

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 25th November, 1932.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Governor, SIR EDWARD DENHAM, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Millard, C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer.

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B. Litt. (Oxon.), Director of Education.

The Hon. J. S. Dash, B.S.A., Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo (Eastern Berbice).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B. (Essequibo River).

Major the Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, M.A., Dip. For. (Cantab.), Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, Comptroller of Customs.

The Hon. Q. B. De Freitas, M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. E. G. Woolford, K.C. (New Amsterdam).

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North).

The Hon. A. V. Crane, LL.B. (Lond.) (Demerara River).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

The Hon. A. E. Seeram (Eastern Demerara).

The Hon. J. I. De Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. G. E. Anderson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 24th November, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

PAPER LAID.

The following document was laid on the table:—

Report on the accounts of the Walter Mitchell Fund and the Mitchell Foundation Scheme for the year 1931 (*Mr. Millard*).

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.

HINTERLAND RAILWAY.

Mr. ELEAZAR gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS it is generally admitted that the Colony possesses in her vast hinterland almost unlimited resources of undeveloped wealth; and Whereas an increase in the population is absolutely necessary for the successful exploitation of these resources; and

Whereas the Wilson-Snell Commission of 1921 has recommended *inter alia* the construction of a railway into the hinterland as a means of developing the Colony as a whole; and

Whereas it is agreed that the preparation for and the commencement of the construction of a railway into the hinterland will attract population to the Colony as well as relieve unemployment; and

Whereas the finances of the Colony stand in great need of re-organisation and adjustment owing principally to the failure of the Colony's major industries:

Be it Resolved,—(a) That immediate steps be taken to secure from the Colonial Development Fund or otherwise a loan of no less than £5,000,000 with or without interest for a period of ten years for the purpose of constructing a railway into the hinterland as a sure means towards the expansion of the Colony's productions and equipment of her industries; or

(b) That immediate steps be taken to invite private capitalists to undertake the construction of such railway by offering as consideration and inducement a liberal concession of lands for the purpose;

Be it further Resolved,—That His Excellency be respectfully requested to forward a copy of this motion and the debate thereon to the Secretary of State for his information.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Mr. MILLARD (Colonial Treasurer): I move that "A Bill to allow and confirm certain additional expenditure incurred in the year ended thirty-first day of December, 1931" be read the third time.

Professor DASH seconded.

Question "That this Bill be now read a third time and passed" put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

Mr. MILLARD: I move the first reading of "A Bill to continue certain expiring laws."

Professor DASH seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the first time.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time. (*Mr. Millard*).

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GOVERNMENT BILL.

Major BAIN GRAY (Director of Education): I move the second reading of "A Bill to amend the Church of Scotland Government Ordinance, Chapter 230, by removing all doubts as to the relationship between the Presbytery of British Guiana and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and as to other incidental matters." This short and non-contentious Bill represents an agreement arrived at between the two parties concerned and embodied in the Bill. Clauses 2 and 3 correct certain mistakes which were made in the last revision of the law. Clause 4 makes it clear that the property of the Presbytery shall be held for the use and benefit of the Church of Scotland in British Guiana. That is implied in the Ordinance but it is desired to make it clear beyond any doubt. Clause 5 deals with the exact relationship of the Presbytery of British Guiana to the Church of Scotland as a whole and is added to the existing Ordinance to remove doubts on the subject. When we go into Committee I propose to move an additional clause, which is in the nature of a formal saving clause of the rights of His Majesty and his successors.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Major BAIN GRAY: I move that the following be inserted as clause 6:—

35. Nothing contained in this Ordinance shall in any way prejudice or affect the rights of His Majesty, his heirs and successors, or any body politic or corporate or any other person, except those persons mentioned in this Ordinance and those claiming by from or under them.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Council resumed.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the third time. (*Major Bain Gray*).

REPORT ON THE RAILWAY.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. C. Douglas-Jones) I beg to move :

THAT, with reference to Governor's Message No. 4 of the 23rd November, 1932, this Council approves of steps being taken to secure a visit of inspection and a report being made on the British Guiana Railway and Transport Department by Mr. A. S. Cooper, C.B., C.M.G., who is now advising on the working of the Trinidad Government Railway, Mr. Cooper to be paid a fee not to exceed £ 50 (\$720) for a visit of a fortnight's duration at £50 a week plus any out of pocket travelling expenses incurred which should not reach the additional £50 provided.

When Government became aware that Mr. Cooper, who is a well known authority on the management and control of railways, was visiting Trinidad with a view to reporting on their railway, it was thought that it would be a good opportunity to invite him to visit this Colony and report on the railway here in view of the changed personnel of the Transport Department and also of the recommendation of the Financial Commissioners that instead of a General Manager we should have a Manager-Engineer. That recommendation has not altogether commended itself to Government because the Transport Board feel that the officer holding the post of General Manager should be able to devote the whole of his time to the administration of the Department, which is considerable. This would be a good opportunity to get Mr. Cooper over to advise us on that and other points. One of the points which I personally would like Mr. Cooper to advise us upon—and I think some members of the Board agree with me—is on the method of keeping the accounts. In a Department of that kind it is necessary to have some recognised system of arriving at actual costs as adopted in the operation of large railways and colonial railways elsewhere. We want to find out whether it is not possible to effect economies by some principle of working out the cost of operation not only in the workshop but in the running of the railway itself. We have during the last two or three years introduced certain innovations in the railway system which have proved successful. In 1928 we reduced second-class fares very considerably and in 1931 third class fares were introduced. Although it looked at the moment that we might lose money, we carried a greater number of people and earned a certain excess of revenue which

we would not have earned. The rolling-stock was able to compete with the additional traffic, but we now sell no first-class tickets at all with the result that any overflow from the second-class goes into the first-class coaches. The question whether we should not reduce the first-class fare will have to be considered and is an additional reason for obtaining Mr. Cooper's advice. The proposal to invite Mr. Cooper to come to the Colony has been considered by the Transport Board and the majority think no good purpose can be served. My own and other members' view is that there is a great deal we can learn from Mr. Cooper which would be useful, and, at any rate, we shall have his advice on questions we badly want advice upon. I may add that we are in difficulties with two of our engines and that is a matter upon which he would be able to give us sound advice. One has been laid up practically the whole of this year and has cost a considerable sum in maintenance. There seems to be an engineering dispute as to what variety of gear should be used and that we have two engines with wrong machinery. That is a matter we should like to have independent and practical advice upon. On the whole I think a great deal is to be gained by having Mr. Cooper here and I am sure we will receive very great benefit from his visit.

Mr. SMELLIE seconded.

Mr. AUSTIN : I take it from the Colonial Secretary's remarks that Mr. Cooper will be able to deal with the locomotives such as are now used in the Department. I understand that two locomotives—"Sir Graeme" and "Sir Wilfred"—imported as late as 1924 at a cost of \$46,000 have had spent on them in repairs as much as \$31,000. If Mr. Cooper has general knowledge of locomotives I think it would serve a very useful purpose if he does come down here at the cost estimated and suggest some means whereby this extravagant expenditure will cease.

Mr. WOOLFORD : I rise to oppose this motion because I feel convinced that the result of this visit will be entirely nugatory. The hon. Member who has last spoken has given, I believe, quite accurately the total expenditure on these two engines since they were imported.

Whoever gave the hon. Member that information has omitted to tell him that their importation to this Colony was due to the expert advice of an expert who was sent out here from England and recommended those engines and their method of construction, against the expert advice of our local engineers despite their entreaties not to adopt that method of construction, with the result that this Colony has been burdened with these two engines and with their consequent expenditure. I regard this Message as an invitation to repeat that mistake. If, on the other hand, anything is to be gained by experience and by taking the advice of men on the spot, the last importation which is named after yourself, sir, has given no trouble at all. Like yourself, sir, it is not likely to give any trouble (Laughter). It is a reflection on the years of experience gained by our local engineers if their advice is not to be entertained even after consultation with these so-called experts who come here. I do not know whether you are aware, sir, that some individuals become experts at a very early age. There is an old school anecdote of a mother who on her boy returning from school heard him say "I am the best boy in the school." The mother asked him "Who told you so?" and he replied "I found it out myself." That is the opinion formed by experts about themselves, but I hope that the instance which I have quoted—and it is being perpetuated to-day—will not be repeated. We have not been given any information of the vast experience Mr. Cooper is supposed to possess. I know he ended his career as a Brigadier-General in the War. I am not aware that Mr. Cooper is a Mechanical Engineer.

THE PRESIDENT: I interrupt the hon. Member to say the gentleman has not ended his career. He is now in active employment in Peru.

Mr. WOOLFORD: That is a *lapsus linguae*. If he is not a Mechanical Engineer he would not be of the slightest assistance to us in telling us anything about these engines. The trouble is that all these gentlemen who come here can never acquire during the limited period of their stay anything like the experience which we are anxious to obtain. Mr. Spiller, who is equally as competent and qualified

to express an opinion as Mr. Cooper and whose reputation still survives, advocated the construction of the engines in the way he did despite the advice of the local engineers. Those constant repairs are the very things the engineers warned him would happen in a country like this. Although Mr. Spiller was well qualified one of the recommendations he made—and it is the kind of recommendation we are likely to get—was that there should be some accommodation for the plate-layers. It is grotesque to tell a labourer here he must live over his work. These men who would have been quite content to live in the villages nearby would have had to sell their homes to live on the job. Our ballasting was in some measure due to sand and in some parts due to the use of burnt earth. Mr. Spiller quickly arrived at the conclusion that that ballasting was of no use at all and that the drainage bed was not being maintained, that the alignment of the rails would be put out of joint and there would be railway accidents, and all kinds of fears were entertained. I do not know what position the department would have been in if it had to ballast the railway. Regardless of cost these recommendations are made. If the Combined Court was in existence I would not mind these experts coming because we could control the expenditure. I fear a repetition of the cost of requisitioning two engines of the type of "Sir Wilfred" and "Sir Graeme" if we adopt the recommendation of these experts.

Let Mr. Cooper remain in Trinidad, because I am satisfied he cannot tell us about our present system anything that is likely to be of any use to us for many years to come. I strongly advocate the postponement of the visit of Mr. Cooper. It would be extremely amusing if it were not so important, but Mr. Spiller actually advocated the substitution of steel sleepers for our wooden sleepers. He wanted endurance and permanency. He would have put a period, if he could, to our *mora* and local timbers. I do not know what Mr. Wood would say of that recommendation to-day, but if the subject had to be voted on to-day he would have to vote for it. That is one of the disadvantages of Crown Colony Government. We were told that our sleepers could not last; they last very much better than some steel sleepers in other parts of the world. We

were told that our rails were too heavy and all kinds of things were going to happen. These rails are still there and nothing has happened or is likely to happen. Give Mr. Spiller and Mr. Cooper an opportunity to enjoy their stay wherever they are and enjoy their rides on the Trinidad, Jamaica or Nigeria railway. In order that he should not come here I would willingly vote for the payment of Mr. Cooper's passage to the furthest port from Trinidad. Mr. Spiller in his report said we had no railway officers who had been trained or had served outside the Colony. I think it is still lingering in the minds of the Colonial Office. It is impossible to say he could not have been impressed with the calibre of the local men. At that time both Divisional Engineers had had experience on railways outside the Colony and years of experience on our line. Is there any railway engineer with more experience and better training than Mr. MacDougall? I doubt it. If Mr. Spiller had absorbed some of the advice of Mr. MacDougall and Mr. Trounson he would not have told us what he has done in his report. If Mr. Cooper cares to come here at his own expense to learn something or to gain a wider experience he is very welcome, but I am not going to be a party to allowing him and his recommendations to be subject to criticism similar to that of Mr. Spiller's after he has gone. Unfortunately, we would not know what his recommendations are likely to be until he has gone, and after all that is a most important thing. If Mr. Spiller had his way you would have had two European permanent way engineers in addition to Mr. MacDougall.

All the money we are likely to spend on visits we want to spend on the permanent way, on a new coach and a great many other things. If Government were asked for funds for poor law relief we would be told that money cannot be found, but money can be found for bringing Mr. Cooper here. The Administration has been ill-informed as to what are the necessities for improvement in our railway system. They are not technical by any means. We know that we can improve receipts on the West Coast if we could deepen the ferry on the other side. The public should know that if you compare revenue and expenditure on the West Coast railway it is a paying proposition. The receipts are

far greater than the expenditure, but we are burdened with a capital encumbrance. The management is successful and the results are good, and I object as a member of the Board to continue to have the decisions of the Board disregarded in this and other ways when the management is successful. That Board is composed of a member of the firm of Messrs. Booker Bros., McConnell & Co., Ltd. (Mr. Mackey), an attorney of Messrs. Curtis, Campbell & Co. (Mr. Seaford), a director of Messrs. Wieting & Richter, Ltd. (Mr. White)—I won't mention the lawyers because they are not expert or perhaps competent, but there are also lawyers on the Board and business men consult us very quickly when they get into difficulties—and Mr. Smellie who is of opinion that this visit will be useful. I do not believe there is anyone who pays more attention to the economic management of business than Mr. Smellie and I cannot believe that in his own heart he would justify his opinion if he had time to visualise it. He has been rushed in this matter and I object because I feel all is well with the Transport Service to-day. It is true that we have lost the services of two valuable officers, but I do not think the visit of Mr. Cooper can result in his recommending a suitable appointee. I do not believe that he is more competent than we are, in the Colony to do so and I hope Your Excellency will after consideration review your decision in this matter, and I ask you to do it because you have done this of your own volition. I gather that you have invited this enquiry and it is not a suggestion of the Secretary of State, therefore any evil results that flow from this recommendation will be the responsibility of the local Government. Mr. Spiller made several valuable suggestions which have not been carried into effect because we had not the money, but they are there and I ask you, sir, to read that report before giving your final decision on this matter, and in consultation with the technical officers I am sure they will be able to convince you that this visit is most untimely.

Mr. CANNON: I am at a loss to understand why the finding of the Board of Directors has been overruled. The hon. Member has indicated that if the Board is going to be overruled it is no place for him. I hope I understand him correctly and that is the attitude he is going to adopt.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not a question of overruling the Board. The Board is an advisory Board and the matter is put before the Council for consideration to-day. The matter has not been settled and the Board has not been overruled.

Mr. CANNON: I am glad to hear that the Board has not been overruled. I will put it the other way. The Board's advice has not been respected, and I think it is equally as bad, if not much worse. The hon. Member has told us the names of Unofficial Members of the Board but he has omitted to tell us the names of the Government Members. I presume that Government Officials who supported the majority view will to-day be not asked to sin their conscience. I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the last speaker as to the very great value of the engineers of the Transport Department, and I certainly do think it is a great reflection on them that this matter should be brought before this Council.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am entirely in favour of this motion. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam with his wonderful eloquence can always make a house out of straw. He has quoted from Mr. Spiller's report, and I do not say that Mr. Spiller is right in all things or wrong in all things. But is there nothing in his report that is correct? We paid Mr. Spiller a certain fee and perhaps he has saved us more than that fee. However, Mr. Cooper has not gained his experience in the United Kingdom entirely. You cannot put him down as a railway man who has no knowledge of local conditions because he has had very large experience in tropical countries, and he is the type that would help us more than any railway man who we may bring from perhaps any part of the United Kingdom. I cannot agree that there is any reflection on the present staff or the Board. The Board are very capable business men and very capable lawyers. But have they had any knowledge of transport? Where did they gain that knowledge that is so essential? The transport question is assuming a larger and larger position every day not only in this country or the West Indies or Africa but in the United Kingdom. Did the advisers in that case consider they were slighted by any means? It is very difficult for us to keep in touch with all the im-

provements going on in the world. Is the Transport Board capable of saying whether the locomotives are of the right kind? I do not think so. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam criticised Mr. Spiller in respect of the drainage of the permanent way. The hon. Member forgets that the lower East Coast to-day gets drainage which it did not then. I do not think the technical staff will consider the visit of Mr. Cooper any reflection on them. I would like the opinion of a railway man as to whether five engineers are necessary for this Service. We are not able to keep in touch with all the methods adopted to-day, sir, and I am sure your technical advisers will tell you the same thing. Mr. Cooper has had vast experience of transport work—he has apparently kept in touch with improvements and progress—and if we can get the benefit of that experience for \$720 that money is well worth investing. That money is invested even if we get no result. There is one question I should like to ask the Transport Board. Is it necessary that the heavy train should be run every morning backward and forward to Berbice? The number of people and freight might be carried beyond Mahaica with a lighter railway and engine very much cheaper. Is it not also possible instead of burning imported patent fuel on the locomotives to adapt the engines to use oil or combustion fuel? That is a matter that a technical man can advise us on.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have been trying to keep my prejudice against these experts from Africa or anywhere else coming here, remaining for a few days and pretending to give advice on local matters. In every single instance it has been a failure. The last one was Sir Harry Moorhouse; he brought African ideas here. If the Transport Board were consulted and they feel that we have no difficulty and nobody can tell us about our railway what we do not know, what are we paying this money for? We are pressed for funds and it is not absolutely necessary to have this gentleman visit us even though the amount is nominal. We have been told that we have recommendations by Mr. Spiller but they cannot be carried out because we have not the means to do so. At one time the railway had Mr. Dorman as Manager and Engineer and there is no reason why we should not have now one man as Manager and Engineer. It is also not necessary to

have five engineers. The members of the Transport Board tell us they know what is wrong but have not the money to rectify the deficiencies. I do not think we would be justified in incurring this expenditure when we are so much in need of money. I know that Your Excellency will do the right thing if you are convinced and I appeal to you further to consider this question.

Mr. SEERAM: I understand that the Transport Board has advised that it is not necessary for Mr. Cooper to come here. The Board is more conversant with transport affairs than we are and if it has given that advice I ask Government to take it. I have no doubt that in his report this gentleman is going to make recommendations involving the Colony in greater financial difficulties. I do not regard the expenditure as an investment but if it is to be construed in that light I fear it will be a very expensive experiment.

Mr. SMELLIE: It has been said that I have been rushed in this matter. That is not so. I have had time for consideration and see no reason whatever why I should change the views I expressed at the meeting of the Board. I feel very strongly that Government would be making a serious mistake if it does not take advantage of the opportunity of getting Mr. Cooper to come to the Colony at the present time. The time is opportune. We have lost the two senior officers of the Department and I feel that the advice of Mr. Cooper will be most valuable at such a time. I look upon the expenditure of this very small sum of money as reproductive expenditure. We are not bound to accept all the advice he gives; we can sift it out and take what we feel will be of advantage to the Department. In view of the debate this morning it is apparent that the majority are against his coming, but I sincerely trust that the majority will treat Mr. Cooper with consideration if he comes to this Colony and not with antagonism in any way.

Mr. GONSALVES: The views which have been expressed here are those expressed at the meeting of the Board when the matter was discussed. What strikes me is that we are to secure a visit of inspection and a report on the railway and Transport Department and it is proposed that this should be done in a fortnight's

time. I observe from his report that Mr. Spiller arrived here on the 18th March and his report is dated the 15th April. I think this is going to be useless expenditure from the point of view that if it took another expert a month to prepare a report I cannot see how Mr. Cooper will in a fortnight's time prepare a better report. We must be satisfied that we are going to get value for our money? Are we going to get as full and conscientious a report as is anticipated by Government? If it is desired to have Mr. Cooper's observations on the railway it might be easier and less expensive to let him have Mr. Spiller's report with any remarks by the Department on that report and obtain his advice on that. If his recommendations were going to be in favour of a railway to the interior you would have our support. The question of the condition of the two engines was brought to my notice by an article in one of the newspapers. I have submitted the article to the Board for enquiry whether the statements in it are correct and what remedy could be effected. That matter is engaging attention and I think the engineers are capable of expressing an opinion and making recommendations. The Chairman of the Board would say, if he were asked, that the Board has always given serious consideration to every matter that comes before it. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam told us who are members of the Board, but he omitted one who is an engineer, Mr. Wong. On the Board you have not only lawyers but engineers, merchants and officials, the only omissions being a doctor and a parson. This matter has received full consideration of the Board and the view of the majority was that it was inadvisable that this expenditure should be incurred.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: The only redeeming feature of this proposal is the close proximity of Mr. Cooper to Demerara. The Transport Board considered the proposal and the majority were against it, and I shall have to follow their advice. The Transport Department has five engineers at the present time. Have the Board asked any of their engineers for a report on the transport system? If they have, what value was placed on that report? One of these engineers should be asked to report before assistance and advice are asked from outside. The expenditure on

the engines is appalling and it would be cheaper to scrap these engines. The Message says the proposed expenditure can be met from savings on the 1932 Estimates. It would be better to bring forward those savings in 1933 if we hope to relieve the community of taxation.

Mr. CRANE: It is due to the profound respect which I pay to you, sir, that I am taking part in this debate. I know that in your opinion the country will reap some advantage from the proposed visit. I also know you hold the view that with an expert so near we should not lose the opportunity of hearing his opinion about a system which was investigated ten years ago. I wish to give the reasons which induce me to the view that this expenditure should not be undertaken. The objection has been aptly expressed in the complaint that the duration of the visit would be too short. Added to that is the general suspicion that this community holds of all experts. There are occasions when it is apparent that the kind of investigation which is being sought is such that it is likely to be of no value to the community. The man who is to tell us about our engines must be a Mechanical Engineer, and Mr. Cooper is not a person upon whom we can depend for professional advice on a matter which relates to mechanical engineering. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam has told us that the two engines which have been referred to were designed and constructed on the recommendation of an expert. We are reaping the harvest of this expert. The "Sir Edward," which required no expert knowledge and was built upon local experience, is giving no such trouble. There is a complete revolution in the administration of the service now as compared with when it was run by the Demerara Railway Company. The one was a ramshackle system and could not be depended on, while the present is an organised system.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon recess.

Mr. AUSTIN: During the adjournment I referred to some memoranda which I had as a member of the Harbour and Transport Board and I found that two engineers of the Department approved of the two engines being sent out. They were not

against the mechanism, and both Mr. Grant and Mr. July were in favour of those engines being imported.

Mr. CRANE: I am not in a position to controvert what has been said by the hon. Member. I stated before that I believed the visit of this gentleman is not likely to be of any benefit. If one is to be of any use in determining whether the administration of this Department is as efficient as it may be he must spend some time much longer than a fortnight to find himself in a position to do so. The Financial Commissioners spent longer than two weeks and came to the conclusion that the ferry steamer was losing money and plying much oftener than the traffic justified. They recommended a curtailment of that service, and the Board gave way and the service was duly curtailed. The result is a heavier loss in the traffic receipts of that service, and the Governor-in-Council has ordered a restoration of the services that were curtailed. Is this gentleman to advise the Department on every conceivable aspect of the service? Is he to advise on administration? That is a distinct and separate branch of study from Engineering itself. Of what is this gentleman an expert? Surely he is not an expert of every aspect of railway engineering. He must be an expert in some particular direction, and if we do not know in what direction he is an expert we are unwise in inviting him to advise us on matters he is not competent to advise us on. He has come to Trinidad merely as an administration officer, one who has had experience in the running of railways, and he is there to enquire why that railway is not paying as it should and what should be done. I do not know if Government has sufficient information to determine on what particular branch he can be of use to us. If Government is not in possession of sufficient information to determine that he should not be brought down here. The last remark I desire to make is in relation to Mr. Smellie's appeal to members of the Board who are not in agreement with this proposal to play cricket. I can say for myself, and I think for the other two Elected Members on the Board, that whether we win or lose in this discussion the result will not prevent us from being less than gentlemen. We dare not in our own interest be antagonistic to a gentleman who has been brought here through no fault of his own but on the decision of the majority of the Legislative

Council to give what he considers a fitting opinion upon the state of our railway. I think he can have no fear at all of our conduct in that respect and regret that the hon. Member has thought it necessary to suggest it would be possible for any dissentient in this matter to treat Mr. Cooper in any other than a gentlemanly manner. Whilst we are convinced from our standpoint that the gentleman should not be brought here and are bound to vote against it, we shall have to respect the opinion of the majority of this Assembly; and when Mr. Cooper comes, if he does come by the decision of the Council, he shall have 100 per cent. of my respect in the same way as if I had been one of those who have been agitating that he should be brought here to advise us.

Mr. WOOLFORD: The question in relation to the two engines concerned whether the gear should be placed on the inside or outside. These engines work half of the year and the other half they are in the workshop, whereas in the case of the "Sir Edward" there is no such happening. I happen to know that the expert authority in England was wedded to the inside gear even in a recent indent of another Colony. Our engineers say that gear is unsuitable to our permanent way and it has been proved that it is not economic. That is the explanation and I can verify it by reference to correspondence.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have listened with very close attention to the speeches which have been made in opposition to the suggestion that Mr. Cooper be asked to visit this Colony to advise on our railway, and I regret to say I have heard nothing that I regard as a real objection, from the point of view of Government, when it is anxious to obtain valuable assistance and advice in regard to one of its quasi-business concerns. I am afraid the objections have been mainly those that we have heard on previous occasions in this Council: that is, that "we have no faith in experts and we don't want experts." I know that the experience of the Colony with regard to experts' advice, especially on schemes inaugurated during the past 10 or 15 years, has not been altogether happy, but I do not think that has been due to the

experts themselves or to the advice given but due to peculiar and unknown conditions in this Colony. Even people in the Colony do not know them. In some cases they estimated them but can give no more reliable advice than an expert. Another objection is with regard to the time Mr. Cooper would be in the Colony. It has been said that two weeks are too short a time to give any valuable advice or assistance, and in this connection it is said we do not want advice. It is also said that we have great faith in our engineers and there is nobody who can tell them anything. I quite agree that Mr. Cooper might not be an expert in all branches of railway engineering, civil and mechanical, but we do want advice on the administration of the Department. I feel that there is a lot we can learn from the training, experience and knowledge Mr. Cooper has. It is in the general administration of the railway that I feel we want advice. As Mr. Smellie has said, and those who supported the suggestion, it is an opportunity that we should not lose. It is going to cost a comparatively small sum and I think it is worth it. That is on the general question; but I should like to refer to one or two remarks made in the course of the debate. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam based his argument on the report of Mr. Spiller in 1922. In support of his argument he took those cases where Mr. Spiller's advice was not taken and which were known by the engineers and members of the Transport Board to be unsuited and that it would be unadvisable for this Colony to adopt them. He did not refer to the many instances where Mr. Spiller's advice was accepted. I find a number of instances where his advice was accepted and found useful, and those cases largely exceed the few in which his advice was not taken.

Mr. WOOLFORD: We were able to tell him that before he came we had them under consideration. In very few instances his recommendations were adopted. I happen to have had a great deal to do with them.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have the report in my hand and can quote chapter and verse where his suggestions have been adopted and quite a number of things remedied. There is no doubt that a great part of his report was of value to the Department and was adopted. In the

case of the weight of the rails the engineers considered that the subsoil was better suited to light than heavy rails. That was local knowledge and I have no doubt they were right. The hon. Member said the difference of opinion in connection with the engines was in regard to the form of valve gear used in the engines. I will quote from a letter what Mr. Spiller wrote :—

“ I was very sorry to learn that you desired Stephenson's valve gear fitted instead of Walschaerts and I do not think that the fact that your men are familiar with the former justifies its use. The Walschaert's gear is easier to erect, cheaper to maintain, is simpler in action and far more accessible than Stephenson's motion. I am quite certain that any man who is familiar with Stephenson's valve gear would have no difficulty in dealing with Walschaert's and once they become familiar with it will undoubtedly prefer it to Stephenson's. I do not think during all the years I have been with the Crown Agents that we have ever supplied to any Colony a new locomotive fitted with a Stephenson valve gear and to do so now would, I am sure, be a retrograde step. All the Locomotive Superintendents in our Colonies are agreed that Walschaert's is preferred for Colonial Railways.”

That was referred to Mr. Grant and he wrote to Mr. July, Locomotive Superintendent, as follows :—

“ When the specification of the new engine was discussed you stated that you preferred Stephenson's gear rather than introduce one with which your men were unfamiliar. I agreed with you and personally, from bitter experience, I have little or no faith in patent valve gears. In view of Mr. Spiller's views expressed about it, do you still adhere to your opinion.”

To that Mr. July replied :—

“ I have weighed up the contents of Mr. Spiller's letter carefully and while I expressed to you the opinion that I preferred Stephenson's link motion, it was done from the point of view of my drivers, as it is immaterial to me personally what type is ordered being familiar with many, and as Mr. Spiller attacks the Locomotive Superintendent direct, I am compelled now to advocate the Walschaert gear and the drivers will have to be taught this, as no doubt had to be done originally with Stephenson's.”

It is the local peculiarity which makes the one preferable to the other. There is no triangle for turning engines at Georgetown or Rosignol, and when the engines go out they go forward and come back in the reverse gear. The result is that the left side of the engines is always exposed to the breeze which comes from the north, and the dust is blown into the valves and working parts on the right side

which always wear very much more than those on the left side. That is the main reason why the Walschaert gears are not so suitable as the Stephenson to conditions in the Colony. I also gathered that the difficulties we have with these two engines are mainly due to the constant repairs necessary to these gears. Reference has also been made to the question of ballasting. I am certain that our engineers would be only too willing to ballast the line with granite rather than with shell or burnt earth, but we cannot get stone except at a very high cost and have to ballast the line with the cheapest and most readily available material. When Mr. Spiller wrote his report, I happen to know, there was a great deal of controversy about steel sleepers. They were being used in a large number of Colonies, and they were inexpensive, easily carried and easily laid, but in a Colony like this with its timbers it does seem undesirable to use steel sleepers. It has been stated that we had five engineers in the past. We have only three permanent engineers. The others are known as superintendents. Unfortunately, at present we have only one Mechanical Engineer, and by the death of Mr. Grant we lost a valuable and capable Mechanical Engineer. We all know that Mr. MacDougall has done good work as a Civil Engineer, and everything he has undertaken for the railway has been well done. He has always managed to carry out his work on the estimates, and I do not think there is any member of the Board who would not agree that Mr. MacDougall as an engineer has given entire satisfaction.

The Hon. Mr. Seaford referred to patent fuel. He must know that we use patent fuel at the request of the sugar planters. If we could use wood fuel and adapt the engines to the use of wood fuel, I have no doubt that fuel would not cost so much; but we are told that if we use wood fuel we run the risk of burning cane fields. We have gone into the question of using oil fuel but found that there is very little in it. It is a very moot point whether oil burning engines would save us any money and are better than the engines we have at present and the fuel we use. The hon. Member for Demerara River referred to all Government schemes as having been dismal failures. I think that is rather over-stating the case, and I doubt

whether some of the schemes which have been failures, in the first instances, originated from or were initiated by Government. I have an idea that a good many of them were suggested by people in the Colony, and we all know the reasons why the estimates of some were exceeded. Wells are one outstanding instance where a large sum of money was spent from loan funds and so far as actual benefit is concerned very little is shown for it. At the same time we have obtained very valuable information and are now in a position, I think, to go ahead with the scheme and make these wells of material that would not fail. On the point of whether Mr. Cooper is an expert on any particular branch of railway engineering, he may not be but I feel that he can assist us in the administrative branch where we do want some assistance. The late manager was not a trained railway man, but I think we are all agreed that he did extremely well. At the same time we have ourselves made suggestions which perhaps have not altogether received the support of the executive. The General Manager and his staff have been opposed to one or two of the innovations we brought in, but the Board made them as experiments and they have been successful and I think we shall have something to learn from Mr. Cooper, especially in the administration of the Department.

THE PRESIDENT: I am quite willing to take the responsibility with regard to this Message and would like to say something more, especially as regards the views with respect to experts. I have no particular use for experts. The last thing I should like to be tied up with is an expert, but I do believe in meeting other people with whom one can exchange ideas. It surprises me that so many of the Elected Members should take the view that there is nothing to be gained from a visit of this kind. I hold a rather higher opinion of their abilities than they do themselves. I have every reason to believe that if a gentleman with Mr. Cooper's experience comes here the members of the Transport Board and others in the Colony can pick his brains to the extent of £150, and if he is worth anything at all you can get that much in useful ideas from him. Unless we get people from outside to come here and see the country for themselves and hear from them what is being done

elsewhere we are not going to get the best out of modern progress. That is how I regard experts. Several experts have come out here during my time, notably the Agricultural, Veterinary, and Carnegie experts, and money came into the country as the result of the visits of those experts and came in quite readily because they were impressed with what they saw. Not only money but also advice, and very good advice too. An exchange of ideas is always helpful to the community. It keeps the community alive. If you get a man such as Mr. Cooper, I have every reason to believe, you will get from him, even in the course of a visit of a fortnight, information and help that is going to be useful and which will either save money or enable us to spend more profitably.

The question of Mr. Cooper's qualifications has been raised and stress has been laid on his being a Civil Engineer and his competence to express an opinion. I have the terms of reference on the Trinidad Government Railway on which he was asked to advise. The first term is that he should report upon the efficiency of the management, and administrative and technical staff. He is also to report on the question of rail and road transport, both in their relation to one another and the development of the Colony's resources. I am surprised that in the course of the debate no reference was made to that important question. A remarkable change has been made during the last ten years all over the world with regard to road transport as compared with rail. Every country has been faced with the problem of competition between motor transport and railways. Are we so satisfied with the steps that are being taken with regard to competition between road and rail? I am not quite so certain. We have taken action and the results have justified the action taken, but these things have to be looked at from many points of view of revenue, petrol, licence and many others. Mr. Cooper will come here from Trinidad where he is investigating exactly the same problem and that certainly will help him. At any rate he can tell us the results of his experience there. That is something that will be useful and help us in considering the question here. What I propose as soon as he arrives is to ask him to meet the Transport Board at once and discuss

with them special terms of reference on subjects they would like him to deal with. It is quite obvious that he cannot deal with the whole question of the railway and we do not expect a report as was made by Mr. Spiller. What he must do is to go round with our technical advisers and members of the Board, and I think it would be a reflection on them if they did not get some useful information from him.

There is no reflection on the Transport Board with regard to this matter. The Transport Board has been of the greatest assistance and help to Government. This matter was referred to them at very short notice, the meeting was not attended by all the members, and it is quite possible that members of the Board, like Members of this Council, may change their minds when they hear the whole question put before them. It does not necessarily follow that because an opinion was expressed on which there was some difference that that should be the last word in a matter of this importance. We have a man of accepted reputation who has had charge of railways elsewhere, who is now connected with a railway in the very continent we are in, and who is coming to us from an adjoining Colony where he has spent some time studying the same problem. I feel that I should not be doing my duty to this country if I did not take advantage of an opportunity like this. We have a duty to the people using the railway and when we have an opportunity to get in a man with wide experience to advise us surely we ought to take advantage of it. We are not bound to accept the opinions of the expert, or assume that he is going to recommend that £20,000 be spent on engines or that we shall necessarily accept such a recommendation. It is quite clear from our financial resources that we cannot do it. I can assure the Council that recommendations will not be put into execution merely because they are made by an expert; but if we can get a man of his experience at this cost at the present time it should be useful to us. That is the way I visualise this question. There is not the slightest reflection on our local engineers and I shall be surprised if they do not say they appreciate the visit. If they say they do not want a man to come here then I do not think we have the type of engineers we want; but I believe they will welcome a visit from such an expert and

that he is going to be useful to them and to the Colony. Mr. Spiller came here and recommended a certain type of engine and it is assumed that this expert may come here and recommend the same. Why should we assume that and assume that when he comes here he will want steel sleepers as one Member suggested; he may be so impressed with our sleepers as to give an order to the Forest Department for sleepers for Peru. It has been assumed that because certain recommendations were made by an engineer who came here, and many of those recommendations obviously did not suit conditions in this Colony and were not given effect to, an expert is a person who must almost necessarily put up recommendations which will not find favour and will not be sound. Why should we not also take the good recommendations of the expert and for £150 get one or two that I am sure will be useful to this Colony? I will now put the motion.

The Council divided and voted:—

Ayes—Messrs. Seaford, Austin, Anderson, Mullin, Dr. De Freitas, D'Andrade, Wood, Major Craig, Professor Dash, Major Bain Gray, Millard, Dias, Smellie, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—15.

Noes—Messrs. Peer Bacchus, De Aguiar, Seeram, Gonsalves, Eleazar, Wight, Crane, Cannon, Woolford, Fredericks, Luckhoo and Brassington—12.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

FOREST DEPARTMENT.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the draft Estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year 1933 under the head of Forest Department.

Item 1 b—2 Assistant Conservators of Forests, \$6,557.

Mr. CRANE: I formally move that this item be carried out at 1 Assistant Conservator of Forests, \$3,300.

Mr. SEAFORD: I regret that I was not here yesterday when this item was before the House. When this matter came up for discussion two months ago

the House decided that there should be only one Assistant Conservator of Forests. I am now of the same opinion as I was then. If Government feel that this officer is required for experiments in the curing of wood I am in favour of money being spent for that purpose, but the money should come out of the amount of \$25,000 for curing wood and not be included in this item.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): This is the third bite on consecutive days at this cherry, and as there are Members here who did not hear what was said yesterday, just as there were Members who did not hear what was said on Tuesday, I would like to explain what the position is as regards the staff. Before I do that there is one point I laid some stress on yesterday and would like to make perfectly clear. I have a feeling that it is still at the back of the minds of some Members that Government tried to rush this officer on the Estimates and got it through without the House realising what was being done. As I feel that I will be accused by the House of a very great want of frankness if that had been the case, I wish to explain again that when the question of the officer was brought up last I was asked, and Government was asked, to give an undertaking that if his salary was voted until the end of 1932 Government would not put him on the Estimates for next year. I said at that time that I considered I could not do without him and was in no position then to say what the policy of Government would be when the Estimates for next year were being framed, but that so far as from being able to give any such undertaking I personally would do my best to persuade Government to put him on the Estimates. I might have suggested that a note should have been put against this item when the Estimates were printed pointing out that this was the officer concerned. On Tuesday afternoon the hon. Member for Georgetown South asked whether the officer who was being trained in England was the officer who had been taken off the Estimates. As I rose to answer that question the clock struck. When the debate was resumed the hon. Member for Georgetown South was not in his place. The answer to his question was "No, it is not the same officer." Had I been lacking in frankness I could very well have made that answer. The answer

I gave to the House was "No," but when I understood that what was in the hon. Member's mind was that he wanted to know whether this officer whose pay had only been voted to the 21st December was in the Estimates, I said the answer to that question was "Yes." I think the matter has been quite frankly dealt with.

From my point of view the position has entirely changed since the debate last took place. There is now to be \$25,000 from abroad to be spent. I suppose 99 per cent. of it will be spent on labour and doing work on a considerable scale to prove to the public that we can substitute local woods for the woods at present imported from abroad. The system which will be adopted on this large scale will amount to something in the neighbourhood of half a million feet of timber to us if we could season these woods down to a satisfactory condition. We are satisfied that we can. I am prepared to show hon. Members who are interested instances where woods cured by us have been used by us and put in a position where they will undergo strain and shrinkage, and how they will compare with the behaviour of woods supposed to be cured. I am satisfied that we can substitute our woods for foreign woods and also establish a market in our selected material. That large scale experiment will cost this Colony nothing. It will, on the other hand, provide \$25,000 of money coming from outside the Colony to be spent on labour in the Colony. The expenditure of that money will be of great assistance to a class of people for whom I have a certain personal affection—a class who have been suffering and whose sufferings are perhaps not quite so apparent because they live in the backs of rivers and not in the larger centres of population. If that work is to be carried out I should like to explain the position. I have always been reluctant to undertake to make any promise which I cannot carry out. My position is that there will be an officer undergoing training in England, and half of his salary will be paid from the Colonial Development Fund and all his expenses. That training is to qualify him to act as liaison to get our woods into the market in England. The result of that is that the minimum staff out here of myself and two officers will now be reduced to myself and one officer. This officer will be abroad and although the whole of his

salary appears in the Estimates we will actually be only paying half of it.

I have \$25,000 to spend on labour in doing work which, if it is going to be successful, requires the closest supervision and the greatest care. Failure means branding our woods as being of no good. There must be work going on in several places and you cannot be fetching logs and at the same time arranging your sawing. The work of the Department has also to be considered and for all these purposes the staff I will have during 1933 in the Colony will be myself, one officer, a secretary and a typist. This is experiment work and there will be only myself and one officer to undertake it in addition to the rest of the work. The two officers are both due for leave. One has spent more of his time under canvas in the bush than anything else and consequently I cannot envisage what would be the position if either of these officers suffers any breakdown in health. I will make the best use of anything I have got, but I do not think there is any Member of this House with practical experience who would willingly undertake to do thoroughly and successfully the amount of work of this nature with that staff provided, and I must make the position quite clear to the Council that though I am willing to do my best with the staff I will do it as a man who thinks he would probably fail because he has not the staff at his disposal. If I do not get this officer I do not see how I can successfully carry on with the spending of this \$25,000. It is only approximately half the salary of this officer the Colony is called upon to pay. That is not a great deal to pay in order to obtain \$25,000 which will come from abroad and will be spent on labour here. My feeling in the matter is I do not imagine for one moment that any Member of this House would suggest that the Imperial Government will give this \$25,000 to be spent in order to keep one officer in employment at a salary of \$3,257. I think the reputation for business acumen which the British Treasury always held has not suffered any diminution as a result of their recent activities in the Colony, and I cannot imagine the Treasury agreeing to spend \$25,000 of Imperial money with the object of enabling an officer to remain on at \$3,257. I think they are sufficiently imbued with the business spirit to send that officer a cheque for his pay with a charming note.

Another point is that the sum of money to be expended above the line in these Estimates is \$19,000 while the sum below the line is only \$14,000. It is only \$14,000 on these Estimates, but I ask hon. Members to remember that there is another \$25,000 to go below the line. Apart from that I do not see the force in that argument unless it is promised with the statement that the justification for the staff is the amount of money spent. If that is the case I have no more to say. That must be assumed. I am having a fairly rough crossing here. But when the Government Analyst Department comes up and Members see that the expenditure above the line is \$9,000 and the expenditure below the line is \$1,000, I fear the fun will be fast and furious if it is to be assumed that the only justification for staff is the spending of money below the line. But I do not think there is any justification for making that assumption. I would very much like to know what was the expenditure above the line on Sir John Harrison and his assistants, as against the expenditure below the line, in bringing out the cane which saved the Colony. We are trying to do the same sort of thing in the forests. I do not suppose that the proportion of expenditure below the line was any greater than the proportion here is. I do not think it is fair to judge justification for the staff above the line entirely from the point of view of the amount of money which is to be spent below it. If I am to spend this \$25,000 on the work which I believe I can do and make a success of, and which I believe will be of great help to the Colony if I succeed, if I am to be kept down to myself and one other officer then I can only say I will do my best and my best may be rather poor.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I hope that my remarks will not be misunderstood. I do not claim to be an expert in the administration of a Department but I know that I have a little more strategy than the Conservator of Forests. If instead of trying to be his own master of the ship he had adopted the proper methods the passage which he has described as rough would never have been encountered. I am a member of the Forest Trust—I do not know that my appointment has been terminated—but I have never seen these estimates and I do not know that any

other member has seen them. If you wish the support of members of the Forest Trust we ought to know the *raison d'être* of these items. I suggest that consideration of this item be deferred. In 1889 a very large order was placed in this Colony for crabwood by a man who had a partner here with an intimate knowledge of timber that no one would dare to dispute. That order was supplemented by another by an equally large firm and its only reason for rejection was because the shipment did not conform to sample. In other words, uncured crabwood was shipped from this Colony. Those were days before the existence of the Forest Department. I have recently had a bitter experience on behalf of shippers with the execution of very large construction work in England by contractors of world-wide eminence. Failure to conform with specifications has led to the abrogation of a contract which meant thousands of pounds to this Colony, by contractors who had orders all over the world. I object to any portion of the \$25,000 being devoted to this officer. Work to people in the upper reaches of the rivers is spasmodic and I am not going to be a party to their being deprived of employment it would afford to the people to be benefited. I have asked for a postponement because I am at the present moment inclined to the view of the retention of the officer's services, but not for any prolonged period. I am not in favour of any appointment, whether a new appointment or a re-engagement of the officer on the Fixed Establishment, and I shall oppose similar items in other Departments for the same reason. I am not satisfied that the Forest Department might not remain and the Imperial Government assume responsibility. In the meantime we are taking a risk in appointing this officer to the Fixed Establishment if we accept this appointment in all its nakedness. I am willing to give it a trial as an experiment for a year. We ought to see results within a year and I am willing to accede to the officer's retention only on the stipulation that the continuance of the appointment be considered from year to year.

Mr. WOOD: This officer is under notice of retrenchment and is still in the Service in a permanent and pensionable post, as such things are in these days. It would really be degrading the officer from above

the line to below the line. The hon. Member also suggested that he would be willing to give the seasoning of timber a trial for a year. I know the predilection for quick results. I would ask for 18 months. We start this work early in January and fetching logs will take several months.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the point made by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam is one that the House has to bear clearly in mind. We are faced with the position that it is quite impossible to get this \$25,000 for this work unless we have the staff to carry it out. The work has to be done by the Forest Department. If anybody supposes that the Secretary of State will agree that from a free grant of \$25,000 which is given for unemployment relief \$3,000 should be taken to pay an officer, you are basing your supposition on a flimsy ground. There is not the slightest chance of that course being approved, nor is there any intention on my part to support it. I appreciate that Members do not want the staff increased but to have it reduced by one. If it is going to be reduced by one you will have to do it at the expense of the Forest Department or at the expense of the seasoning work. If you are going to do it at the expense of the Forest Department the Secretary of State will say that the Imperial Government has always attached importance to the Forest Department. If it is sought to be done out of unemployment relief the Secretary of State will retort that this money is given for unemployment relief as a special grant to the Colony. It seems to me that the position could be met by saying that the officer shall be retained and employed on this work because it is additional work for the Forest Department. We are getting \$25,000 to season timber and there is work to be done. If there is money provided for the seasoning of timber, it will be for the Council to say whether an officer should be retained for the particular job, but an officer in charge of the work there must be.

Mr. WOOLFORD: Your assurance is all right, sir, if the officer can be informed that his retention will be dependent on certain factors, and not leave it to the end of next year to tell him that his services would be dispensed with.

THE CHAIRMAN: That will be done by informing the Secretary of State that officer's services will be only retained when seasoning work is being done and when the work is being no longer done his services will be dispensed with.

Mr. CRANE: This officer is on leave and is to be re-employed at the termination of his leave. Why not then employ him below the line as suggested by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam?

Mr. WOOD: The intention of Government is not that he should be re-employed but continue to be employed (No, no).

Mr. FREDERICKS: There seems to be a great deal of camouflage in this debate. This officer was marked to go and the whole trouble now seems to be that he is being brought back against the decision of the Council. If some arrangement can be arrived at to satisfy this Council that it is not being over-ridden there is no more trouble. I am pleased that \$25,000 is to be spent in the interior where people need it exceedingly, but I feel with my colleagues that when the Council has come to a decision that decision should not be flouted. If the officer is to be re-employed he should be re-employed below the line.

Mr. CRANE: In view of the discussion I suggest that my amendment be accepted by Government that there be one Assistant Conservator of Forests—and I propose further that the item be placed below the line and the salary carried out at \$3,257. This employment is temporary for 18 months unless the House is satisfied that the progress made justifies longer employment.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I think this officer is very fortunate indeed. He has been retrenched and is going to be brought back at the same salary he was drawing before. It is known to every Member of this House that there are creoles of this Colony who have given long service, who are still capable of giving service to Government, and who have been retrenched on account of abolition of office. I stand for fairplay. Don't let there be differentiation between the creoles of the Colony and men brought from overseas. There is that tendency here. The Conservator of Forests speaks about the difficulty of going on with a reduced staff. There are concerns in the

Colony that have reduced their staff by 60 per cent. or would have had to go under, but with their backs to the wall they have made two ends meet and are still going ahead. I should like to know for how many days the Conservator of Forests is absent from his headquarters. It is often said that some Departments are top-heavy. I think that in spite of spending this \$25,000 the Department can still be run with a further reduction of staff. That is my honest, sincere and conscientious opinion.

THE CHAIRMAN: The difficulty is how to meet this officer's case. Government appreciates the fact that an officer is required for special work, and it is much better to re-engage an officer who has been here and knows the country. At the same time the agreement was terminated at the 21st December. The suggestion is that he should be re-engaged below the line for this particular work. The difficulty is that if you get rid of him on the 21st December you will have to give him a gratuity. Government is prepared to accept the position. But what is the best way of doing it?

Mr. CRANE: At the end of 18 months that question will arise. He will be coming on at the same salary and at the end of 18 months, or two years, we might be justified in keeping him on indefinitely, but the question of a gratuity would not arise at this stage.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the officer is going to lose his pension rights while he is working here it would be unfair on him. If you engage a pensioner you do not wish to deprive him of his pension. We want to be fair to the officer.

Mr. WOOD: An officer on the Fixed Establishment is not entitled to pension on abolition of office or retrenchment unless he has served 10 years. This officer has served about six years and he would be entitled to a gratuity. It seems that entering the pensionable service is a bit of a gamble. Three officers entered the Service at the same time practically on the same terms. Two remain above the line and one is put below it, so it seems a bit of a gamble in which this officer has lost.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I want to suggest a way out of the difficulty. On the basis of service the officer is entitled to be paid a gratuity on six years' service. If he does not accept this appointment we shall have to pay him the equivalent gratuity based on six years' service. If he does not agree to take this appointment and goes to another country he carries his pension rights. He can come back under the agreement on the understanding that if he remains only 18 months he will be paid not only salary but be entitled to ask for and receive his gratuity. If he returns he will get all he is entitled to and if he goes elsewhere he would still be entitled to his pension, and, to use the word of the Conservator of Forests, he is gambling on an expectancy after 18 months to be put on the Fixed Establishment.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now put the question that item 1b be amended to read "1b—1 Assistant Conservator of Forests, \$3,300," the second Assistant Conservator of Forests to be engaged below the line for special work at the same rate of salary for 18 months from the 1st January, 1933.

Question agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will make a statement at the next meeting of the Council showing what will be the financial effect of the two alternatives of leaving this officer above the line or putting him below it.

The Council resumed and adjourned until Tuesday, 29th inst., at 11 o'clock.