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1st Session, 5th Parliament, 18 Victoria, 1855.

FIRST REPORT

Of the Committee on the Letter of the Clerk of the House with reference to the appointment of a Second Clerk Assistant ;—and other references.

(*Mr. Fortier, Nicolet.*)

*Ordered, by the LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
to be printed, 3rd May, 1855.*

Printed, 4th May, 1855.

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REPORT.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

COMMITTEE ROOM,

Thursday, 3rd May, 1855.

The Committee to whom was referred the letter of the Clerk of the House with reference to the appointment of a second Clerk Assistant, and also the letter of the Clerk Assistant praying to be recommended for a Pension, have the honor to present their first Report.

Your Committee have had under their consideration, the letter of the Clerk, referred to them in the early part of the session, and the letter of the Clerk Assistant, referred to them on the 1st instant. Mr. Faribault had previously sent in his letter to the Committee, but no action could be taken upon it, until referred to them by your Honorable House.

After a due consideration of its details they have arrived at the unanimous conclusion, that, in view of the long and faithful services (extending over a period of 43 years) and advanced age of the Clerk Assistant, (65 years) that officer should be permitted to retire from the service of your Honorable House.

Mr. Faribault, in addition to the duties of his office, has devoted a considerable portion of his time to the formation of a collection of valuable works and documents, connected with the history of Canada.

Your Committee have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the zeal which he has always displayed in the service of the House, and beg leave to recommend that he be allowed a pension of £400, per annum, during the remainder of his life.

In making choice of a new Clerk Assistant, your Committee need not say that the greatest care should be taken, that the person appointed to fill that office be in every respect qualified for the performance of its duties. The qualification most essential and indeed indispensable, is a thorough knowledge of both the English and the French languages, in order to be enabled to translate *viva voce* from either.

Your Committee have only to refer to the following rule of your Honorable House, as a proof of one of the instances in which that qualification is indispensable.

“Rule 36. That no motion shall be delivered or put, unless the same be in writing and seconded. When a motion is seconded it shall be read in English and in French by the Speaker if he is a master of both languages, if not, the Speaker shall read in either of the two languages most familiar to him, and the reading in the other language shall be at the table by the Clerk or his Deputy.”

In addition to this qualification, your Committee think that the duty of the Clerk Assistant would be more efficiently performed by a person not too far advanced in years, who would be better enabled to bear the fatigues of a long session.

Your Committee have unanimously come to the conclusion to recommend for the office in question, W. B. Lindsay, Junior, Esquire, at present assistant Law Clerk and English translator to your Honorable House. Mr. Lindsay has already performed the duties of Clerk Assistant, both during the last and the present sessions, at different periods, to the satisfaction of your Honorable House, and from his possessing a thorough knowledge of both languages, they entertain no doubt that, should their recommendation be carried out, the duties of that office will be most efficiently performed.

1855
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Your Committee have had before them several returns from the different departments of your Honorable House, which will be adverted to in a future Report. All which is humbly submitted.

THOMAS FORTIER,
Chairman.

Quebec, 3rd May, 1855.

Letter of Clerk Assistant.

QUEBEC, 30th April, 1855.

SIR—With reference to a letter which Mr. Lindsay, the Clerk of this House, had the honor of addressing you, on the subject of an additional assistant, and which has since been referred to a Select Committee, I beg respectfully to state that viewing my advanced age (being now 65 years) as well as my increasing infirmities, I feel that I am now no longer able to discharge, efficiently, the duties of my office as Assistant Clerk, particularly during the evening sittings of the House.

I have now been 43 years in the service of the House, during which period I have endeavoured to discharge the duties of my situation with all the zeal and ability of which I was capable.

Apart from the duties appertaining to my situation, I can state with perfect truth, that during the last 25 years I have been constantly employed in forming a collection of rare and valuable works as well as manuscripts relating to the history of America. At the time of the destruction of the Legislative Buildings at Montreal, in April, 1849, these amounted to above 1600 volumes, the whole of which were unfortunately entirely destroyed.

After renewed and continual exertions, this collection was again reconstructed and had reached the number of nearly 2000 volumes, when it was partially destroyed by the second calamitous fire which happened on the 1st February, 1854. On that occasion about 700 volumes perished in the flames; amongst them were a large number of publications of the 16th and 17th centuries, many of which it is feared cannot be replaced.

The remaining portion of this collection consists, at this present time, of about 1200 volumes, together with 24 folio volumes of manuscripts and nearly 200 maps, charts and plans, all relating to the early history of Canada. Even in its present state this collection is *unique* in its kind and may in time be brought to attain its former splendid condition, provided it be placed under the undivided care and attention of a competent person.

After having thus stated the nature and extent of my services, I would respectfully beg the favor of your recommendation to the Committee, in order that I may be allowed to resign my present situation as Clerk Assistant, and out of my salary of £550 to grant me a pension of £400, during the remainder of my life, or should this collection be left in Quebec under my charge, that I may then be allowed to enjoy the full amount of my salary.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

G. B. FARIBAULT.

To the Honorable the
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

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