

When we took over the Great Western, we found the car stock wanted extensive renewal, the bridges also wanted renewal, and the line wanted ballast; and I mentioned at previous meetings that these things had been taken into consideration; and I mentioned, particularly, what we proposed to do with regard to the whole of the rails on the joint system, and with regard to the Great Western bridges; and I mentioned that the car stock wanted renewal. This £100,000, according to the figures we have received, is divided into £43,000 car renewals and £57,000, in round figures, for renewals of rails, bridges, and so on. Of course, the idea was that it was desirable to spend this money rapidly instead of waiting to spend it from half-year to half-year, that it should be spent in considerable sums so as to put all these matters—cars and bridges particularly—into good order, and then spread the expenditure over a certain number of years—fifteen was, I think, the number of years mentioned—and charge it out at so much a year from the renewal account. A part of this £100,000 will, I have no doubt, be charged out, in this present half-year. How much more will be added to it I don't know; that depends entirely upon how far further expenditure may be found to be immediately necessary on works of renewal, bridges, cars, and so on, or how far they may be postponed. *I do hope that this £100,000 has arrived at a maximum, and that we shall not come to a higher figure*; but I cannot be certain on that subject, because, of course, it will depend on circumstances. But, at all events, I trust we shall charge it off as soon as possible, for, speaking for myself, I do abominate suspense and renewal funds of all descriptions. I think that, when a large line like this has to be kept in repair, a sufficient sum should be charged upon it every year to keep it in thorough order, and that there ought to be no complication of suspense accounts and renewal accounts, or anything of that sort; but, if there could be any justification for them, it would be, of course, in a case of this kind, where we have taken over the Great Western not in such good order as the Grand Trunk line. The expense of renewals must be met in this way. You cannot charge them to one or two, or even a few half-years, but they must be spread over a number of years. I only hope we shall spread them over as few years as possible. I don't know whether I need go into the details of these expenditures, which I have prepared, upon permanent way, and upon bridges and upon cars; but if anyone is anxious for information upon that subject, I can easily give it. I think I need not