50 per day, but it would not either be quite fair to the country to pay \$250 for two months. I point out to the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Gibson) the fallacy of the doctrine he has laid down with reference to the hours these men are employed. They are employed on the express understanding that they are to be here when required; and if the doctrine laid down by the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Gibson), that they shall be paid an additional sum because of the length of the days they were employed this session, in all fairness it should apply to the permanent employees as well as the extra ones. We have one of our clerks here who comes to his office at ten in the morning and never leaves, no matter how late the House sits, until fifteen minutes or half an hour after it adjourns. I refer to Mr. Bowles. Perhaps, in many instances, he has to remain longer