

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

MONDAY, 21ST JUNE, 1886. (Mr. E. J. O'CONOR, Chairman.)

Mr. A. T. BOTHAMLEY, Acting-Clerk of the Legislative Council, in attendance, and examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You are Clerk of the Legislative Council?—I am Acting-Clerk.
2. How long have you been acting as Clerk?—Since the 10th or 11th February this year.
3. Then, you have only been in attendance as Acting-Clerk of the Legislative Council?—I hold the permanent position of Clerk-Assistant of the Legislative Council.
4. How long have you been attending the Council in that capacity?—I entered the public service in March, 1871. I was first employed in the Legislative Council in the session of that year.
5. In what capacity?—As an extra clerk. I have been Clerk-Assistant for about eight years.
6. Is the Committee to understand that you have been employed each session of the Legislative Council?—Every session, except one year, when I was absent from the colony, first on special service, and subsequently on leave without pay.
7. Is there any record in the Legislative Council of the times of their sitting and adjournment?—There is no record of the hour of adjournment; they begin their sitting at a regular hour.
8. Does the Council sit for a regular number of hours daily?—No.
9. Are there regular days appointed for sitting?—Yes; the regular days are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.
10. Practically, during session, do the Council sit on those days?—Generally they do. The Journals would show it.
11. Have you the Journals of the Council?—I have not got them with me.
12. Are you not able to speak without them?—I could hardly tax my memory as to the days the Council sat, or the occasions on which they have not sat; or the time they have sat on regular sitting days, or the occasions on which they have sat on what are ordinarily non-sitting days—Monday and Saturdays.
13. Then, we are to understand that the Council has no record of the days on which it actually sits?—It has a record of the days on which it sits, but not of the time to which it sits.
14. Is not that available?—The published Journals give the days but not the hours of adjournment.
15. In the estimates for this year the Chairman of Committees is set down at £300, fixed by Act, and £120: are you aware what are the duties of Chairman of Committees?—I do not think I am at liberty to give evidence as to what are the duties of the Chairman of Committees.
16. Why do you think that?—The leave given to me was to give evidence before this Committee upon legislative expenditure. I think it would be exceeding my duty to give any evidence as to the duties of Chairman of Committees without the express direction of the Council. I will, however, take a note of your question; but think I should not be at liberty to give evidence upon it.
17. Then, the same objection would apply to any question I should put to you as to the duties of officers of the Council. I do not ask the same question in respect of the Chairman of Public Petitions Committee, because you would reply in the same way?—The leave given to me is confined to giving evidence before this Committee upon legislative expenditure.
- Mr. Garrick:* Put the question as to any one acting as Clerk of the Council, for the witness is the gentleman who is discharging the duties of that office.
19. *The Chairman.*] Then, as regards the Clerk of the Council: you are acting as Clerk of the Council. There is a salary put down here at £400 by Act and £100 for twenty-three years' service; that does not apply to you?—No; that does not apply to me.
20. Are you aware whether the Clerk of the Council receives that extra £100 for any service rendered over and above the service that he is required to render as Clerk of the Council?—He receives that sum by a vote of the House as Clerk of the Council. I cannot go outside the record as stated in the Speaker's estimates.
21. Are you aware whether he has any other salary except that which is mentioned here, that is, £400 and the £100?—Besides the £500?
22. Yes; that is the question I put?—These estimates are supposed to show the whole of the salary he gets. I am not aware that he has.
23. Has he any other employment from the State?—I am not aware that he has any other regular employment from the State.
24. *Mr. Garrick.*] Or allowance?—I think I must decline to answer questions of that sort, "Whether he has or has not had employment other than——"
25. *The Chairman.*] Yourself?—With regard to myself, I have had other employment, but to give evidence upon this is hardly within "legislative expenditure."