

## Letter from Benjamin Brown French

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Washington, July 25, 1850

{Honorable} D.S. Kauffman

Chairman of the {Committee} on Rules

Dear Sir,

In conformity with your request, I enclose two Resolutions, one of which provides for the payment to me monthly, not exceeding one year, such sum as you may think proper, while compiling the manual contemplated by my memorial. The other provides for paying me a gross sum, when the manuscript shall be delivered to the House or to the Clerk.

Both the resolutions provide for my superintending the printing, and making an index after the delivery of the manuscript, receiving such compensation as the House may order. This, as you will see, is necessary, as the book cannot be indexed properly until it is printed, & for my own credit, I should wish to superintend its printing & examine the proofs.

I think that I cannot furnish the manuscript, in such form as I desire, in less than one year, for I intend the work shall be as perfect as it is in human power to make it.

I should prefer the adoption of the resolution giving me monthly pay, as I am now out of business, and have a very small income; but if the Committee think it most advisable to adopt the latter resolution, paying for the work when delivered, I, of course, shall be content. In either case I shall proceed at once to my labor, I shall press onward with all my industry until I complete them.

I would most respectfully suggest that I think \$2500 per year, or that sum for completing the work, would not, under all the circumstances be an extravagant compensation, but I leave that matter also entirely in the hands of the Committee promising to be satisfied with whatever sum they may be pleased to fix. They are aware that it will be a very laborious work, & will require a vast amount of investigation.

You will confer a great favor on me by bringing the matter up as early as you conveniently can.

With great respect

Your friend and {obedient servant}

{Benjamin Brown} French

Since writing the foregoing I have {received} the accompanying letter from Senator Hunter. I conversed with Mr. Winthrop who is warmly in favor of my plan, and will write me expressing his favorable opinion. Mr. Spencer Cobb is also in favor of it, & will probably address me a note on the subject.

A friend of mine has suggested that, considering my former position, the responsibility & the labor which I propose to undertake, that my pay ought to be equal to that of the Clerk of the House. That matter I leave, as I have before remarked, entirely to the Committee.

{Benjamin Brown French}

Resolved, That the Speaker of this House be directed to contract with {Benjamin} B. French, to compile and prepare for the use of the House, a Parliamentary Manual, upon the general plan embraced in his memorial on the subject; and that said French be paid out of the contingent fund of the House, monthly, while engaged in said work, the sum of

Provided, That said payments shall not extend beyond one year from the time said compilation is commenced, unless by a further order of the House. And said work when completed shall be delivered, in manuscript to the House. And the said French shall superintend the printing of said manual, if its printing be ordered by the House, and shall make an index of the same, for which he shall receive such compensation as the House may thereafter order.

Resolved, That the Speaker of this House be directed to contract with {Benjamin} B. French to compile and prepare a Parliamentary Manual for the use of this House, upon the general plan embraced in his memorial to the House, on that subject, which, when completed shall be delivered to the House, or to the Clerk, in manuscript, and upon the delivery thereof the said French shall be paid, out of the contingent fund, the sum of

dollars, in full compensation for compiling and preparing said manual. And if the same be ordered to be printed, said French shall superintend the printing thereof, and shall make a full and correct index thereto, for doing which he shall receive such compensation as the House may thereafter order