

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTING DEBATES AND PRINTING COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF, ON THE PUBLICATION OF *HANSARD*; TOGETHER WITH APPENDIX).

MR. E. O'CONNOR, CHAIRMAN.

Report brought up 29th September, 1893, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 28TH DAY OF JUNE, 1893.

Ordered, "That a Committee, consisting of ten members, be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the reporting of debates, and to the printing executed by order of this House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members of this House: three to be a quorum. The Committee to consist of Mr. Speaker, Mr. Carncross, Mr. Fish, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Hogg, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Sandford, Mr. Saunders, and the mover."—(Hon. MR. REEVES.)

THE Reporting Debates and Printing Committee have the honour to report,—

That the circulation of *Hansard*, and its usefulness as a means of informing and educating the electors of the colony on political matters, is marred by the excessive quantity of irrelevant matter which it contains, and the staleness of its contents.

With the object of making *Hansard* more readable, and insuring its publication on the day following the debates, your Committee beg to submit for the consideration of the House the following recommendations:—

- (1.) That the space allowed to each member, excepting the Premier, a Minister introducing business of his department, and the leader of the Opposition, and one member of the Opposition to be appointed by him, be limited to a space equal to fifteen columns of present *Hansard* per month.
- (2.) That the matter for publication in each *Hansard* be limited each day to debates taking place between the hours of midnight and midnight on the previous day.
- (3.) That the system of corrections by members be discontinued.
- (4.) That, unless specially requested by the member being reported, the *Hansard* reporters be authorised to condense speeches where this can be done without injury to the main arguments.
- (5.) That speeches made upon motions of adjournment of the House, and all irregular discussion, unless under special instructions from the House, shall be briefly summarised.
- (6.) That there shall be a daily issue of *Hansard*, in such form as may prove most suitable, which may be supplied to newspapers, for circulation, free of postage, at the cost of paper and printing.

EUGENE O'CONNOR,
Chairman.

29th September, 1893.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee express regret that the House has not given reasonable attention to their report upon the compilation and issue of *Hansard*, as the recommendations were calculated to be of great advantage to the electors of the colony, and lead to economy in the expenditure of public money; and I move that the report and papers with it be printed.

EUGENE O'CONNOR,
Chairman.

5th October, 1893.

APPENDIX.

The GOVERNMENT PRINTER to the CHAIRMAN of the Reporting Debates and Printing Committee.

SIR,— Printing and Stationery Department, Wellington, 23rd August, 1893.

I beg to submit the following, in reply to your letter of the 18th instant. I answer queries one and two grouped together, and in the order of sequence, which will be found more convenient.

1 and 2.—Time between Day of Debate and Publication.

The average history, at the present time, of a day's proceedings may be thus tabulated:—

Proceedings	...	...	...	...	...	1st day
Copy received at office	...	...	...	...	...	2nd day.
Slips sent to members	...	...	...	...	...	3rd and 4th days.

(As a rule slips are sent out on the 3rd day, but in the case of a long day's proceedings, and towards the end of a session, the remainder on the 4th.)

Slips returned to office	...	...	...	...	...	5th to 11th days.
Correcting, final reading, and making-up into pages	...	...	...	...	...	11th to 16th days.

The publication issued yesterday contains the balance of debates of the 3rd instant (17 working-days after) and part of the debates of the 9th (11 working-days after); the remainder of the 9th will be published on Friday next (14 working-days after).

Delay or acceleration takes place according to the time within which slips are returned, and the amount of corrections to be made, due allowance being made for the variable length of a day's proceedings. Hence, the shortest time this session that has elapsed between the delivery of a speech and publication has been six days, and the longest time that has elapsed, nineteen days.

Causes of Delay.

Delay arises chiefly from two causes: first, not returning slips promptly; second, the large amount of time expended in final reading, after members' corrections have been made, and before the slips are made up into pages for printing. Occasionally further delay is caused by revises being asked for, which in some cases are returned with nearly, or quite, as many alterations as were made in the proof. This practice has been more frequent this session than previously. The final reading is of an editorial or literary character, and should, in my opinion, be either largely curtailed or altogether abolished. The percolation of speeches through one brain must have the effect of depriving them to some extent of their individuality, and of tincturing them with the mental colour of the brain through which they pass. This practice delays publication by one issue, or, say, at least three days. I would also suggest, as a means of further accelerating publication, that the prescribed limit within which proof-slips are expected to be returned should be adhered to, and that no revises should be given. But I must add that, if the latter be enforced, the present elaborating process in the final reading must also cease, otherwise the slips that may have been punctually returned will be in the Printing Office some days until the final reader can overtake them. At the present time the slips of the 15th, 16th, 17th, and part of the 18th instant are in the office, and will be in ample time for final reading in the ordinary course. Four readers are wholly engaged upon *Hansard*, the entire time of one and part of another being engrossed with final reading.

3.—Corrected Copy, and Continuous Shifts.

If authors' corrections were made in the copy *only*, before it was sent down to the Printing Office, and in reasonable time, one week only would elapse between delivery of speeches and publication.

With the present space at the disposal of the *Hansard* printing-staff, and the defective equipment of the office with the necessary type, continuous shifts are impossible. Such could only work "on time" now, in which none but picked competent men could be profitably employed, while the return of slips would have to be made with inexorable punctuality.

4.—Cost.

The cost of printing the debates has never been ascertained with any exactitude. The most reliable data was obtained by myself last year, when actual expenditure was incurred to the amount of £3,100. I propose to adopt in the future means for ascertaining actual cost as nearly as possible.

The whole of the debates are first put in type on piecework, the rate of pay being 1s. 4d. per 1,000 letters. The ascertained cost of authors' corrections during the previous three years has been as follows, viz.:—

	£	s.	d.
1890—3,436 hours, value	...	...	...
1891—4,907 " "	...	...	...
1892—5,459 " "	...	...	...
	351	14	0
	363	0	6
	409	8	6

Part of this time was paid for at overtime rate; while there is good reason for believing that much was never filed—both of these being unknown quantities, and respecting which it would be quite impossible to make any conjecture with accuracy. I may add that authors' corrections are necessarily made by time-hands.

5.—Circulation.

The number printed this year is 4,850. The disposition of this number is as follows, viz. :—

For binding	300
" members of both Houses	2,725
" official use and sales	658
" free list	1,167
Total	4,850

I am of opinion that the number of copies sold would not be materially increased if *Hansard* were issued in its present form earlier. Reports efficiently condensed would, without doubt, increase sales, if publication were materially hastened. The number of copies sold last year was 389. The number for the present year to date is 264.

I have, &c.,
SAMUEL COSTALL,
Government Printer.

The Chairman, Reporting Debates and Printing Committee,
House of Representatives.

TABLE showing Space occupied by MEMBERS' SPEECHES, from No. 1 (June 22) up to and inclusive of No. 27 (part of September 18).

Name.	Columns in Hansard.	Name.	Columns in Hansard.
Allen	84 $\frac{3}{4}$	McKenzie, J.	64
Blake	19 $\frac{3}{4}$	McLean	86 $\frac{1}{4}$
Bruce	66 $\frac{1}{4}$	Meredith	50 $\frac{1}{2}$
Buchanan	51	Mills, C. H.	12 $\frac{3}{4}$
Buckland	128	Mills, J.	27 $\frac{1}{4}$
Buick	19 $\frac{1}{4}$	Mitchelson	47
Cadman	6 $\frac{3}{4}$	Moore	43 $\frac{1}{2}$
Carneross	18 $\frac{3}{4}$	Newman	54
Carroll	36 $\frac{3}{4}$	O'Connor	61
Dawson	4	Palmer	28 $\frac{3}{4}$
Duncan	17 $\frac{3}{4}$	Parata	23
Duthie	91 $\frac{1}{2}$	Pinkerton	26 $\frac{1}{4}$
Earnshaw	85	Rees	27
Fergus	34 $\frac{1}{2}$	Reeves, W. P.	169 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fish	269 $\frac{1}{2}$	Rhodes	40 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fisher	132	Richardson	46 $\frac{3}{4}$
Fraser	5	Rolleston	161 $\frac{1}{4}$
Grey (absent) ... ..	...	Russell	56 $\frac{1}{4}$
Guinness	15 $\frac{3}{4}$	Sandford	48 $\frac{3}{4}$
Hall	92 $\frac{1}{4}$	Saunders	22
Hall-Jones	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	Seddon	370 $\frac{1}{4}$
Hamlin	12 $\frac{3}{4}$	Shera	28 $\frac{1}{2}$
Harkness	24 $\frac{1}{4}$	Smith, E. M.	70
Hogg	93 $\frac{3}{4}$	Smith, W. C.	23 $\frac{1}{4}$
Houston	14 $\frac{1}{4}$	Steward	41 $\frac{3}{4}$
Hutchison, G.	65	Stout	120 $\frac{1}{2}$
Hutchison, W.	30	Swan	18 $\frac{1}{4}$
Joyce	7	Taipua	18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Kapa	14	Tanner	15 $\frac{1}{2}$
Kelly, J.	12	Taylor	66 $\frac{1}{2}$
Kelly, W.	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	Thompson, R.	36 $\frac{1}{4}$
Lake	12 $\frac{3}{4}$	Thompson, T.	6
Lawry	22 $\frac{1}{4}$	Valentine	25 $\frac{3}{4}$
Mackenzie, M. J. S.	81 $\frac{3}{4}$	Ward	185 $\frac{1}{4}$
Mackenzie, T.	90 $\frac{3}{4}$	Willis	26 $\frac{1}{4}$
Mackintosh	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	Wilson	26 $\frac{1}{4}$
McGuire	53 $\frac{1}{2}$	Wright	41 $\frac{1}{4}$

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, nil; printing (1,250 copies), £2 4s.

By Authority: SAMUEL COSTALL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1893.

