

make use of the full reports given in the daily papers. In a minute by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, dated 4th June, 1895 (last June), the following passage occurs: "The staff at present consists of ten shorthand writers, which includes the principal shorthand writer, who is wholly responsible for the work—a duty large enough without doing any gallery work."

I then tried staying out of the gallery, with the result that, by assisting in the transcribing-room and general organization, the staff is now able almost invariably to rise with the House, and, if there are arrears, to work them off on the following day between 2 and half-past 2 o'clock when the Houses meet. Previously it had been almost as invariably the custom to stay for an hour or two after the House adjourned, and it was frequently necessary to call the staff together again next morning at 11 o'clock and work till luncheon time. Not once this session has this been necessary, which shows that the strain on the staff has been less. Nor have I been compelled to engage any more extra assistance than I did when I reported in the gallery myself. This extra assistance is engaged only when the work in both Houses is very heavy, or when an important debate, such as that on the Financial Statement, is going on, when it is necessary to relieve the strain on the reporters as much as possible.

My extra work renders it necessary for me to attend at the office every morning, whereas the rest of the staff have not to attend now until 2 or half-past 2 o'clock in the afternoon. I have to get division-lists, compare Committee-work with Clerk's notes, answer queries from the Printing Office, go through honourable members' speeches where they are not accustomed to making printers' corrections, write headings to questions, motions, &c., and many other matters which it is difficult to define, but which fully occupy my time, to say nothing of the constant references to me by reporters and honourable members while the House is sitting, which rendered the writing-out of my own "turns" a work of the greatest difficulty.

17th September, 1895.

C. C. N. BARRON, Chief Reporter.

The CHIEF REPORTER to the Hon. the CHAIRMAN, Reporting Debates Committee.

SIR,—

Hansard Office, 21st September, 1895.

I think, as I am now, in the twenty-ninth year of my service to Parliament, on my trial, so to speak, that, before the Committee comes to a conclusion, I should be allowed to say a word or two in my own behalf.

I am accused, I believe, of neglecting my duty, and, by implication, of taking no interest in the work of *Hansard*. I should like to say that I introduced type-writing machines here to assist the work of the staff. These machines were scarcely known in this or the neighbouring colonies at that time, but, with the kind concurrence of Sir Maurice O'Rorke, then Speaker, who saw as I did what a help they would be, I procured them, and they have fully realised our anticipations. They were not used by the New South Wales staff until the Chief Reporter had obtained my opinion upon them. I next procured a shorthand typewriter—the first imported into this colony—thinking it also might assist the staff. Having devoted some time to trying it I do not believe in it, but, as I paid for it myself, the State is no loser. I am now anxiously watching the development of the phonograph. At present the expense and mechanical difficulties, which I need not go into, render my experimenting with it impossible; but I have a strong belief that it will yet be possible to use it for reporting purposes. I have read an account in an American periodical of an alleged successful experiment in this direction, but have not yet obtained any confirmation of it.

I have, as you are aware, compiled the rulings of the Speakers of the House of Representatives: the little book is now on the table of the House with the Standing Orders, &c. This was to me a labour of love. The only remuneration I received for it was a kind note from the Hon. Sir Robert Stout expressing approval of it. I have also compiled the rulings of the Speakers of the House of Commons, of our own Speakers, and of those of other colonies where they seemed to me appropriate. I have them in manuscript, but as Mr. Blackmore, Clerk of Parliaments of South Australia, forestalled me in the printing, though not in compilation, I have not attempted to have them printed.

I trust these facts will convince you and the Committee that my interest in the work has not diminished.

I have, &c.,

C. C. N. BARRON,
Chief Reporter.

The Hon. the Chairman, Reporting Debates Committee,
House of Representatives.

MR. GREY'S ANSWERS.

GENTLEMEN,—

Hansard Office, 19th September, 1895.

I have the honour to acknowledge, from the Clerk of your Committee, the receipt of a series of questions which the Committee desires the members of the *Hansard* staff to send written replies to; and I therefore proceed to answer these questions in the order in which they have reached me.

Question 1. Has the work of the *Hansard* staff, per day, been increased of recent years?

Question 2. If so, what are the reasons, and what do you suggest as a remedy?

Question 3. What was the average time worked after the House rose, and before it met, prior to 1893 and afterwards?

Question 4. If there is any decrease in the hours, has that been due to the different manner in which Mr. Barron has carried out his duties?

Answer. With regard to questions Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, I have to say that there is no data at my disposal which would enable me to give an answer to these questions, and it is impossible for