

THE SENATE

DIVORCE COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP INCREASED

Wednesday, January 11, 1956

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

Routine proceedings.

LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

REPORT OF JOINT LIBRARIANS

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present the report of the Joint Librarians of Parliament.

The report was read by the Clerk Assistant as follows:

Report of the Joint Librarians to Parliament
3rd Session, 22nd Parliament, 1956.

To the Honourable the Speaker of the Senate:

The Joint Librarians of Parliament have the honour to submit their report for the year 1955.

It will be four years next August since the destructive fire occurred in the Library of Parliament building. The reconstruction of the building was begun in the summer of 1953. On December 19 last the Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Joint Librarians made a tour of the library building and were very favourably impressed with the structural and decorative work that has been done there. However, the architects in charge of the reconstruction cannot as yet give us a definite date when their task will be completed; they hope that it will be some time in the early summer of this year.

The methods adopted in order to provide a satisfactory service to members of Parliament and officials while we are occupying several buildings in Ottawa have been described in previous reports. No important changes in these arrangements have been made since last session with the exception that we have recently acquired a light panel truck to facilitate the transfer of books and materials from one place to another.

The recataloguing of the collection according to modern methods is progressing satisfactorily, with the help of the six additional librarians engaged for that purpose. In the course of the year just ended 25,565 volumes were recatalogued and reclassified, which brings the total number so far processed to 48,120.

A number of donations were received during the year, among them an album of photographs recording the first century of "Earncliffe", presented by Sir Archibald Nye, High Commissioner for the United Kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,

Felix Desrochers,
F. A. Hardy,
Joint Librarians.

Library of Parliament,
Ottawa, January 10, 1956.

The Hon. the Speaker: When shall this report be taken into consideration?

Hon. Mr. Lambert: Next sitting.

Hon. W. Ross Macdonald: Honourable senators, with leave of the house, before the report of the Committee of Selection is presented, may I refer to a matter directly connected with that committee? As honourable senators know, over the years the Senate Committee on Divorce has been hearing an ever-increasing number of divorce petitions. For ten years before I came to this house the committee was under the able chairmanship of the honourable senator from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine). Since I have been here it has been under the equally able chairmanship of the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck). The committee has a very arduous task to perform. Each petition for divorce, of course, receives very careful consideration; the evidence is heard and weighed just as it would be in a court of law, and from my experience in the courts of law I am satisfied that a petition for divorce presented to this house receives as careful and expeditious consideration as it would if heard in any court in Canada. As I have said, however, the committee has a very arduous task. The chairman has today tabled petitions from 257 applicants. He has so organized the committee, which hitherto has consisted of 20 members, that the evidence is heard by sub-committees and these report to the main committee. I am sure we all want to assist the chairman and his committee in their important work—work which under our Constitution it is necessary that Parliament should perform. It has been suggested that the committee's task would be somewhat lightened, though not greatly, if the membership were increased from twenty to twenty-five; so, with leave of the Senate, I will move:

That the rules of the Senate be amended by striking out paragraph 9 of Rule 78 and substituting therefor the following:

"9. The Committee on Divorce, composed of not less than nine senators and not more than twenty-five senators".

Hon. John T. Haig: Honourable senators, with the permission of the house, I would like to second the motion of the honourable leader of the Government.

Unlike him, I have had considerable experience on the Divorce Committee. For many years I was a member under the chairmanship of the honourable senator from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) and I am now a member *ex officio*—whatever that means—under the chairmanship of the honourable