

5. The same difficulty and annoyance are experienced by the Audit Office in dealing with the travelling expenses of members of Parliament engaged on Royal or other Commissions, who are debarred by the Disqualification Act from receiving remuneration of any kind for their services, and whose travelling expenses are also limited by the same Act to expenses "actually incurred."

6. The Committee recommend that authority should be obtained to commute such expenses for a fixed sum of twenty shillings per day, in addition to money paid for coach, railway, steamship, or other passenger fares; such commutation, in the case of members of Waste Lands Boards not to exceed twenty shillings for each day that the Board sits.

1st September, 1883.

F. J. MOSS,
Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, 26TH JULY, 1883.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Dargaville, Hon. Mr. Dick, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Peacock, Mr. G. Wilson, Mr. Wright.

Motion made, That the Controller-General be summoned to give evidence as to the desirability or otherwise of any amendment being made in "The Public Revenues Act, 1878," and Amendment Act, 1882.—(*Mr. Dargaville.*)

Motion put, and agreed to.

Adjourned till Thursday next, at 11 o'clock.

TUESDAY, 7TH AUGUST, 1883.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Wright.

The Committee considered the reference from the Treasury *re* "Public Revenues Act, 1882."

Mr. J. E. FitzGerald, Controller and Auditor-General, was examined.

Adjourned till Thursday next, at 11 o'clock.

FRIDAY, 31ST AUGUST, 1883.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wright.

The Chairman stated that he had prepared a draft report in connection with the reference from the Treasury *re* "The Public Revenues Act, 1882."

Motion made and question, That the draft report be printed and circulated amongst the members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Dargaville.*)

Motion put, and carried.

Adjourned till Saturday next at 11 o'clock.

SATURDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER, 1883.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Dargaville, Hon. Mr. Dick, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wright.

The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee considered the following draft report *re* "Public Revenues Act, 1882":—

The Committee, having received from the Treasury a reference, dated the 25th July, 1883, referring to them "The Public Revenues Act, 1882," in order that the Committee might consider "whether any and, if so, what amendments it may be desirable to suggest to the House, especially with regard to imprests," report,—

1. That they have examined the Controller and Auditor-General, whose evidence is attached. The Committee regret that, in consequence of the late period at which the investigation was begun, and of the other duties devolving upon them, they have been unable to give the subject full consideration. They therefore confine themselves to reporting their opinion as to the means of guarding against the expenditure of further money beyond two months after the Appropriation Act has expired, in order to secure that Parliament shall be called together within that time.

2. The ninth section of the Act of 1882 provides that the Colonial Treasurer may, until a new Appropriation Act is passed, "issue and pay" moneys during two months after the Appropriation Act of the previous year has expired. The Appropriation Act of 1882-83 expired on the 31st March, 1883. On the 31st May the Controller and Auditor-General issued £192,150 to the Paymaster-General under protest. He was aware that it could not be required for the past month's services, but considered that he had no legal power to refuse. The money then became an imprest in the hands of the Paymaster-General, and was used by him to make payments till Parliament (which met on the 14th June) had granted a new supply.

3. The Committee are of opinion that a slight addition to "The Public Revenues Act, 1882," prohibiting the Colonial Treasurer or any imprestee from paying public money after the 31st May,