

214. So you think that the present system is better than getting some one to cater for Bellamy's?—I think so.

215. Do you speak from your experience at the time that Bellamy's was catered for?—Yes; I have been Chairman for ten years; I think the present system is the best.

216. You are very seldom there of an evening: your duties bring you less into Bellamy's than members of our House?—I am there pretty often; I generally lunch there twice a week. I often have a cup of tea there. I cannot stand the heavy dinners.

WEDNESDAY, 30TH JUNE, 1886.

Mr. G. DIDSBURY, Government Printer, in attendance, and examined.

217. *The Chairman.*] You are Government Printer, Mr. Didsbury?—Yes.

218. With regard to printing that is being done for the Legislature, it has been suggested that a considerable amount of economy might be practised by changing the system under which the records and Journals of both Houses and other parliamentary papers are printed. Here are two volumes, one showing the Victorian system, and the other the Canadian system. This latter appears to me to be in newspaper form?—It is in double column, which style, I suppose, is adopted for convenience of reading. It is more convenient, you will perceive, to carry the eye along the more limited space, especially where such small type is used. Many persons would have a difficulty in following the long lines if set across the page. That is the principal reason for using double column.

219. Would it not be possible to publish the votes and proceedings in this way, so as to save space as well as cost?—I do not think that it would effect much saving. You will see that our Journals are in large type, which I find more convenient for the purpose. It is the same as the Order Paper, Governor's Speech, &c., are set in, so that we get standing matter to work into the Journal in that way. There are only about 400 copies of the Journals printed, so there would be no appreciable saving in paper by altering the size of the type to brier, or the size of the page. It is of course more easily read by using large type. Small type is very often objected to by members.

220. With regard to printing when the House is in session, have you to take on any hands for the session-work?—Yes; I generally have to take on twenty-six or twenty-seven hands. I do not take them all on at once. I begin to take them on gradually some time before the session commences. Parliamentary papers are sent to me in advance, which enables me to get my staff together before the session actually commences.

221. Can you suggest any means by which economy could be effected in printing either *Hansard* or the votes and proceedings?—With regard to parliamentary papers I notice that we print a large number in excess of what is printed in the other colonies. In Victoria, where the population is a million, they only print 750 copies; while we print 1,400 and sometimes a large number for the departments in addition.

222. What becomes of all these papers?—They are circulated free. A great many extra copies are sent up for members' use. Copies are sent to local bodies in the colony, also to all public libraries and newspapers. A great number are sent to officials: this, with the copies reserved for binding, brings up the number to 1,350 or 1,400 copies of each paper. That is nearly double the number printed in Victoria. There would be a good deal saved in paper and binding if the number could be reduced, but as far as the cost of compositors' work is concerned I do not see how any saving could be effected. The papers are mostly done by piece-work. Those consisting principally of tabular or table work are done by the time-hands. I select the papers to be given out to the different rooms.

223. Printers are paid by the thousand?—Yes, piece-hands are.

224. In cases of columns—such as the division-list, for instance—do you pay extra?—As in this Canadian volume, where they are printed in four columns, double rates would be charged; but in our own Journals we only print them in double column, in which case there is no difference in rates.

225. What do you mean by that?—Work requiring four justifications, or in four columns, is always charged double under the piece-work system.

226. Then, there is no extra charge for division-lists when set double column?—No.

227. Being set up at so much per thousand, and in double column, I understand you there would be no saving in changing the system of printing the names in four-column form?—No.

228. How if you ran the names on?—It would save space.

229. It would also effect a saving in other respects?—Yes.

230. What have you to say against that saving being effected?—I have nothing whatever to say against it; in fact, I suggested it some years ago to the Printing Committee, but it was not adopted. The only objection to it would be to render the names of the gentlemen voting on either side less prominent. There is no objection on the part of the printing office to set them "solid" if it should be approved.

231. Have you any suggestions to make in regard to *Hansard* that would save printing?—The cost of correction is very heavy in connection with the printing of *Hansard*. I do not know that there could be any saving effected, unless it were decided not to send the proofs to members for revision, and allow the press-reader to finally revise their speeches. It was contemplated, when the type-writers were introduced, to send the "copy" to each member for revision before coming to the printing office. I told Mr. Barron I did not think that that plan would be feasible: it is so difficult to get back copy from members by the time it is wanted. Moreover, I do not think the copy is sufficiently legible to send to members for correction, judging by the way some of the *Hansard* reporters send copy to the printers.