

me to supply such details from memory extending over such a lengthened period. When I gave my evidence before the Committee on Monday last, 16th September, I produced and left in possession of the Committee abundant and incontrovertible statistics to prove that the volume of *Hansard* reporting has very materially increased since 1892, owing to the more lengthy debates in the Legislative Council, to the acceleration of speed in the delivery of speeches that has been brought about in the House of Representatives by the operation of the time-limit, and to the greater proportion of members now addressing the House on various questions than was formerly the case.

Question 5. Is it necessary or desirable that the Chief Reporter should regularly take a turn in the gallery?—Yes, it is both necessary and desirable that the Chief Reporter should regularly take his turns in the gallery. This was affirmed by a resolution passed by the House in 1871, which declared “that it should be a primary duty of the Chief Reporter to take his share in the task of reporting.” (See Appendix to Journals, House of Representatives, 14th November, 1871, and report in *Hansard* of that date.)

Question 6. Is the present staff overworked; and, if so, would the appointment of an additional reporter relieve the pressure?—Yes, the staff is most decidedly overworked, and the appointment of an additional reporter would relieve the pressure.

Question 7. If the Chief Reporter reverted to the old system of taking his turn in the gallery would that relieve the staff sufficiently without the appointment of an additional reporter?—If the Chief Reporter took his regular turns in the gallery the appointment of an additional reporter would not be necessary.

Question 8. If the Chief Reporter took his turn in the gallery would his work be any heavier than that of other members of the staff?—No, the work of the Chief Reporter would still be lighter than that of the other members of the staff, because, in the first place, the compilation of the *Hansard* index is performed by the other seven members of the staff, and this work takes up a considerable portion of their time on days when the Houses are not sitting—namely, on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays. Very few members of Parliament seem to be aware that this is the case. Generally, members appear to be under the impression that on days when the Houses are not sitting the seven members of the *Hansard* staff have all this time at their disposal to recruit from the fatigues of the past week's work. Again, when the Chief Reporter took his turns in the gallery he invariably placed his name last in the afternoon turns, whilst the other members of the staff took first, second, third, and so on in rotation. In this way the Chief Reporter had less reporting to do in the gallery than any of the other members of the staff, and, as a consequence, very frequently escaped a turn when questions were being put to and answered by Ministers, which is one of the most trying times for the reporters by reason of the buzz of conversation that frequently goes on during this period of the proceedings, rendering it sometimes most difficult for the staff to catch an absolutely full note of what takes place. This accounts in a great measure for the “please supply” which members perceive when their proofs reach them for correction. Besides this, when the House is in Committee, and no new business can be taken after midnight, the seven members of the staff “draw” to determine which two of them shall be left in charge until the House rises, and they may be there till all hours of the morning. As the Chief Reporter is never included in this “draw” he always goes away at midnight. Under all these circumstances it is obvious that, if the Chief Reporter took his regular turns in the gallery, his work would still be lighter than that of the other reporters.

Question 9. If not, would £300 per annum be sufficient payment?—I must respectfully decline to answer this question, as I do not consider it is a matter within my province. It is a question entirely for the consideration of the Committee, of the House, and of the Government.

Question 10. What should be the duties of a Chief Reporter?—The primary duty of the Chief Reporter should be to take his regular turns in the gallery. The reporting of the proceedings of Parliament is the only expert and responsible duty connected with *Hansard*. Were the Chief Reporter permitted to abstain from taking his share in the task of reporting a bad precedent would be established, and no one could blame his successors if they adhered to the same practice, which is now, and would be, most unfair to the other members of the staff, as it throws, and would throw, additional work upon them, which in justice they should not be called upon to perform. It would mean nothing more nor less than the creation of a most comfortable and lucrative sinecure; and, if this were established in connection with *Hansard*, the same system might with equal injustice be brought into operation throughout every department of the public service.

Question 11. Is the system of employing note-takers out of the gallery a good one?—The system of employing amanuenses besides being costly is a most objectionable one. In the first place, there is the time lost in dictating notes by the *Hansard* reporter when he leaves the gallery to the note-taker in the *Hansard* room. Then there is a corresponding amount of time lost by the amanuensis in writing to the dictation of the *Hansard* reporter. This loss of time on the part of both in this second-hand process of filtration must take place before the work of transcription for the printer begins. Then, again, the *Hansard* work has to be performed, as a rule, under such high pressure, and at such a break-neck pace, that the *Hansard* reporter has no time at his disposal to read over the transcription performed by his amanuensis, and that “copy,” with any mistakes it may contain—and occasionally the most glaring inaccuracies have been detected by the merest chance—has to go direct to the Government Printing Office. As a member of the staff, I would much prefer to do my own work and take the full responsibility for it; but that is now impossible, owing to the Chief Reporter not taking his turns in the gallery, and a sufficient interval not elapsing between one turn and the next. In fact, it is a case of from the type-writing machine to the gallery, and from the gallery back again to the type-writing machine day and night, and members of the staff, in the transcription of their notes, have not time to do justice either to themselves or to the members of the House whose speeches they have reported. As the hours of the night advance, the members of the staff become “fagged,” and in the early hours of the morning they will have to go