

187. *Mr. Brown.*] There is no business that he has to attend to prior to a month before the opening of the session?—For a month or six weeks before the session solicitors would be coming to him to make inquiries about procedure. He must be accessible to the legal profession so as to give them the information they may require.

188. He is not obliged to appear in his office after the close of the session?—No; the fees payable on private Bills more than cover his expenses.

189. Have you any shorthand-writers in the Upper House?—Yes; one.

190. Has he any duties besides shorthand-writing: is he employed otherwise during the session?—I cannot say.

*Hon. Sir R. Stout:* He is employed, I believe, on the Press.

191. *Mr. Brown.*] You say that no one but the Speaker can give us the information as to the duties and salaries of officers?—I suppose the Auditor-General could give you every information as to salaries. As to this shorthand-writer, the reason of his appointment was that there was a difficulty in getting one of the Committee reporters some two years ago. I think myself that a clerk of this description expedites the business of a department.

192. Do you not think that, considering the great amount of time the Legislative Council has on its hands, they could dispense with a shorthand-reporter?—There has been a Joint Committee on the Rabbit Nuisance sitting daily for the last fortnight or three weeks; they have sat five days each week.

193. They do not have such a Committee every year?—They had one in 1884.

194. It would not be necessary to provide a special shorthand-writer for each year?—Every year there is some special Committee sitting, perhaps, for two or three weeks. If it is not a Committee in respect to rabbits and sheep it will be a Committee on something else.

195. It is possible that the person referred to may not have to attend more than ten days during a session, or even five days?—Just so.

196. Then, he has got a fixed salary for five days' work?—That might be so.

197. So that he may get £150 for doing no work?—I cannot say from my own knowledge.

*The Chairman:* Captain Baillie might be able to furnish the Committee with a return of the number of Bills passed in the Legislative Council from 1860 to the present time, showing the increase from year to year.

198. *Mr. Brown.*] Have we the number of hours they sit?

199. *The Chairman.*] Yes; we have a return taken from *Hansard*. Mr. Reynolds has also given us a return. I should like to ask Captain Baillie a question or two in regard to the House Committee. I would ask what are the arrangements under which the House Committee manage Bellamy's?—Originally the Government had a grant of £700 or £800—it might have been £1,000—to meet certain expenditure. A good deal of this was expended in plate, china, and other things. A sum of £250 was put down for servants. During the last five years there has been no grant nor any assistance, except £75 two years ago for china which is broken. There is great breakage every session. You would scarcely believe the amount of breakage which is principally arises from carrying refreshments to Committee-rooms and places outside Bellamy's. That has to fall on the profits derived from the wines. On the messing, that is, on "the table," there is a loss. The whole of the servants are paid out of profits.

200. As to the manager?—He is paid as custodian of the building during the recess. He has to look after the buildings during the year. He is responsible for the furniture and everything else in the place. There is a night-watchman also during the recess and while Parliament is sitting. He comes on at 8 o'clock.

201. Has he anything to do with Bellamy's?—No.

202. Fuel, &c., is, of course, paid for by the Government?—Yes.

203. The salary of the manager of Bellamy's?—He is paid as custodian of the building,

204. Are there any other expenses connected with Bellamy's?—Except incidental expenses in the way of repairs.

205. Are you aware what is the profit on the sale of liquors sold in the course of the session?—Last year we were £70 to the bad. There were two short sessions, which were detrimental to profit. We had to keep on servants. If you remember, there was a six week's *hiatus* between the two sessions; that obliged us to keep on the servants.

206. You say the table does not pay?—No.

207. How many members of the House avail themselves of Bellamy's?—About twenty-two, I think; but a great number of them have occasional meals there, luncheon especially. When sittings are late, and on wet nights, a good many have supper.

208. Do you think that Bellamy's, for the sale of wines and spirits, or for supplying meals, could be dispensed with?—I do not think so beneficially to the health of members. I doubt very much if you could carry on without some place for refreshment. Members would be tempted to go to neighbouring hotels, and at times of division, or at other times when they were wanted, they would not be in the House.

209. In other words, you think it serves a purpose?—It is of course not an unmixed evil in itself.

210. *Mr. Levestam.* In connection with this ball, is anything paid by Government towards that?—Not a bawbee.

211. How is that managed?—The gas must be burnt whether there is a ball there or not. The messengers will be paid by the Ball Committee, the workmen engaged in the preparations will also be paid outside: there might be a little breakage, but very little.

212. Do you remember when Laing catered for Bellamy's?—Yes.

213. Did we pay him anything?—No, I think not; but he never gave us such a table as we have now; the liquors were not to be compared with what they are now.