

sion to say something on this subject. I give them fair warning that if they are not disposed to consider this question I will give them ample time to consider it before prorogation. I hope they will accept the motion in such a way as to do justice to the people whose rights I consider myself bound to advocate here.

Bill reported.

INSOLVENT BANKS, INSURANCE COMPANIES, &c.

The House again resolved itself into Committee on Bill (No. 145) respecting Insolvent Banks, Insurance Companies and Trading Companies.—(Mr. Mousseau.)

On clause 122,

Mr. MOUSSEAU. When this Bill was first under consideration I asked that a section be struck out and another inserted in lieu thereof. I now beg to withdraw that amendment, and restore the original clause.

Bill reported.

INLAND REVENUE ACT AMENDMENT.

Mr. MOUSSEAU. I ask leave to withdraw Bill (No. 123) concerning the Inland Revenue and to introduce a new Bill (No. 168) to amend the Act concerning the Inland Revenue, 1880.

Bill read the first time; and (at 2.20 o'clock, a. m.) the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

FRIDAY, 12th May, 1882.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

OFFICIAL DEBATES.

Mr. STEPHENSON moved that the second report of the Official Debates Committee be adopted.

Mr. BLAKE. I do not rise for the purpose of opposing, as far as I am concerned, the recommendations made in this report. I place confidence in the Committee, and am quite disposed to support those particular recommendations; but I take this occasion to say that I believe the arrangements which have been made by the Committee, and which it is proposed to continue, are inadequate for the proper reporting of the debates—not that the reporters employed are not competent to discharge their duties, but, as far as I can judge from results, there are not enough reporters on the staff to render an efficient discharge of their duty possible. I have more than once pointed out how grossly inaccurate are the papers submitted to us, and I believe the inaccuracies are due, not to the want of ability and skill on the part of the reporters, but to the circumstance that more work is given them than they can get through. I have had no communication with the gentlemen on the staff on this subject, but such is my conclusion from the character of the errors. The errors, from their character, are evidently attributable, as a general rule, to too great haste and absence of proper revision. There are repeated instances of words which are alike in sound but not in sense, and repeated errors occur in figures and punctuation which often entirely destroy the sense of that which was said. I observe evidence also of the absence of an intelligent reading over of copy by those who have written it; and I believe that both in the extension of the notes, in the punctuation, in the printing, and in the proof reading, there is a want of accuracy which renders the

result not creditable, and not by any means a substantial representation of what the speakers have said. My own idea is that the pressure is too great. It looks to me as if the reporters were obliged to transcribe their notes as rapidly as possible, and have no opportunity to make proper connections between the different parts taken by different reporters, or seeing that their own work is correctly transcribed. With reference to the editing, it seems to me that if the editor is responsible, as I understood from members of the Committee when *Hansard* was last spoken of here, for seeing that the general substance of speeches is set down, he ought to be here. It is extremely difficult for one who has not been present during a debate, and has, therefore, no idea what was said, to properly discharge the duty of supervising the reports. That is, perhaps, only a minor point, but I do say that we should have, not a verbatim report, but a report which, at any rate, would give us the substance with reasonable accuracy, of what is said by the speaker. With the present scanty staff, that result is not attained.

Mr. STEPHENSON. I consider the reports are a marvel and the printing almost a miracle. Considering that the reporting costs but \$7,000, as originally estimated, its being done so successfully as it is, is a wonder to every pressman and reporter throughout the country. I think the hon. gentleman is about the only gentleman in this House, or at least one of the exceptions, who has not given a great deal of trouble to the reporters. He speaks very correctly, and is one of the easiest hon. members of this House to report; but I think when he complains about the punctuation, the figures, and that sort of thing, the fault is his own. Every hon. member has a right to revise his speeches, and if the hon. gentleman opposite has not taken the trouble to revise his speeches, then I must say that he is scarcely in a position to blame the reporters for the clerical errors of which he complains. I think we have an efficient staff of reporters, who have done their duty with thorough impartiality; no matter on what side of politics these gentlemen may be outside of this House, in the performance of their duties there is not the slightest trace of a party bias. I think the reports we have had have been fair and equitable towards all parties who have spoken, no matter from which side of the House. So far as the number is concerned, I do not think that, starting under the circumstances in which *Hansard* was started, it would not be at all prudent for us to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. We have secured, I believe, the best reporters, for an equal number, that can be found in America, and we are paying them the smallest possible salaries for the amount of work they perform. We have taken occasion in this report to increase their salary, and it is the smallest increase we could give them and retain their services. Everybody is proud of the *Hansard*, the House is proud of it, because in many cases the reporters give to members better speeches than they have delivered themselves. So far as the salaries are concerned, that is a matter deserving of consideration, and if it is thought proper to increase them, I, for one, would be willing to vote for it.

Mr. AMYOT. I would call attention to the fact that there is only one French reporter, and it is altogether impossible for him to report in proper time all that is said in French. It would be better to dispense with the services of the French secretary and employ two French reporters.

Mr. STEPHENSON. In reference to that, I may say that one member of the present staff has sent in his resignation, and another gentleman has been appointed in his place who is able to report both in English and French, and hereafter we shall have two gentlemen on the staff who will be able to report in both languages.

Mr. MILLS. The hon. member for Kent has entirely mistaken the observations of the hon. leader of the Opposi-