

22. What do you consider the Committee reporters?—Permanent officials. I have not touched upon the permanent reporters, the Interpreters, or the Sergeant-at-Arms.

23. With regard to the subordinate officers, who has appointed them?—With regard to the officers named down to the Record Clerk, I have given the mode of procedure. With regard to other officers the mode of procedure has varied at times. I find that in some cases the Speaker has appointed direct, without reference to the Government, Committee and *Hansard* reporters. There appears to be no regular procedure. The Sergeant-at-Arms has been appointed on the recommendation of the Speaker without reference to the Government. The practice varies a great deal.

24. Some of them the Government have appointed?—That I cannot tell, because we have no record in our books of such appointments.

25. Sometimes the Speaker has done it and sometimes some one else?—Yes. I have no record of any one else doing it. The only record is that of the Speaker.

26. If that power was conceded it might be a question of considerable increase or decrease of expenditure at the dictum of the Speaker?—Scarcely so. I do not understand that the Speaker would have the right to make appointments until sanctioned by the House. He would only make appointments in accordance with the expenditure voted by the House.

27. If we concede that according to this irregular practice the Speaker has the right to appoint irrespective of consulting the Government, if he has the power to appoint one he could appoint dozens?—No, he can only appoint to vacancies that occur. I am not referring to a creation of new appointments at all.

28. I thought you mentioned Committee reporters amongst these officers?—Yes.

29. There is no particular vacancy for Committee reporters?—Are you talking of extra reporters? They are taken on as the Committees require them. I am speaking of the two reporters of the House. We have no control over the number of extra reporters required. If a Committee is set up and the Chairman wishes a reporter, he has to be supplied.

30. Who makes that appointment?—There is no appointment. The reporter is sought for and is got for the day's work.

31. Who engages them?—Mr. Otterson. There is no appointment; they are only engaged for the day's work. He keeps a list of applications, and sometimes there is a great deal of trouble, because they are not available.

32. Mr. Otterson has the patronage, and can appoint whom he thinks fit?—Yes; he has to supply a shorthand reporter when required.

33. There is a considerable amount of money paid for this sort of work?—It was very heavy last year.

34. How much did it amount to?—I suppose £300 or £400.

35. And the appointment rests on the responsibility of Mr. Otterson?—Yes. It can scarcely be called an appointment; it is only an engagement for the occasion. The reporters are only taken as the Chairmen of the Committees require them.

36. Who appoints the messengers and so on?—They are appointed by the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Speaker together. When one or two vacancies occur they are settled by the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Speaker.

37. The Government having charge of the estimates since 1891, would it not be necessary for them to know the number of messengers and the money required for them?—There is a certain amount of money put on the estimates for the appointment of messengers, and it is within the power of the Government to reduce it or otherwise. Proposed alterations would result in correspondence between the Government and the Speaker.

38. The body having control of the estimates as to the amount to be paid, it would follow as a natural sequence that they should also control the number employed, because the number would be controlled by the amount?—I have already said they have the power to do so by reducing the estimate.

39. What is the amount paid to the officers—that is, leaving out yourself and the Clerk to the Committees—what is the amount involved in salaries to the other officers?—The permanent officers?

40. Yes.—£350 to the Second Clerk-Assistant, £250 to his junior, the Record Clerk and Clerk of Bills and Papers, and two Interpreters at £225 each.

41. The head clerk as an average receives £100 a month for the time of his services, the one getting £300 a year?—To whom do you refer? The fourth clerk receives only £250 a year.

42. Who is the other clerk at £350?—Mr. Rutherford. He is engaged the whole year round. He has to be in daily attendance at the office.

43. In Wellington?—Yes. He is never away except on leave of absence, perhaps for a month or six weeks in the course of the year.

44. Who grants him leave?—I do.

45. Without consulting any one else?—Without consulting any one else.

46. The next officer receives £250?—Yes.

47. How long is he engaged?—Only during the session, a few days before and a few days after, perhaps ten days.

48. That is to say, for three months and a fortnight he gets £250?—Yes, his services are not engaged during the recess.

49. During the remainder of the time he can obtain any employment and go where he likes?—Yes; that is Mr. O'Rorke.

50. Who is next under him?—There is none under him in the office.

51. Are those the only two—Mr Rutherford and Mr O'Rorke?—They are the only two provided for by the estimates.

52. But there are other clerks—are they paid by the session?—They are paid by the day. They are taken on and provided for the Committees.