

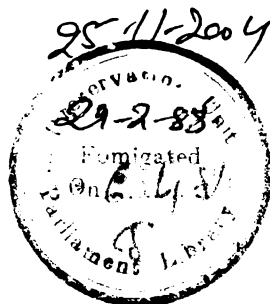
Tuesday, 24th February, 1925

THE COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

Volume V

(20th January to 26th March 1925)

FIFTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE, 1925



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COUNCIL OF STATE.

Tuesday, 24th February, 1925.

The Council met in the Council Chamber at Eleven of the Clock, the Honourable the President in the Chair.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

102. THE HONOURABLE RAJA SIR RAMPAL SINGH: Will the Government be pleased—

- (a) to state when and with what recommendations the Local Government of the United Provinces submitted the report of the Committee appointed by that Government on the question of separation of executive and judicial functions;
- (b) to lay the said recommendations of the Governor in Council on the table; and
- (c) to state what orders the Government of India have been pleased to pass on the report and the recommendations?

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. CRERAR: (a) and (b). The views of the Government of the United Provinces were received in February, 1923. The Government of India are not prepared to lay the papers on the table.

(c) These as well as the opinions of the Governments of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Madras are under the consideration of the Government of India, but no decision has yet been arrived at.

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

103. THE HONOURABLE RAJA SIR RAMPAL SINGH: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state if it has received the report of the Land Revenue Settlement Committee appointed by the United Provinces Government? If so, when and with what recommendations by the Government?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to lay these recommendations on the table and state what orders have been passed on them by the Government of India?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: (a) and (b). The report of the Land Revenue Settlement Committee appointed by the United Provinces Government has been received by the Government of India, and copies were placed in the Library of the House last September in compliance with a request made by the Honourable Sardar Jogendra Singh. The recommendations of the United Provinces Government in regard to the subject-matter of the report are still under consideration by the Government of India, and I regret I cannot place them on the table of the House.

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

104. THE HONOURABLE RAJA SIR RAMPAL SINGH: Are the Government aware that a Resolution was passed by the Local Council United Provinces for postponing the Land Revenue Settlement work for ten years in those Districts of that province where the term of settlement was about to expire, and will they be pleased to state the decision arrived at by the Government of India on that question?

THE HONOURABLE SIR MUHAMMAD HABIBULLAH: No Resolution in these terms can be traced.

TRIBAL AND CASTE COMPOSITION OF THE 5TH KING EDWARD'S OWN PROBYN HORSE AND KING EDWARD'S OWN REGIMENT 57TH INFANTRY.

105. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government kindly state what is the tribal and caste composition of the Probyn Horse of the Indian Cavalry and the King Edward's Own Regiment 57th Infantry?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: The 5th King Edward's Own Probyn Horse is composed of the following: One squadron of Punjabi Muhammadans, one of Sikhs and one of Dogras. The composition of the late 57th Wilde's Rifles (Frontier Force)—now known as the 4th Battalion, 13th Frontier Force Rifles—is as follows: One company of Punjabi Muhammadans, one company of Sikhs, one of Dogras and one of Pathans. This information is published in the Indian Army List.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: May I know, Sir, what particular company or troop was sent to quell the riots?

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Will the Honourable Member kindly repeat his supplementary question?

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: What particular company or what particular troop out of these two military forces were sent to quell the riots?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I think the answer is contained in the reply to the subsequent questions.

TRIBAL AND CASTE COMPOSITION OF MILITARY FORCES EMPLOYED TO QUELL THE RIOTS IN KOHAT.

106. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will the Government also kindly state what was the tribal and caste composition of the companies of King Edward's Own Regiment and the composition of the squadrons of the Probyn Horse, sent to quell the riots in Kohat on the 9th and 10th September 1924?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: Detachments from all the squadrons and companies mentioned in the answer which I have just given to the Honourable Member were employed.

TRIBAL AND CASTE COMPOSITION OF MILITARY FORCES STATIONED IN OR NEAR KOHAT DURING THE RECENT KOHAT RIOTS.

107. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: Will Government kindly state what other forces were stationed in or near Kohat at the time of the recent Kohat riots and what was their tribal and caste composition?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I lay on the table a statement giving the names of the other regular forces stationed in the vicinity of Kohat. For the class composition of these units, I would refer the Honourable Member to the Indian Army List.

Detachments from nearly all these units also were employed in connection with the suppression of the Kohat riots.

Statement showing the units stationed at, and in the vicinity of, Kohat at the time of the Kohat riots, 1924.

At Kohat.

118th Pack Battery.

Frontier Brigade, Royal Artillery (less detachments).

G. Divisional Signals (less detachments).

$\frac{1}{2}$ 19th Company, Sappers and Miners.

3rd Battalion 6th Rajputana Rifles.

$\frac{1}{2}$ Battalion 9th Jat Regiment.

3rd Battalion 12th Frontier Force Regiment.

1 sub-section armoured cars (Royal Tank Corps).

At Thal.

Detachment of the Frontier Brigade, Royal Artillery.

$\frac{1}{2}$ Battalion 2/9th Jat Regiment.

At Parachinar.

2/8th Gurkha Rifles.

At Hangu and Samana.

1/5th Gurkha Rifles.

SUPPLY OF ONE ANNA SQUARE POSTAL ENVELOPES TO THE PUBLIC.

108. THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY:

(a) Would the Government please state why people who require them are not supplied with the one anna square postal envelopes and are asked to take half the requisite quantity in square envelopes and half in the old oblong envelopes?

(b) If the reason of such procedure be the need of getting rid of the old stock of oblong envelopes would the Government please state what stock they still have and when it is expected to be finished?

(c) Would the Government please state what the stock of oblong envelopes was when the square envelope was reintroduced, and why the square envelope was introduced at all without getting rid of the old stock in the first instance?

(d) What would be the loss involved by cancelling the two pice envelopes instead of changing the face value into four pice?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY: (a) In order to sell off the old stock.

(b) There is still a stock of 11,350 reams in the Bombay, Madras and Rangoon Central Depôts which is likely to be exhausted by September next. The stock in other Depôts has been exhausted.

(c) 163,633 reams. I am informed that the square envelope was introduced before the old stock was exhausted upon the suggestion of the Honourable Member himself, in order to meet the convenience of the public.

(d) Approximately Rs. 13,000 taking into account the stocks held by the Central Depôts only; the loss would be considerably greater if the stocks in the treasuries, sub-treasuries and post offices were cancelled at the same time.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY: Is it not a fact, Sir, that the two pice oblong envelope is much in demand for book post purposes, and if so, would there be anything to prevent the remaining stock of these envelopes being used for that purpose and square envelopes being made available to the general public which, as the Honourable Member was good enough to say, was introduced at my instance?

THE HONOURABLE MR. A. H. LEY: I am not aware that the oblong envelope is in demand for book post purposes, but if the Honourable Member will put his question down on paper, I will have inquiries made.

AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I have to inform the House that His Excellency the Governor General under sub-section (6) of section 67 of the Government of India Act has consented to the amendment recently made by the Council of State in the Standing Orders. The amendment in question, as the House will remember, was that which provided for a general discussion of the Budget in parts.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE RAILWAY BUDGET.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: I may also inform the House that, in exercise of the power conferred on him by the proviso to the new Standing Order, His Excellency the Governor General has appointed the Honourable Sir Charles Innes to exercise the general right of reply at the end of the discussion on Part I of the Budget.

The House will now proceed to the general discussion of Part I of the Budget.

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. W. A. BELL (Bengal Chamber of Commerce): Sir, I agree with my Honourable friend Mr. Hindley that his submission of a separate Railway Budget is an important event in the history of Indian Railways. For the first time it is possible for railway administration to be dealt with on its own merits, free from any political or general economic consideration. In other words, it is now possible for the Railways to be dealt with as a commercial department, run on purely commercial lines.

I warmly congratulate my Honourable friend on his excellent and interesting budget speech, and also on the fact that the first Budget which he has an opportunity of submitting to this House is such a favourable one. It is quite true that the estimates for the coming year are not so favourable as the results for the past year. It is estimated that the contribution to general revenue and also, which is perhaps more important, the allocation to reserve, will be smaller in the coming year, but this has been fully explained.

In studying the Budget one is often tempted to endeavour to find points in it to which objection can be taken. But I venture to think that any one approaching my Honourable friend's Budget in this spirit will find very little to take exception to. There will be differences of opinion, of course, with regard to the allocation of capital expenditure. Each Honourable Member will naturally be most impressed by the needs of his own province, of his own constituency. But I think that each item appears to have been examined with care and with due and fair regard to the needs of the country generally.

With regard to income there is very little to say. The income for the present year has far exceeded expectations, and the estimate for the coming year is a very moderate one and there is little to be said about it.

With regard to the expenditure for the current year, there are two points to which I would like to refer. The first is the fact that out of a sanctioned capital expenditure of 30 crores only 12·85 crores has been expended, or, if 1·55 crores recovered from customs revenue be added, a total of 14·40 crores out of a sanctioned amount of 30 crores. In explanation we are referred to the Railway report of 1923-24, to the causes mentioned in that report. But I think my Honourable friend will agree with me that this explanation is not entirely satisfactory, because from it two facts emerge. In the first place, in examining proposals for new projects it was found that there was room for improvement in the method of estimating that had been employed, and, in the second place, it was discovered that in the past insufficient attention had been paid to the important question of additional work and equipment. I do not, however, wish to dwell on this point, as it is with the future rather than with the past that we are most concerned.

The second point to which I wish to refer is the reduction of 4 crores in the value of stores which is said to have increased the capital expenditure to that extent. I should be very much indebted to my Honourable friend, and I think the House would be also, if he were to give some further explanation of this item which is a somewhat unusual one. If the amount falls to be added to expenditure, it means either that the stores have been found short to that extent or that it has been necessary to write off as obsolete certain stores to that very large value or some such explanation, and I should be very much grateful to my Honourable friend if he would deal with this point.

Coming to the expenditure for the coming year, Honourable Members will note with approval the proposed expenditure on additional rolling stock and marshalling yards, and particularly the expenditure on marshalling yards. These two items are closely related to each other in railway administration. I don't know whether any Honourable Members have cared to read in the newspapers the evidence given before the Indian Coal Committee but, if so, they may have noticed that there were frequent complaints that one important factor contributing to the shortage of the wagon supply was the inadequacy of the present marshalling yards. It was in fact suggested that it would do little good to increase the supply of wagons, as, looking to the present facilities in the way of marshalling yards, the Railways had as many wagons as they could conveniently handle. In view of the position of the coalfields of the provinces of Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, I regret that it has not been possible to make greater provision in the Budget for the remodelling of marshalling yards in these provinces. I know, of course, that the coalfields must take their chance

[Mr. J. W. A. Bell.]

with other districts, but I hope that their claim to consideration will not, in future, be overlooked by the Railway Board. I am glad to observe that in the matter of doubling the lines on the East Indian Railway and the Bengal Nagpur Railway the Railway Board have dealt generously with the requirements of the coal industry.

The announcement that an expenditure of something like 13 crores is contemplated on remodelling railway workshops is one that has more significance than appears at first sight. With regard to the workshops at Trichinopoly, Dohad, Parel and Perambur, the budget memorandum shows how deplorably inadequate and how far behind the times workshop accommodation is in these important railway centres. These statements explain what has been a cause of complaint by the public in the past, and in fact, in view of the disclosures made, it is surprising not that there have been so many complaints, but that there have been so few. No system of transport, whether it be railways or steamers or any other, can be efficiently run and can be run without a great waste of tonnage, unless it has at its disposal efficient well-equipped workshops in which repairs can be promptly and economically effected.

I listened with great pleasure to my Honourable friend's remarks as to the advance that had been made in the electrification of railways, and I am glad to know that the position of Calcutta suburban traffic is receiving the attention of the Railway Board. This is an urgent matter, and the completion of the scheme to which my Honourable friend refers will be awaited with some anxiety, as also will be the result of the promised examination of terminal facilities of Calcutta. It is always a source of surprise to visitors from abroad, more particularly from America, that Calcutta, which was once the capital of India, and which, rightly or wrongly, some of them consider should still be the capital of India, is so far behind the times in respect of its suburban traffic and its terminal facilities.

There is one paragraph in my Honourable friend's speech which may arouse a certain amount of criticism, and that is the paragraph in which he announced the new policy of the Railway Board under which they will refrain in future from sanctioning the construction of branch and feeder lines by private enterprise. My first feeling was that this was a mistaken policy, and that for three reasons. In the first place, under the old policy, it had been possible for Government to raise funds from the public at a time when they themselves had not funds available. In the second place, this had enabled railways to be built which would certainly not otherwise have been built, and in the third place, the new policy seemed to close a desirable and attractive opening for the investment of Indian capital which had, in fact, been taken advantage of to a large extent by Indian investors. But I must admit that there is a very great deal of force in the objections to the old system put forward by the Railway Board, and I think it is right that the new policy should be given a fair trial, and if it be found not to be successful the question can be re-opened at a later time.

I think the last paragraph of my friend's speech on the subject of organisation and decentralisation is one of outstanding importance, because it indicates that the policy of the Railway Board is, as far as possible, to be one of non-interference in matters of detail with the Managers and Agents of the different railways. If the Railways of India are to be run successfully by the State, it can only be on that principle. Nothing

could be more harmful, nothing could more certainly impair the efficiency than interference by the Legislature and by the Railway Board in the internal domestic details of the management of the Railways. If you are to insist, as you must insist, on the Managers and Agents of the Railways being responsible for an efficient railway service, it is essential that you should refrain from interfering with them in matters of domestic detail, and that you should allow them to carry on with,—as my Honourable friend put it,—“freedom from interference from headquarters.”

Before I sit down I should like to protest against the attack on the citizens of Calcutta which was made by my Honourable friend in that part of his speech in which he referred to the Howrah Bridge. He charged them with having failed to wake up to a sense of their responsibilities, and it was not only what he said but the bitter tone in which he said it that hurt the representatives of Calcutta in this House. As he spoke he glanced angrily across the floor of the House at my Honourable friend Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary and myself, as if we had been personally responsible for the fact that the new Howrah Bridge had not been erected. I do not think that this attack on the citizens of Calcutta was deserved, or that they have failed to wake up to a sense of their responsibilities in the matter of the Howrah Bridge. They know quite well what they want, and they know quite well what they ought to have. But they have not got the money to get it. I do not know whether my Honourable friend Mr. Hindley has ever been in that position. I know that I have, and that is a very difficult and uncomfortable one. Calcutta is anxious to have a bridge worthy of the second city in the Empire.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: No.

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. W. A. BELL: But the cost of a bridge of what they have been told is the most suitable type is so enormous, and the annual charges for upkeep are likely to be so great, that, already over-taxed, they are unable to face it. To add to their difficulties, they have been bombarded by advice from eminent engineers and committees of engineers—I think my Honourable friend was a member of one of these committees,—I am not sure. I stand open to correction. . . .

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: Quite right.

THE HONOURABLE MR. J. W. A. BELL:as to the particular type of bridge which they should have. Each of these engineers recommends a different type of bridge, and each asserts that all the others are entirely wrong. That is another difficulty which Calcutta has to meet. In spite of what my Honourable friend has said, I trust that the Honourable Members of this House will realise that in the Howrah Bridge Calcutta is faced with a problem of unusual difficulty, and that what she ought to receive from the Railway Board is practical sympathy and not undeserved and somewhat unfriendly criticism.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY (Central Provinces: General): Sir, this is a memorable occasion, the occasion of the first presentation of a separate Budget, and I rise to speak on this occasion with a feeling of sorrow and with a sense of deep disappointment. Sir, I have not much to quarrel with the details of the Budget. On the details I shall presently congratulate the Honourable Member and Mr. Hindley for the great service they have rendered to the country. My quarrel just now is of a different nature. Mr. Hindley in his very interesting, very lucid and

[Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy.]

very able speech remarked with just pride that this is an outstanding event of historic importance to the Railways of India, and yet, Sir, on this historic occasion it is a matter of regret that this Council was not even consulted or its opinion asked for at all. I will just briefly describe what the situation is. The Honourable the Finance Member in his budget speech last year pointed out the advisability of separating the Railway finance from general finance. This question was taken up in the Assembly. It was brought first by way of a Resolution so far back as March, 1924. It was subsequently rediscussed with great force and vigour there and a certain Resolution embodying the specific details of the new scheme or convention was presented to the Assembly for its consideration. The Assembly became nervous, thought that it was an invasion of their powers of control and asked for time to consider, and also asked that the Resolution that was placed before that body should be remitted for the consideration of a special committee. The special committee was appointed, matters were threshed out there and a new Resolution somewhat differing from the one which had been previously proposed by the Honourable the Commerce Member was introduced in the Assembly by you, Sir. That Resolution was again fully discussed, and the sanction and approbation of the Assembly was obtained. I will refer to a significant passage in the speech of my Honourable friend, Sir Charles Innes, on that occasion. He said :

“ I regret very much that it was not a unanimous report in all respects and I regret it the more because it is likely to make my task to-day somewhat harder. But, Sir, the matter is of vital importance to Railways. The Resolution represents the considered policy of the Government of India and it is clear that we can accept a decision in this matter only from the Assembly itself. You will all agree I think that it is only right that the Government should submit to this Assembly a reasoned statement of their reasons why they think that the House ought to adopt this policy.”

The Honourable the Commerce Member admitted that his proposals involved a change in the policy of the Government of India. It was a new policy inaugurated by Government and I assert that this Council had a right to be consulted and had a right to discuss that Resolution and express its opinion. Sir, if the matter lay exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Assembly, I for one would never take any objection to it. I fully recognise the powers and privileges, the financial obligations placed on that body. At the same time, I think it is the duty of every Member of this Council to see that the rights and privileges of the Council of State are in no way restricted or affected. Sir, what is the question? Here Government make a change, a vital change, in their Railway policy. Crores of rupees are separated from the general finances under a new convention to be dealt with by the railway administration. True, it is an administrative problem, it is a railway problem. Do you think it was right and proper that this Council was not given even an opportunity to discuss the principle of that Resolution embodying the terms of a convention which according to Mr. Hindley was the new charter of Indian Railways? And the details of the specific scheme of contribution which was approved by the Assembly was not even officially brought to the knowledge of the Council. I submit, in this matter, I depend on my Honourable colleagues to support me. I depend upon you as President of this Council to support us and to see that the rights and privileges of this supreme revising body are never again so unceremoniously curtailed or restricted.

But my observations on the spirit in which this question has been treated will not detract from my tribute of admiration for the scheme as a whole. This scheme of separation of the railway finances from the general finances has distinct advantages. It will help to improve the railway resources and railway finance, and prevent its violent fluctuations. It will afford a valuable incentive to Railways to economise and to work with a well considered and deliberate policy that they may get back the surpluses for the development of Railways. It will enable them to lay out a depreciation fund for their ever wasting assets and of all commercial concerns the Railways may be regarded as a concern in which the speed and progress of depreciation is greater than in any other concern of an industrial character. It will enable them to lay by a certain sum annually towards depreciation and to go in more rapidly for making up the wastage of their assets. The reserve fund will also be of incalculable assistance to Railways in times of trouble and distress. The former policy of the Government of India was to rob the Railways of their legitimate earnings. When the Railways gave to general revenues large surpluses those surpluses were given back grudgingly to the Railways with a pusillanimity which cannot but be condemned. There was always opposition in the Council that spending of money on Railways was undesirable and unnecessary, and that more ought to be spent on education, sanitation and other nation-building works. That was the position constantly taken up by Honourable Members here. That controversy will now be at an end. This scheme of separation of the railway finance from the general finance will for all time to come put an end to that great controversy. It will enable the Railways to retain to their credit their unspent balances which were ear-marked for purposes of railway development and renewals and other miscellaneous improvements, and it will lead to the general prosperity of the Railway Department and will indirectly conduce to the prosperity of the country.

Speaking on the Budget itself, it gives me infinite pleasure to remark that the whole scheme of capital and expenditure programme has been well thought out, well conceived and executed to perfection. I am very pleased to note that a large sum of money is to be spent on the development of the railway lines in this country. As one deeply interested in the commerce of the country, I welcome this feature of the new railway programme and I have no doubt that the Railway Department have adopted a most judicious and correct policy. 40 projects are now under contemplation involving a total new mileage of 2,135 and an expenditure of Rs. 40 crores. These figures may sound very big, they may appear even alarming, but there is no doubt that the Railways in India must be vigorously developed. If Railways are developed, the trade of the country will develop and expand and the position of the individual tax-payer will be improved. My Honourable friend over there has referred to the new policy in regard to the branch and feeder lines. He stated that he was disposed first of all to a feeling of objection, but on further consideration he has come to the conclusion that the policy after all is a sound one. I beg to differ from him in that respect. Sir, I quite understand the present position of Government, that they are able to float their loans for railway purposes easily, that they are able to float loans cheaply for general purposes. It has been pointed out that the real object of this policy, which was inaugurated 30 years ago, was that the Government then were unable to obtain large loans generally and more particularly for small feeder

[Sir Maneekji Dadabhoy.]

lines. Much of their attention had to be diverted to bigger lines and main projects and they could not find money for branch and feeder lines. I am afraid the Railway Administration is counting rather too much upon getting or upon succeeding in obtaining in future years large loans. It is true that the Government of India have during the last few years been in a position to raise large loans very successfully. Our borrowing policy before the war was a stinted one, and the loans that we borrowed were generally of a smaller magnitude. Later on, calls in connection with the war and other post-war circumstances which required the rehabilitation of the Railways and the general administrative exigencies of the country necessitated the floating of bigger loans, and the Government succeeded in raising loans to a great extent, but there was reason for that success. During the last few years the confidence of the investing public in industrial concerns was a little bit weakened and latterly considerably shaken. It was that policy of nervousness of the public investor that made him run to the Government investments as a safer form of investments, but once there is a revival in trade and business, once the industrial growth of this country is accelerated. I think, I will not say it will be very difficult, but Government will not be able to float and obtain large sums of money on easier terms as they have been in the past. This is not my isolated opinion on the subject. This opinion is shared by large commercial bodies both in Bombay and elsewhere. Sir, I deprecate, therefore, this departure from the existing policy on the ground that it will take away a safe and useful form of investment for the public. It will prevent the construction of smaller lines to which Government have neither time nor money to direct their energy, and it will lead to a sense of disappointment among a certain class of people who regarded this as a safe, legitimate and sound investment. I trust the Government will reconsider their policy. It has also been pointed out that the Government have no objection to support the idea provided the Provincial Governments can look after these feeder lines and give guarantees for the loans. I cannot understand why this obligation has been thrown on the Provincial Governments. Railways are a reserve subject. Railways are a subject which appertains to the Central Government. The Central Government have a dominating voice in the management and running of these Railways and in shaping generally railway policy. Why such a departure should be made on such slender grounds I am afraid I am unable to follow. I am however very pleased and it is a very gratifying feature of this Budget that the Railway Administration have awakened to the necessity of standardisation of their locomotives, their rolling stock and their standard coaching underframes. This difficulty has been severely felt in many a business quarter, particularly coal mines and other mining concerns. Often wagons of various description are sent to certain collieries and they have not been able to take advantage and use them. The general system which is much appreciated is the open wagon system. Some sort of standardisation is very necessary and I am glad that a movement has been made in this direction. This will have the effect also of effecting economy in railway expenditure and will also avoid the necessity for the Railways of keeping a large number of spare parts.

Sir, there are one or two other matters to which I should like to refer before I bring my remarks to a close. I am glad the Government of India, I mean the Railway Administration, have seen the necessity of doing their

best towards Indianising the railway services. I am very pleased to notice from the explanatory memorandum annexed to the Railway Budget that in the twelve months ending October, 1924, the number of Indians in superior appointments rose from 280 to 310, and of upper subordinates from 1,821 to 1,929. This is a very gratifying feature and we are grateful to Sir Charles Innes for fulfilling the pledge which he gave to the Assembly some time ago to see that a rapid progress towards Indianisation will be made. I do not for a moment wish to assert that in this process of Indianisation efficiency should be neglected and all considerations of safety should be discarded. I am a great believer in efficiency. If the progress is a little bit slower, I welcome it provided it is accompanied by the attainment of efficiency. Further, I fully appreciate the difficulties of Government in this matter. It is impossible to move at a rapid pace. You have got men on the existing cadre in the service. You have got men who rightfully look upon their claims to obtain promotions in time. You cannot arbitrarily dispense with their services. It is equally true that the problem is a much bigger one than one ordinarily imagines. I fully appreciate the fact that it is no longer a racial but a communal question. It is necessary that all communities should have a share in these railway appointments. The money is that of the Indian tax-payers generally, and when I use the word Indian I do not refer only to natives of this country, but I refer to all men living and domiciled in India and paying taxes. I cannot in this matter overlook the rights of the Anglo-Indian community, who have in the past rendered very useful services and who have been the mainstay of the Railways in this country and through whose energy, capacity and enterprise the Railways have been brought to their present advanced condition. In the distribution of all these appointments the rights of the minorities must be carefully considered and given weight to, and I am therefore very glad to observe that a substantial progress in the direction of promoting this policy of cautious Indianisation has also been made. Sir, it is equally gratifying to notice that a start has been made in the matter of electrifying the Railways, and this is the first fruit of an enterprising railway policy. I trust that this policy of electrification of the Railways will be rapidly extended as the finances of the Railways permit, and that especially in big congested towns like Bombay and Calcutta all suburban railways will be put on an electric system.

Sir, I shall not detain the Council with any further remarks. I join with my Honourable Colleague Mr. Bell in expressing the country's indebtedness to the Honourable Sir Charles Innes for placing before the country such a gratifying and encouraging Budget, a Budget which shows a substantial profit, a Budget which holds out hope of future development, a Budget which is in all ways worthy of the Government Department and its former traditions. Sir, the scheme of separation was conceived by the Acworth Committee. It was brought into operation with the consent of the Assembly by the Government of India, but the brunt of the battle has fallen on men who have to perfect the scheme and put into execution the various details of this difficult and technical scheme. Our gratitude is particularly due to our friend the Honourable Mr. Hindley to whose industry and exertion this well thought out Budget is in a great measure due.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I congratulate the Honourable Mr. Hindley on the excellent speech he made in presenting the Railway Budget for next year. I congratulate him specially because he gave us not merely the substance

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of what the Honourable the Railway Member was saying about the same time in the other House, but because he gave us certain additional information on the technical side which was not included in the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member. The two speeches were complementary and when read together gave one a clear insight not only into the working of the Railways for the last few years, but they gave also an idea of their programme for the future.

Sir, before I go into the details of the Budget, I join with my Honourable friend Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy in expressing my regret at the attitude which the Government have adopted towards this House in connection with the subject of the separation of railway and general finance. That their attitude is of a stepmotherly kind towards this House is a settled fact. This House has no power over the purse, and hence, the Government of India do not attach much importance to this House; the Government do not attach even one quarter of the importance which they attach to the other House from whom they have to get money grants. But I may here sound a note of warning, that if the Government of India are going to treat this House in the way in which they have been doing in the past, then at the time of the next general election, many of us may not care to come in merely to be ignored as we usually have been till now.

Sir, as this is the first occasion when this Council takes official cognisance of the fact that the Railway Budget and the General Budget are separated, I think I shall be considered to be in order if I go into the merits of the convention that has been arrived at in the Legislative Assembly. The Honourable the Railway Member in his speech compared himself to a Chairman of a Board of Directors addressing the shareholders. I want to amplify on this analogy. If the general tax-payer is the shareholder, then all profits must go to him, i.e., the tax-payer. If a new entity, the entity of railway companies, is created,—an imaginary entity I grant,—then the general tax-payer instead of becoming a shareholder becomes merely a guarantor. If he is a guarantor and the companies are to be run as independent concerns, then the question arises as to what the guarantor is entitled to get out of the profit as a remuneration for the risk he is taking in guaranteeing the liabilities of the concern. In the Banking world in this country and specially in the Bombay Bazar and, perhaps in Calcutta also, the usual charges made by well-known guarantors or shroffs are about 1 per cent. If the general tax-payer was to be paid only one per cent. out of the profits of the Railways, then we ought to be satisfied, as a guarantor. If the guarantor is a money grabber, he may want more, and I believe the general tax-payer as representing the Assembly has asked for and taken more than what a good reasonable guarantor is entitled to. He does not only get the one per cent., but he gets one-fifth of the surplus profits. This share in the surplus profit, which we in Bombay are now learning to call surplus sharing certificates, ought to have been considered sufficient, but the Assembly representing the general tax-payer was not even satisfied with that much. They have decided that when the surplus exceeds 3 crores, one-third of this excess should go to the general tax-payer. The guarantor therefore gets one per cent. of the capital for the risk that he is taking, he also takes what a money grabber might do, that is about one-fifth of the surplus profits. Even with that he is not satisfied and wants one-third of the excess profits over three crores.

THE HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA: Very naturally.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: If the general taxpayer wants all these things, the result will be that the Railways cannot carry on item 4 of the convention to which the Honourable the Railway Member refers in his speech at page 4. The Honourable the Railway Member says:

"As regards the Railway Reserves, under the terms of the convention these Railway Reserves are to be used (1) to secure the payment of the annual contribution to general revenues, (2) to provide, if necessary, for arrears of depreciation and for writing down and for writing off capital (*here I lay stress on the third point*)—and (3) to strengthen the financial position of Railways in order that the services rendered to the public may be improved and rates reduced."

Now in spite of the fact that the Honourable the Railway Member has 4 crores 10 lakhs at his disposal this year and will have 3 crores and 28 lakhs in the next year, he is not able to use any portion of that money for item 3 of clause 4 of the convention. The reason he gives for his inability to spend this money, or a portion of it is, as he puts it:

"We have to bear in mind that in 1926-27 we have to pay a contribution based on the current year's working of approximately 735 lakhs from commercial lines."

Now, Sir, I want to impress upon the Honourable the Railway Member and the Railway Board the fact that in agreeing to the convention as they did, they have given away the rights of the Railways to a certain extent and reduced their own power of using the reserve in the best way that they can. I hope that when the convention is revised next time. (*The Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy*: "Five years hence.") I am not quite sure of the time, but I know—it was three in the first period—when-ever it is revised, the Honourable the Railway Member, whoever he may be,—because I heard the Honourable Sir Charles Innes saying that he was going to shake off the dust of this country from his feet in a year and a half, whoever the Honourable the Railway Member may be, he will, I hope, see to it that the Railways get the fullest possible advantage out of the profits earned by them. For after all, Sir, if you go to the root question, the fare paid by the travelling public is a sort of taxation also. If commercial concerns are to be made a success, the freights and the rates will have to be manipulated in such a manner that they give them a sufficient return to enable them (1) to pay off interest, (2) to make allowance for depreciation, and (3) to have some reserve for bad or lean years. I do not think a sinking fund is necessary for such concerns where the assets are kept up to the same value as the amount that has been spent on them. (*The Honourable Sir Dinshaw Wacha*: "Don't Railways rust?") Sir, Railways do rust but the depreciation fund if properly used for renewals and replacements ought to be able to keep them quite up to the mark. (*The Honourable Sir Dinshaw Wacha*: "That is begging the question.")

We have been supplied with all the papers, including the blue book on demand for grants, that were given to the Members of the Assembly. The demands for grants will not, however, come to this House as we have no power on the money, and consequently I want to take this opportunity to refer to some of the grants, to congratulate the Honourable Member and the Railway Board where a definite line of improvement has been made, and also to criticise them if I find that they have not done all that they ought to have done or where there has been some sins of omission if not of commission. In the first place, I will take up item (c) of Demand No. 4, referring to the amount of 3 lakhs that has to be spent on the training of railway officers at Chandausi and for a technical school for apprentices at Jamalpur, etc. I refer to this item in the beginning as it has a

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direct effect on the greater Indianisation of the Services. We all want more and more Indians employed in the Railways. My friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy said he was quite satisfied with the progress made. Speaking for myself, Sir, I fear I must say that I am not satisfied with it and I will give my reasons to show that the rate of progress could have been much greater. We have been supplied with a statement of higher paid subordinate staffs employed on railways and companies for the year 1923-24, and there I find that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway has a much larger percentage of the total number of Indians, namely, Anglo-Indians, Muslims and non-Muslims, than in any other Railway. Incidentally I may say that I see no reason for dividing Indians into so many subdivisions. The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway are employing the largest number of Indians, because from very early days, from the days when Mr. Hanson, who was once a Member of the Railway Board, was the General Traffic Manager,—from those days, the management of the company made an honest effort to secure the services of Indians, local Indians, whether Hindus, Parsis or Muhammadans and it succeeded. The Honourable the Railway Member has said in one part of his speech :

“ It is a noticeable fact that in all important stations almost every railway official in a position of authority that one sees is a European or an Anglo-Indian.”

If the Railway Member has troubled as much on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India line, as he has on other lines, he would have found that even station masters at the largest stations are mostly Indians. This shows that it is the spirit that pervades the management at the top that is responsible for the larger or the smaller number of Indians employed in the various Departments. It is true that an improvement has now set in on other Railways as regards Indianization, whether it has set in of its own accord or on account of the pressure exerted by the Assembly is another question. What we now want to see is that the progress in this direction will be more rapid and on correct lines. It is because the Chandausi and Jamalpur Schools will lead to greater Indianization that I congratulate the Railway Board for giving special facilities for the training of officers at these places. I also congratulate them on the provision made under the miscellaneous head for employing a forest officer to select the right kind of timber for sleepers, not only for sleepers but of all the timber that they require. That is also a movement in the right direction. Although it is late one remembers the old adage “ it is never too late to mend ”, and we hope that the report of this special officer will prove useful and will lead to the greater utilisation of indigenous products on our Railways.

Referring to grants, about depreciation, I want to make one suggestion to the Honourable the Railway Member. It has been said in the note that they have worked out the lives of locomotives, wagons, buildings, etc., and then worked out the depreciation on those lines. To show clearly the basis on which this scheme is worked out, I shall quote one sentence from the note :

“ An appropriation of Rs. 3,000 a year to the depreciation fund will ordinarily be sufficient for a locomotive costing Rs. 1,05,000 ”.

The appropriation to depreciation fund is Rs. 10,73,000 while the appropriation from depreciation fund is Rs. 9,50,000, leaving a balance of one lakh 23 thousand. That amount will remain utilised and will be earning interest, and in calculating the number of years over which the

whole cost of the 'block account' should be spread, no allowance has been made for the interest that would be earned on the balance between the provision for appropriation to depreciation fund and the appropriation from depreciation fund.

The Honourable the Railway Member in his speech referred to the passenger fares and gave his reasons why it was thought necessary to reduce in some cases fares for the first and second class passengers and not to reduce the fares for the third class passengers. In this connection, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to the figures given on page 22 of the Annual Report. For some reason, not easy to understand, no reference was made by the Honourable the Railway Member to the intermediate class. But leaving that aside I want him to look up the figures for third class passengers and he will find that the increase in their number from 1922-23 to 1923-24 is not more than what it was from 1910 to 1911. That is, the increase is not in any way more than the normal. If we refer to the increase in the number of third class passengers from 1921-22 to 1922-23 the increase was only 2,000, much smaller than in the preceding years. It is not quite fair to say that the increase in the third class fares has not led to the slowing down of the normal income. I am at present not pressing for reduction of third class fares, but I do want the Railway Board to provide more accommodation for third class passengers. This year provision has been made for 822 coaches out of which some 67 are first and second class and the others are third class. Figures have been supplied to us regarding the Railways where this additional provision has been made. Without exactly knowing the upper class requirements of individual Railways, it is very difficult to say offhand whether it is absolutely necessary or not. If they are not absolutely necessary I suggest that instead of having 67 more upper class coaching vehicles it will be more advisable to have a larger number of lower class coaching vehicles.

Coming to the figures of income and expenditure I desire to refer to the remark of the Honourable Mr. Hindley in his speech that they had only to spend 2 crores and odd to earn 5 crores. I do not think, Sir, that that is the correct way in which the question should be examined. The correct way to examine it is to find out whether the five crores could not have been earned by spending less than 2 crores; and I do not think that the management is entitled to get all the credit for this reduction in expenditure. The explanatory memorandum and the other papers show that there have been reductions in fuel charges. There is likely to be reduction in the loss for compensation, and there will be a reduction on account of the reorganisation of the North Western Railway. This reduction cannot be all attributed to more efficient management. However, as there have been reductions in various directions, congratulations may well be given to the Department concerned with the hope that the good work that has been begun will be continued.

I congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member and the Railway Board on the greater activity that they show as regards the quadrupling of the railway from Bandra to Borivali and for the arrangements for extensions at the Grant Road station. We have long felt the necessity of these improvements, and I am glad, Sir, that the Government of India recognise that Bombay suburban development depends to a large extent on these improvements being carried out.

[Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas.]

Reference has been made to the electrification of the Great Indian Peninsula and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railways. My Honourable friend Mr. Hindley was present when the first electric train was started from the Victoria Terminus and he perhaps remembers that His Excellency the Governor paid a deserved compliment to the Tata-Hydro Companies which supplied the electric power. Such a compliment coming from the Railway Member would have been very welcome, for it would have shown the appreciation by Government of India of the Bombay enterprising spirit which is still absent from Calcutta, which the Honourable Mr. Bell says is the second city in the Empire. Bombay started this enterprize on its own, not necessarily for electrifying the railway, but for electrifying the mills. I am one of those who have been intimately connected with the Hydro Companies from the very beginning and I know that as soon as we found that the Railways wanted more power, first a third company was started and then a fourth one, which will be complete in June 1926. If the Railways join hands with these Hydro Companies and work together, there is no reason why in the near future there should not be electrification up to Igatpuri from Kalyan on the one side and up to Poona on the other side. Later on, further electrification may be carried out. I do not know whether the existing Hydro-Electric Companies will be able to supply the power for further extensions, but I want this House and the Railway Member to keep in mind the fact that that co-ordination between the Hydro-Electric Companies and the Railways is absolutely necessary if further electrification is to be carried out.

I join my Honourable friend Mr. Bell in showing my appreciation and in congratulating the Government on the right lines on which they are increasing and remodelling the workshops, because, after all, a great deal of good work will depend upon improving the workshop practice. The Honourable Mr. Hindley has also referred to improving the workshop practice and he has given such full details. That any one carefully studying these figures will see that this improvement by itself will lead to a great reduction in capital and revenue expenditure and also that it would lead to better and efficient management.

As regards the management of the various Railways, I entirely agree with the view that the details of the management should be in the hands of the men on the spot, of course under the control of the Railway Board, and that the general policy should be laid down by the Legislature. If there is as little interference as possible with the management as regards details, and the policy is correctly laid down by the Railway Board and the Legislature, I do not see any reason why the future of the Railways in India should not be what we expect it to be.

In conclusion, I desire to congratulate both the Railway Member and the Honourable Mr. Hindley on the splendid Budget that they have presented to the House.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS (Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to congratulate the Honourable the Commerce Member, the Honourable Mr. Hindley and the Railway Department for the Budget which they have presented to this House, and it is a great pleasure to see that in the short time which was at their disposal they have done so well. The separation of railway finance from the general finance

is a matter of gratification. It will give a chance to the railway management and the Railway Board to run the railways on a commercial basis. It is however a pity to find, Sir, that on the Railway Board we have not got a single Indian Member. The Honourable the Commerce Member in his speech said that as generally the selection to the Railway Board is made from the ranks of Chief Engineers and other experienced officers of the Railways, it has not been possible to select one. Sir, I know it as a fact, that the then Railway Board had a very high opinion of Rai Bahadur Ralla Ram, who retired as Chief Engineer of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, and as far as the Indian public were concerned, he was quite suited for appointment to the Railway Board. It is a great pity to see that the colour bar has been brought into effect in accepting the recommendations of the Lee Commission, and consequently there is a great discontent amongst a certain section of railway officers. Why should Government be a party to this? I hope Government will duly consider this very important question as a discontented servant does not put in a good day's work.

It is a matter of great gratification to find in the present Budget a sum of Rs. 174 lakhs provided for the amenities of lower class passengers. I hope, Sir, that this amount will be fully spent, and that at the end of the year we shall find no lapse. In the speech of the Honourable Member we find that the sum of Rs. 30 crores which was allotted last year for the rehabilitation and improvement of Railways could not all be spent because approved schemes were not before the Railway Board. In this connection might I say that little attention was paid to raised platforms and waiting sheds which did not require intricate technical projects for approval. A great number of roadside stations have not even now raised platforms at all and the travelling public, particularly the womenfolk, find it very inconvenient and sometimes risky to get down from the railway carriages. I hope that the small sum of Rs. 4,30,000 which has been provided for the purpose will be fully spent. Arrangements for drinking water used to be good some time back, but after retrenchments came into effect a great number of water porters were reduced and one finds on the roadside stations on the North Western Railway and the East Indian Railway great difficulty to get drinking water. As regards the betterment of carriages I would suggest that so far as upper class carriages are concerned *coupe* compartments have proved of great value to the travelling public, and in case the Railway Board will extend and adopt the *coupe* carriages in all classes it will solve the question of reservation of compartments for certain communities, and it will be a great boon to the travelling public. I welcome the decision of Government to revert to new constructions programme on a large scale. This is a thing which we greatly need and it will help the development of our commerce and industries a great deal. Thefts on railway trains have, I am sorry to say, greatly increased, but adequate measures have not been taken to guard the public against thefts. At present what we see is that only two travelling police constables are posted to each night train and when we have long trains now, two constables are not quite sufficient for the purpose. I know a good many cases in which bags of rupees have been stolen in the night from various trains, and I wish to urge on the Railway Department the provision of more travelling police constables on each passenger train during the night time. Another thing which I wish to bring to the notice of Government is that the lighting arrangements on the roadside

[Lala Ram Saran Das.]

stations since retrenchment was brought into effect have become very bad. On such stations only one lamp is lighted and particularly on dark nights a number of thefts take place even on the railway platforms.

I find in the note of the Honourable the Commerce Member that as a business proposition third class fares cannot be reduced. He has seen his way to justify the decrease in the upper class fares. In that connection I wish to endorse what my Honourable friend Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas has said that the increase in third class passengers is the result of the normal yearly increase. The decrease in the upper class passengers is certainly due to the high fares. Some time ago reserved compartments were available to the public by paying 5 fares and four-wheeler carriages used to run through to branch lines, the other compartment being put for public use. But one has to pay 10 fares now in case one wants one reserved compartment in a four-wheeler carriage to run through. If a reversion is made to the old method I think the receipts from reserved carriages will greatly increase. In the case of industries in the north of India in particular and especially those in which coal is carried over long distances reduction in coal freights ought to receive the attention of Government. The heavy coal freight is a difficulty which the industries in the north particularly feel in the successful working of their concerns.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Bell, said that the Council should not interfere in the internal control of the Railways. I beg to differ from him and wish to say that healthy criticism should always be welcome. In these days autocracy ought to come to an end. In certain railways certain officers have done much better than others because they had different feelings and different sympathies, and if we do not criticise their action in the Council and bring the grievances of the public to the notice of the Government we shall be failing in our duty. I consider that Government ought not to discourage us from doing the useful service which we do to the public as well as to Government.

From the note it appears that the Railway Department has done well as far as Indianisation is concerned. I do not know about the other Railways, but as far as the North-Western Railway is concerned, nothing substantial has been done; particularly in the upper subordinate service in the traffic branch and in the Loco and Carriage Department very little has been done. In this Council a Resolution was carried which Government accepted, and which aimed to increase the number of traffic inspectors on the traffic transportation side on the State Railways. I am sorry to find that on the North-Western Railway in particular practically no increase has been made since then. As far as the subordinate traffic staff is concerned I find that out of the two Station Superintendents on the line there is not a single Indian occupying that post. In the station masters of the F class out of 10 posts only one is Indian. Out of 25 station masters of the E class we have no Indian. In assistant station masters and yard masters of the E class out of 78 there is not a single Indian. Out of the four Chief Controllers there is not a single Indian. In the 6 Deputy Controllers we find no Indians and out of 46 Assistant Controllers there is only one Indian. This state of affairs needs attention. It is a matter of pleasure to find that the Government are establishing a training school for transportation officers at Chandausi. I should very much like the Government to put before this House a scheme as to the recruitment of the various classes to that school, I mean the rules for admis-

sion of graduates, under-graduates or matriculates who may wish to join the school to secure the higher or upper subordinate appointments in the traffic service. The Honourable the Commerce Member in his note says that when the railways started Indians did not come forward to take up the traffic appointments. With due deference to him I wish to say that from the very beginning, as far as the Punjab is concerned, Indians have put themselves forward and they have retired after 30 to 40 years' meritorious service on a comparatively poor pay. In case the Chandausi School does not serve the purpose of helping the Indianisation of the services I do not think the school will fulfil one of its great functions.

Increase in rates for tourist cars is discouraging their use on a large scale. The present rates are too high and private persons who wish to take advantage of the use of the tourist cars have now to revert to reserving ordinary carriages. That is also a point which needs consideration at the hands of the Government. In these days agricultural manures are greatly needed, and in case the Railway Department is prepared to carry manures at the same rate as coal or stone, they will be doing a great service to the country and the indirect advantage which will accrue in increase of traffic by bettering the yield of the crops will repay Railways in the end. As my friend the Honourable Mr. Bell pointed out I agree that the item of 4 crores in the matter of stores is one which requires explanation from the Railway Department. Another thing that I find in the memorandum is that the recommendations of the Lee Commission will apply to the officers of the Company Railways. This is a matter which cannot be understood. Why should the State extend this advantage to company lines? This is a matter on which I wish some light should be thrown. As far as the inauguration of the new branch line policy is concerned I welcome the measure, but I endorse what the other Members have said that in case experience shows that this change in policy is not suited it may be reconsidered. As far as the introduction of the divisional system on various railways is concerned we expect a great saving therefrom, but there is some apprehension in the public mind that in this new scheme Indians will not have a sufficient hand in the direct control of the various railways. I do not know how far that misapprehension is right or wrong but I hope attention will be paid to this by the Railway Department. I welcome the Budget and I offer my congratulations to all concerned for their increased activities.

THE HONOURABLE SIR ARTHUR FROOM (Bombay Chamber of Commerce): I rise to join the previous speakers in offering my congratulations to the Railway Board so ably presided over by the Honourable Mr. Hindley and, may I call him, his referee, the Honourable Sir Charles Innes.

I was very interested to read one portion of the speech of the Honourable the Commerce Member where he referred to the Inchcape Committee. When that committee published its conclusions about a couple of years ago, I think I am right in remembering that the Railway Department, especially, felt that it had a grievance at the amount of cut recommended by that committee. Well, Sir, the Railways have shouldered the recommendations of that committee and I cannot help feeling that in the satisfactory budget which has been presented to us the recommendations of that committee are in some degree reflected. I was especially interested to read the remark of the Honourable Sir Charles Innes in the other place when he referred to the standard set by the Inchcape Committee of earning $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital charge of the Railways. He went on to say that this had nearly been realised because the commercial railways had earned 5.46

[Sir Arthur Froom.]

per cent.,—which Honourable Members will recognise is very nearly 5½ per cent.,—on the capital entrusted to them by Government. That, Sir, I think, is an extraordinarily satisfactory position of affairs. I take it that these earnings are not subjected, as the earnings of ordinary commercial affairs are, to income-tax!

Well, Sir, I have been connected with the transport of people and goods for many years, and like my Honourable friend Mr. Bell, my mind turns to certain very necessary adjuncts which are required in carrying passengers and goods. Looking to that part of the Honourable Mr. Hindley's speech where he makes a reference, though it is brief it is none the less satisfactory, to improving the capacity of yards and lines; that, Sir, to my mind, is one of the greatest features of railway control. If the marshalling yards are not up to standard, you will have the greatest wastage of your wagons and coaches. It is no use having on paper what might appear to be a satisfactory number of wagons and a satisfactory number of passenger coaches if they are held up at big junctions of the Railways to an extent which renders their efficiency very low.

Again Workshops. Well, Sir, I claim to have some knowledge of workshops and if repairs cannot be rapidly and efficiently done, you upset the running of your steamers, and I am sure, in a similar way, you would upset the efficient running of your Railways. What would be the use again of having on paper what might appear to be an adequate number of locomotives if for some minor repairs that have to be carried out, they remain in the workshops for two months when one month should suffice? That would certainly affect the efficient running of your Railways.

Standardization. I quite agree that standardization is a satisfactory system. I also agree with what has been expressed by the Honourable Mr. Hindley that there is some danger in standardization becoming stagnation. But if that is carefully looked after, I do not think that danger need really be feared. Standardization is necessary when you get a new type of wagon, a new standard wagon. I think standardization should be applied to all the lines so that the Railways can get their renewals cheaper and their upkeep also may be cheaper. But that does not mean that when a better class of wagon is introduced two or three years later they again should not be standardized. The first class wagon might be called Standard A and the second might be called Standard B if the standardization is properly looked after.

Branch lines. This is an old subject of controversy, and I do not propose to dwell on it very long or hardly at all. We have a statement before us in which the Railway Board state that they propose to take on the construction of feeder lines and do this more economically than can be done by minor managements. They also undertake to see that there will be no slowing down of new construction. I should have accepted that statement with a very large pinch of salt some twenty years ago, but I do recognise that the present Railway Board is an entirely different body to the Railway Board of some years ago, some considerable number of years ago. I do recognise that they are a more live body, and without making perhaps invidious comparisons, I think we may recognise that they are a more efficient body. At the same time, I would like the Railway Board to keep clearly before them that, if they find for some reason or other, they cannot proceed with new works of small lines, if they find that the money is not really forthcoming, they will again consider this important matter.

Electrification of suburban lines has a peculiar interest to me, as it has to my Honourable friend Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, because we have started it in Bombay. As most Honourable Members know, the Harbour Branch line, which is an electric one, has recently been opened in Bombay. Within 18 months it is hoped to open a suburban line on the Great Indian Peninsula, also electrified, and also it is proposed to electrify the Bombay, Baroda and Central India suburban line. The railway administration part of the Railway Board in Bombay is not merely content with the progress I have mentioned on the Great Indian Peninsula, and they propose to extend the electrification up to Igatpuri and Poona. The advantage of that, of course, is that the lines run up to the ghats. I do not mean to suggest that it would be possible to run electric lines over the main lines for long distances, but the advantage up the ghats is recognised, and I think Honourable Members will be rather astonished when they hear how distance has been annihilated between Poona and Bombay. In the old days when the journey had to be accomplished by road, it was a most uncomfortable journey,—before I came out to India,—it took about 24 hours. Then after the railway was introduced, the journey was gradually improved until at the present time it takes about 6 hours, and when the electrification between Bombay and Poona is complete, it is estimated that the journey should be accomplished in about three hours. That shows, Sir, in one direction what Railways are doing for us in India.

As I said, my mind having been associated with steamship companies and therefore with the carrying of passengers and goods, it works on somewhat similar lines to that of Mr. Bell, but it does not accompany him to the Howrah Bridge, my chief recollection of which, is some years ago sitting on it in a carriage in a block of traffic and wondering whether I was going to catch my train.

There is one other important matter to which I should like to refer, and that is decentralization. I lay very great stress on decentralisation. I lay very great stress on the relinquishment of control from headquarters as far as it is possible to do so. Control overdone must only cramp the heads of your various Railways, the Agents. Now the Agents of the various Railways are without doubt most competent men, and if they are constantly interfered with in matters of detail, I am quite sure they will feel inclined to say "You had better come and run the line yourself". That is what I should do. And I would remind Honourable Members who have spoken and who have all advocated that there should be decentralisation to ensure to greater efficiency,—I would remind Honourable Members that some of them themselves cramp the staff of the Agents of Railways, by asking innumerable questions on railway matters on the floor of this House. What happens? Certain statistics are called for regarding the number of Indians employed on Railways. Questions are asked why so and so has been dismissed. What has the Honourable Member in charge got to do? He has to send these questions to the Agents of the various Railways for a reply. As I said, if I were the Agent of a Railway, and if I were asked why so and so was dismissed, I should be inclined to say that I dismissed him for good reason and that I am managing this Railway. Honourable Members say they agree with decentralisation with the absence of undue control. And I should like them to refrain from imperilling it. It is the big man who does not exercise undue control. It is the small man that does. Our Railway Board consists of big men, and I feel sure that they

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will not exercise undue control. You have your Agents, you should trust them, and it is a big man who trusts the men beneath him.

Sir, I have no more to add except that this Budget presented on the first occasion of the separation of railway finance from central finance can only be regarded as a highly satisfactory one, and I wish the Railway Board all good luck in their future Budgets, which I have no doubt will be the case next year provided we have a prosperous monsoon.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY (West Bengal: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, as we had reason to learn yesterday, complimenting and congratulating is a somewhat risky avocation in this House for it is supposed to carry imaginary obligations. That will, however, not deter me from paying a deserved compliment to Mr. Hindley and Sir Charles Innes for the admirable work that they and those associated with them have done in the short time since railway re-arrangements were made, and I desire to assure them that my compliments and congratulations are not mere conventionalities.

I am personally very glad to see Mr. Hindley here. He is an old Calcutta friend who has risen rung by rung to the topmost rung of the ladder and who has justified himself in every inch of space that he has traversed in the course of his remarkable career. According to a newspaper correspondent, his advent here has been helpful to this House because he has been good enough to come down to our level and present the statement of the Railway case in a manner suited to our capacities by making it devoid of angularities about stores, Indianization and third class passenger fares and other intricate questions, which engaged Sir Charles Innes' attention elsewhere. I am very glad to see Sir Charles Innes here and if he and Mr. Hindley will help us, we shall try to understand something of these difficult subjects. Sir, for one who had been so thoroughly identified with company management as Mr. Hindley it is apt to be somewhat of a strain to him to have to take up Government methods of work, and the way that he has been working shows that Mr. Hindley is fully equal to his new task. And that task has been simplified in a large measure by the claim put forward by the Department and endorsed here by several Members of what practically amounts to autocracy, independent of any criticism that this House or the other House may venture to make regarding what are called questions of detail. It is very difficult, Sir, to separate in some matters questions of details and policy. I am entirely at one with those who claim that as much decentralisation as possible ought to be allowed in regard not merely to Railway Administration but to all administrations. But we ought to remember the terms under which separation of railway finance from general finance came about and also the terms on which State management of the East Indian Railway was decided upon, against, as I understood, the views of the better mind in the official world. One of these terms was that the Houses of Legislature were to be allowed a reasonable control regarding not merely questions of general policy but with regard also to other questions that could not really amount to questions of policy. I myself would deprecate unnecessary details burdening the proceedings of the Council in departments of public activity. When Honourable Members make themselves responsible for questions in this House, I cannot imagine that they do not act under a proper sense of responsibility. When there are in their judgment suitable cases for interference the House will listen to representations about them and the Department ought not to debar information that

would be helpful in understanding the situation and at all events in clearing up misunderstandings. Take, for instance, cases about promotions and dismissals and about ignoring the claims of individuals or sets of individuals and of supersession of claims, in which justice is denied. Is there to be no appeal and no interference on proper materials? That would not be justice. We have had questions of that description sometimes and I deny that they are not proper questions. Conceivably again there would be cases in which this House or the other House ought to hear something more of a particular matter which may be considered a mere detail. At all events information about them would help to disabuse Honourable Members' minds and the public also would be disabused. Go down the list of minor matters further and take, for example, questions that sometimes appear in newspapers, in connection with complaints about, say extortion, by porters and other undue demands due to exactions by monopolist contractors or their supervisors or of those in charge of coolie arrangements. Take, again for example, the seemingly simple question of supply of drinking water in railway stations or of pure foodstuffs and refreshments for orthodox passengers at reasonable rates by responsible people. I am purposely selecting seemingly insignificant matters. But these are questions from the passenger and public points of view of very great importance. They are constantly reaching Honourable Members through newspapers and by direct complaint because the authorities concerned are indifferent and appeals to them are useless. In spite of such indifference these matters have to be looked into. I remember to have taken up some of these questions myself with the authorities but in vain. Are we to understand it is not right for Members to bring up those questions in the House or in the Central Advisory Committees or in the Local Committees, as the case may be? Grievances, however minor, must be remedied whether by high authorities or low.

Talking of the Central Advisory Committee, Sir, Members have felt and short as my experience is I think I should voice the opinion here, that they have really no power or duties and are merely called upon to look into questions that they are invited to do by courtesy or as a matter of convenience and that is about all they can do. If these Central Committees are given more power, if they are given opportunities of initiative, if the local committees are similarly armed and if the members of the Central Committees are asked to take their places in the local committees of the Provinces with which they are concerned, these questions of detail which in themselves are of great importance to the parties concerned, but which may not be deemed to be of sufficient importance to the Railway Board, or the Houses of the Legislature, need not, in future, trouble the Legislature or the Railway Board.

But we are in the beginning of things and of a new era of Railway History, as we have been told, and so long as matters do not properly settle down, decentralisation ought not to be done to death. It should be possible for Honourable Members to bring up questions which they think fit either to the Members of the Railway Board or to the Legislature, as the case may be, so that what may appear minor questions of detail but are really questions of importance, if not downright large questions of policy, may be satisfactorily dealt with.

Sir, speaking of the question of passenger comfort, reference has been made to the difficulty of getting reserved accommodation, and I desire to endorse what has fallen from the Honourable Lala Ram Saran Das—about

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coupes—a proposition which I have myself several times put forward before the railway authorities. It would be a real help to passenger traffic in general if the smaller *coupe* type of reserved accommodation on reasonable terms could be provided. It would mean less congestion of traffic at large and it would certainly be a great comfort, at least for those who can pay for it, and much of the complaint about reserved accommodation that we hear of would disappear. I would strongly urge upon the Railways to adopt the *coupe* system in all classes. It has been worked with success on some railways to a partial extent, they might well be adopted in the other railways and extended on railways which already have them.

And I should like in this connection to add my voice in support of the plea for reducing third class railway fares. We hear now-a-days that the railway administration have more money than they know what to do with and it is their grievance that they cannot spend it quickly enough. Some of that plethora might well go towards giving some redress to the large class of passengers who bring them the largest revenue, and in securing larger and better accommodation and facilities for them.

Sir, in connection with the question of separation of railway finance from general finance I desire very strongly to associate myself with what has fallen from Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy and other Members. I do not want to go into the details. They have been referred to already. Nor do I care to join in the protests and claims in the interest of the dignity and usefulness of this House. I have raised these questions in other concerns. If Government will not help us in getting facilities for working up to the rightful status, trouble will soon come and this House will ignominiously suffer. The sooner Government realise the matter, the better it is for all concerned. We want this House to do its duty in a dignified manner and do not want to have to complain every time when occasion arises that we have been neglected and that we want to be better treated. If I may just for one moment refer to an extraneous matter, I have heard that the Assembly is to have an opportunity of discussing the Reforms Committee's Report after the 9th of March next when the Report will be published. We have not heard any announcement yet by the Leader of the House that this House is to have an opportunity like that. These are little things which in their cumulative effect must derogate the House in a manner that make Members feel and make people outside the House refer to it slightly. Government get a large support from this House in spite of the recalcitrant dozen or half-a-dozen, on all occasions and should see the House better treated.

I shall now, Sir, turn to some provincial matters. Some of them have been referred to by the Honourable Mr. Bell. I shall give a prominent place to what has long been almost a hobby with me and which is not willing to leave me. Mr. Hindley has outlined a very large construction programme of nearly 2,000 miles benefiting mostly Madras, Burma and possibly Bihar. I wish these provinces all joy and luck in their construction programme, because they need it all. But may I ask why the old Howrah-Vishnupur chord, which used at one time to occupy so prominent and honourable a place in the programme of construction, has been assigned a fairly ignominious place that makes it impossible for it to be a practical proposition for a long series of years to come. It is expected, I believe, Sir, to tap a very important part of Bengal and to be a great relief to the coal trade so far at least as the Calcutta market and docks were concerned, and it was

expected that it will shorten the route between Bombay and Calcutta by a good few minutes, which by itself is a recommendation in its favour. It will also help, I believe, in dealing with the question of flood and inundation in the parts of the country concerned by a judicious system of open work left in the course of construction. The East Coast harbour is now to be taken up and there is to be a railway connecting the coalfields with the harbour. I have been informed as a result of inquiry that till that line is constructed and it is experimented as to how the coal traffic is going to converge and how the thing is going to end financially the Howrah-Vishnupur Chord about which there has been long and painstaking survey, which was to have been taken up quite a long time ago, is likely to be practically abandoned. I do not see, Sir, why we should have to wait for this experiment. Apart from everything else, apart from help to the outside coal traffic by the proposed line connecting the coalfields with the East Coast harbour, I think this line stands on its own merits. It is quite a short line which can without any inconvenience be taken up. The Government have practically committed themselves to it some time ago and it has quite good points which I should like to urge upon the Railway Member for his careful and sympathetic consideration. 100 miles or so added to 2,000 miles will not make much of a difference and it is a line that is fully worthy of being taken up.

Then, Sir, as regards district and local railways, we have had two sets of opinion expressed here and I am not prepared to identify myself with the Honourable Mr. Bell's revised opinion regarding them. I do not know what influences have been at work. I know my commercial friends from Bengal were at one with me in the earlier stages of the question and I do not think that Bengal as a whole will be prepared to give up the contest in a hurry. I have been looking at the Bengal Budget, which if the provincial contributions are remitted, may still have a silver lining. But a very careful examination of the Budget does not show me the slightest provision, or possibility of provision, for guarantees, without which necessary local and provincial railways cannot be taken up if the mighty and busy Railway Board chooses to scrap any of them. It will be an ideal state of things for the Government and the Railway Board to be able to take up all commercial ventures. But Government have not so far been able to show much of a success in that direction, and feeder lines that did so admirable work when nobody was coming to their help, except with the small guarantee that the Government had provided, should not be so summarily laid on one side because one committee or another has said one thing or the other to their derogation. It reminds me of the homely Bengali adage about the potter bringing in the earth with all reverence on his head and then kneading it with his feet for his own purpose. This state of things does not appeal to me. Let us give these lines more time and more opportunities of course under proper supervision and under proper terms. Government and the Railway Board and the whole country are under very large obligations, to the pioneers in this field. Honourable Members will remember that almost immediately after the Honourable Mr. Hindley adumbrated the scheme here in this House, rules regarding the matter were published. The public and those concerned have not had time to consider the matter and realize the situation.

The Honourable Mr. Bell has spoken of the rebuke to Calcutta that Mr. Hindley has felt obliged, I am afraid, to administer with regard to our bridge accommodation. The contest that has been going on in and about

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Calcutta for some time past between the Government, the representatives of trade and commerce, the representatives of the people, the Municipality and the Port Trust as to who could get away with the least contribution towards the problem has not been very edifying or profitable. I hope they will be able to settle their differences soon and decide on a practical scheme. The real trouble about the matter has been, Sir, the expensiveness of the scheme put forward. Although Government have not committed themselves to that scheme in the Bill that they brought before the Provincial Council and which was rather summarily thrown out, grave objections have been taken to it all round. Other and less expensive schemes have been canvassed in the press and I am told that there are still less expensive schemes which are no less sound. The Local Government have their grand canal problems. They have their bridge problems, so far as ordinary traffic is concerned and we not have the requisite money. What I should like to say however on this occasion is that the Railway, which has an obligation in the matter, all its own, might disregard the foot passenger and conveyance traffic problem and have its own bridge purely for railway purposes, somewhere up the river between Calcutta and the present railway bridge near Hooghly. The neighbourhood of Calcutta will easily require more than one bridge. I am very glad, Sir, and I congratulate the Railway Board that some of the terminal arrangements about East Indian Railway trains are about to be undertaken in Sealdah. That is the natural site for a central railway station for Calcutta, as against the Dalhousie Square scheme which some wiseacres have been long insisting on. The Dalhousie Square neighbourhood would be far too expensive. It must be in the neighbourhood of Sealdah that whatever central station ideas the Railway Board may ultimately decide on will have to materialise. I hope it will soon be possible to be run more East Indian Railway trains from Sealdah than have been announced even with the scanty bridge accommodation near Hooghly. But the point that I should like to submit and press for consideration of the Railway Board is their own railway bridge, independent and apart from any bridge that may be constructed in the near future for dealing with the passenger and conveyance traffic of Calcutta and Howrah. Calcutta has only half a bridge or a quarter of a bridge, none too safe. And this reminds me of the professor who went in the olden times in one of those old coal tubs down a colliery. When going up he asked the man in charge as to what he thought of the safety of the rope. "If we get up safe this time the rope will be changed to-morrow," was the answer. That has been the answer about the Howrah Bridge for long and one does not feel comfortable. Missing a train is not the worst of disasters that might have befallen my Honourable friend, Sir Arthur Froom. If the Bengal people and the Bengal Government are not up to their duty in the matter, the Railway Board at all events ought to do its duty and have its own railway bridge and finally deal with the question of terminal arrangements in Sealdah; that would be one of the solutions of our congestion problems. In that connection I welcome the prospect of an electrification of the Calcutta suburban railways and I hope tubes will also come in time. My Honourable friends from Bombay have taken an understandable pride in having started electric works which have enabled them to begin the work of electrification of more than their suburban railways. There is no reason why our coalfields should not afford abundant electric power from a central powerhouse and why some of the river powers that my Honourable friend Mr. Haroon Jaffer is going to tell us about soon should also not be utilised.

One does not know why in the Darjeeling heights or somewhere at a more eastern point electric works could not be established that would be the salvation of Bengal—salvation not only as regards the railway question but also in regard to other big problems. Bengal stands well rebuked, indeed, but may yet improve.

Before I get away from the question of central railway station arrangements, I should like to ask the railway management as to what they propose to do regarding the central railway accommodation at Delhi. It ought not to be long in settling. The not unreasonable enthusiasm, which for the time being, threw out proposals on a previous occasion regarding central railway accommodation in Delhi no longer exists. Things have changed and the authorities should be getting along. I think Raisina has come to stay however much one may dislike it. A journey of 14 miles a day along dusty and congested roads is killing all of us and we want something better than the existing arrangements. But until Raisina has better railway accommodation the evil will continue. It must be recognised that the centre of gravity, both as regards railway and other matters, must be in Raisina and not citywards. I think the solution of the question should not be long in coming and I invite the railway management to decide and inform the public at a very early date as to when the central railway question of Delhi is going to be solved.

Sir, Members have welcomed and rightly welcomed the prospect of very large industrial undertakings in connection with the railway management, and I particularly welcome the prospect of standardisation of locomotives. I believe one of the arguments urged against giving contracts to the new locomotive concern in Tatanagar was the difficulty about standards and types. The difficulty was said to be one of giving adequate work except of any particular standard and that would not keep the concern going. I am informed that by giving this firm wagon work the immediate grievances of that particular concern have been redressed. I am not concerned with the redress of shareholders' grievances or anything of that kind. To my mind, the locomotive industry as a very highly specialised industry is one of the great needs of this country, and that need cannot be adequately dealt with till a certain amount of standardisation such as is proposed is effected. I have heard criticisms about it, but the pronouncement of a technical expert like Mr. Hindley is quite enough to assure me that standardisation is possible and desirable. Until that standardisation is a reality it will be difficult for any concern in India to exist that will not be able to take up locomotives of different standards and different types—it will be very difficult for any single company in India to adequately provide itself with work that will keep it going. From that point of view as well as from the railway point of view that has been mentioned in the course of Mr. Hindley's speech, I welcome this idea of standardisation.

So do I welcome the recognition of the need of improved appliances against accidents, such as have been mentioned about automatic couplings and things of that kind. No money spent even on experiments regarding appliances that will save lives of railway employees and passengers should be grudged. Honourable Members have no doubt heard of a very sad accident only the other day at the Delhi railway station itself, many like which might have been avoided if we had improved appliances. We heard in connection with the Sind disaster not long ago regarding which questions were asked in this House as to whether a certain Great Indian Peninsula Railway appliance that had been invented by a Great Indian Penin-

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sula Railway official could not have prevented that disaster. The Honourable Member who was then in charge had not even heard of such an appliance and we have heard nothing further about it since. Anything that will help in preventing these accidents and making the management more efficient and safe will warrant ungrudging expenditure.

Enlargement on the spot of the industrial side of the railway management opens out wide prospects of training Indian apprentices on a generous scale and on generous terms. That alone will solve the question of Indianisation, on the technical and engineering side. I am at one with some of my Honourable friends that Indianisation for the sake of Indianisation without sufficient training cannot be insisted on in these departments. It is not merely a question of efficiency. It is a question of life and property that has to be carefully considered. At the same time one cannot expect to sit down quietly in the words of the well-worn-out phrase about an expert swimmer without opportunities of swimming. Opportunities in the past have been few and far between and we are suffering a great deal on account of the past remissness of the railway management. Now with these large possibilities opening out, specially in the technical departments, I hope the training of Indian apprentices on suitable terms and on a wide scale will be possible, and that that alone will solve the question of Indianisation in these departments more than anything else. This expenditure on industrial arrangements of the Railways will also reduce expenditure in time.

While on the question of Indianisation I desire to draw the attention of the Honourable Member in charge as well as Mr. Hindley to complaints, which I hope are not well founded, of some officers in the East Indian Railway who have grave apprehensions regarding the terms of their employment. The same form of notice was I believe used in their case as well as in the case of menials, in fact of everybody, which did not give the officers concerned sufficient notice as to what change in terms might come afterwards. A copy of a bond which some of these subordinates have been asked to sign has been placed in my hands. It provides amongst other things that they are to be debarred from benefits and privileges which the ordinary State railway official has. I have been informed, I hope not credibly, that men in the traffic department have also misunderstandings and misapprehensions which are creating a great deal of flutter. I shall be glad to be assured that there is nothing in all this. But if there is, I hope the grievances will be carefully looked into and I trust that the prospects of Indianisation will not be jeopardised by any careless or thoughtless action on the part of the Railway Board after the Government has taken up the East Indian Railway. These men have entered Government service in full hope that all the benefits and privileges that Government servants on the Railways are allowed will be theirs, and there is no reason why anything should be taken away from them in the manner apprehended.

Well, Sir, the Railways now have as much finance at their command as almost the Government of India themselves, and claim and will have more power. The great possibilities that they thus have will also add to their duties and obligations. The vista of usefulness is long and wide and a new era of development and progress has been promised. We want to take a long view of things and shall patiently watch what is claimed as the making of history. I therefore wish the Railway Board God-speed and all success in their new ventures and undertakings. I hope that when the next

Council of State assemblies, to which my Honourable friend Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas does not want to return, the Railway Board will have to their credit a record of better doings and better success than has been vouchsafed to them in the short time that the new arrangements have been in existence. But even in that short time a great deal has been achieved, and our thanks are due to Sir Charles Innes and Mr. Hindley and others in the department who have so loyally assisted in the whole venture.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. A. NATESAN (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): I think that a few Members of this House and perhaps a few more in the other place and elsewhere who doubted the wisdom of the proposal to separate the Railway from the General Budget will now feel convinced that their apprehensions were groundless. We are now in a decidedly very advantageous position in regard to the method and the manner in which the Railway Budget has been presented to us and particularly the way in which even dry-as-dust figures have been presented to us. I am glad that the Honourable Sir Charles Innes has given expression to the long felt grievances of Madras. I read from his own speech where he said "that Madras has always complained that she has been starved of railway development." Sir, it is so not only in this matter but also in other matters as well. The new Budget has at it were started under new auspices, and I am glad that some of the Madras projects which have long been delayed find a place in the programme, and I think that it is only proper that I, being the solitary Member from Madras adorning the empty-benches, should state that we feel grateful that after all some of these long delayed projects have been taken up. I am glad that in the south of the Presidency some 300 miles of railway, namely, the Villupuram-Trichinopoly, Virudupatti-Thenkasi, the Dindigul-Pollachi and Trichinopoly-Karaikudi lines are to be taken up.

I must confess that I read with certainly a great deal of gratification about the electrification scheme and the account of the proceedings of the opening of the recent electric railway in Bombay. I am glad to find from the statement presented by the Honourable Member of the Railway Board that it is in contemplation to start an electric train service between Igatpuri and Poona and that they are examining the problem of the suburban traffic in Calcutta with particular reference to starting an electrification scheme, but I find no mention in the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member of anything about Madras. In the statement presented to us in the book which is entitled the South Indian Railway in page 3, under Open Lines, I would draw the special attention of the Honourable Mr. Hindley to the reference to the improvement of facilities and development of traffic in the Madras suburban area. The necessity for some relief in the congestion of traffic in the Madras suburban area which is served by a single line of railway has been long felt in Madras and facilities have frequently been recommended by local interests. Being connected with the Madras Corporation for over 16 years and knowing full well the terrible congestion to which we are subject and the high rate of mortality, especially infant mortality, I may point out that everybody who knows Madras is struck by the very obvious fact that many a large family, particularly of poor people, are obliged to dwell in rooms which are not more than 8 feet by 6 feet in such lamentable conditions that it is essential in the interests of the city of Madras and of the growth of a healthy population, more particularly to prevent infant mortality that suburban traffic should be encouraged as far as possible. The Government of Madras, which has been

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fully alive, to this very serious difficulty, has taken upon itself the responsibility of forming a town planning trust and it has lately added to the municipal administration a suburb called the Mambalam area. It has been a cry for a long time that people who live in some of these suburbs only five or six miles away from the town of Madras could not avail themselves sufficiently of the train service because they will have to spend at least one hour to cover the five or six miles to the city of Madras to pursue their avocations. If, therefore, something is done, it will not only help the people in Madras with facilities which they are undoubtedly entitled to have but also help the city of Madras to solve the problem of congestion and infant mortality. I should like to ask the Honourable Mr. Hindley what exactly has become of this project about which something was heard in the newspapers about the Tambaram project of electrification. If you cannot have the money next year for starting the electrification scheme surely it lies within your resources to double the line so that trains can run from one end of this suburban area to the other without interruption, without stopping at every station on the way. For I may tell you that, if I am not mistaken, there are as many as 8 or 9 stations in which a man has to wait if he starts from Chingleput to arrive in the city of Madras. In Calcutta and Bombay many people who are pursuing their avocations in the city come from long distances. The train service there is very quick, and it must be quicker and better with the electrification scheme. Surely my province should not be neglected and I hope the fact that it is situated thousands of miles away and that it is not nearer the seat of the gods does not prejudice very much its claims in this direction. I am expecting very anxiously some statement from the Honourable Mr. Hindley. I find here a statement made by the South Indian Railway authorities that the acquisition of the necessary land would cost approximately 7 lakhs and it has been sanctioned. If you cannot find enough resources to start the electrification scheme, and if some difficulty stands in the way, I do hope in the interests of the province for which it is my privilege to plead before you in this House that you will make earnest endeavours to double the line, so as to enable the trains to run more quickly.

I happen to be an elected member of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Board and of the Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce, and I was particularly glad to notice here a provision made for the improvement of the workshops at Perambur. My committee was taken on inspection to this workshop and we were very much struck by the fact that the arrangements, to use the words used by my Honourable friend Mr. Bell, were deplorably inadequate and far behind the times, in the matter of making bolts, nuts and other things which one would expect in a big workshop to be turned out by thousands with the aid of up-to-date machinery. I do hope that some more money will be provided than what has been already given for the improvement and proper equipment of this workshop and also the one at Trichinopoly. I do not look at this question purely from the point of view of the improvement of Railways. I look at it from the point of view of unemployment, particularly of finding suitable avocations for a number of young fellows who have gone in for a few years study at school and find it difficult to get employment. I do know that in the Perambur workshops and also in the Trichinopoly workshops young fellows of good families, who had a strong aversion to manual work, are now taking to working in the workshops. It therefore behoves Gov-

ernment to recognise that young lads of good families who had for years a strong aversion to manual work are now taking up this work. More than anything else, I think that the employment of some of these young lads who have had a little bit of education, even though it was not quite up to the mark, will enable labour to become more skilful and useful, an ideal to which many an employer of labour, big and small, always cheerfully looks.

I am afraid, Sir, that the Honourable the Railway Member does not give much hope for the reduction of third class passenger fares. Confining my observations purely to the working of the Madras Railway and the South Indian Railway—I think it is a point on which I should lay stress—I find that 98·7 per cent. of the total passenger traffic is among the third class passengers, and 92 per cent. of your revenue, of the total receipts, is drawn from the third class passenger. From the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, 96 per cent. of the total passenger traffic comes from the third class and 90 per cent. of the revenue is from the third class passenger traffic. With these facts so obviously staring one in the face, I think it is very difficult for one like me to reconcile myself to the statement made by the Honourable Sir Charles Innes that it is difficult to consider any reduction of the rate for third class passengers. There is this very obvious fact that the largest amount of revenue and the greatest amount of traffic is from the bulk of the people who travel by third class, and I think a very strong responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the Honourable Member in charge of the Railways to see that something is done to reduce the rates for third class passengers.

I do not propose to take up the question of Indianization, nor do I think it desirable to discuss the claims of individuals who have been dismissed. I am very pleased to see that the railway authorities have recognised the necessity and the value of a school for training people in the art of railway administration. The Government for years took up this question of providing facilities for training men for their own services, but unfortunately people in this country have suffered a great deal owing to the fact that the Railways have been chiefly under Companies and that they did not bestow adequate attention to their part of their obligations which Government from the very beginning, from the days of the East Indian Company, thought it desirable to bestow in regard to that matter, that is, Government took special care to provide special facilities for teaching people by starting schools and colleges and prepared young men for Government service. Now that a new era has been begun by the Railway Department, and Government are getting more and more control in regard to these matters, I do hope that every effort will be made to see that more schools of the kind which it is proposed to start at Chandausi are started. I am particularly glad to see that adequate facilities will be provided at the Chandausi School for training men who are in railway service, and while I recognise the difficulties which the Honourable the Railway Member has pointed out in regard to speedy Indianization, and the fact that it is only very recently that Indianization at the top has begun, I would make one suggestion, and I hope it will receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Honourable the Railway Member and also at the hands of the Honourable Mr. Hindley who is here. My suggestion is this. In all other departments like the Department of Education, Medicine, Forests and in several other Departments, Government pick out young men of a certain amount of capacity who have proved themselves useful for service

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and send them to England and other foreign countries to equip themselves in the latest institutions, and I think it is only right that the Government should consider the desirability of setting apart a certain sum of money to select a few promising young Indians who have got the necessary capacity and the adaptability and sending them to England to train themselves in the latest schools. If the problem of Indianization is to be solved and if the difficulties mentioned by the Honourable Member for Railways with regard to the rapid Indianization are to be remedied I think the suggestion that I have made will help the solution of that problem. It will, more than anything else, infuse a considerable amount of confidence in the public at large for whose good and for whose benefit the railway administration is conducted.

The Council then adjourned for Lunch till Twenty-five Minutes to Three of the Clock.

The Council re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty-five Minutes to Three of the Clock, the Honourable the President in the Chair.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY (Chief Commissioner of Railways): Sir, I should like first of all to thank Honourable Members of this Council who have already spoken for the very kind words of appreciation which they have spoken about the efforts of the Railway Board and myself in connection with the Railway Budget. I should also like to express my great thanks to this Council for the extremely kind and sympathetic way in which they have listened to the remarks which I had to make in presenting the Railway Budget to this House. I feel particularly appreciative of that kindness because I am unfortunately only a bird of passage here and I was making my maiden speech. I hope I did not say anything in that speech which gave real foundation for what my old friend, the Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, described as speaking down the level of my listeners. I am sure—I have looked through my speech—there was nothing in the words which I used which could possibly have given rise to such an idea and my feeling at the time that I was making that speech was that I was endeavouring to live up to the atmosphere of the House. (*The Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary*: “I was speaking, Sir, of Mr. Hindley’s newspaper friend.”) Oh, well, I am afraid I am not responsible for him. It was probably very kind of him but it was not very tactful. What I did feel, when I was preparing my speech, was that in this case perhaps I had an opportunity of dealing with railway matters in a practical way and allowing myself to indulge in technical matters, which, perhaps Honourable Members will understand me when I say, is at times a great relief to a practical man like myself. It is a very great advantage to me to be able to take Members of this Council into my confidence to some extent and to let myself go on technical railway matters for which I very rarely have proper opportunities of expression. And for that reason I am very grateful to this Council for listening patiently and so kindly receiving the matter which we have placed before them.

I would like to make just a few remarks about some of the matters which have been mentioned by Honourable Members when speaking on the Railway Budget. In the first place, the Honourable Mr. Bell regretted the fact that we had been unsuccessful during the current year in spending the capital grant which had been allotted. That regret of the Honourable

Mr. Bell's we fully share. We agree that the position is not altogether satisfactory and we are making special efforts to improve the speed at which approved works are being carried out. The position is perhaps not quite so bad as would appear and in that respect I would like to elucidate a remark which was made in our budget memorandum and also in my speech relating to real expenditure on capital works. Although the figure shown is only 12·85 crores, that represents the actual expenditure, we have really done considerably more because we have received a credit from the refund of the customs duty, an expected credit which reduces the appearance of the amount that we have spent. Further, we expect our stores balance to be reduced by 4 crores and that strictly speaking should be added to the figure of 12·85 in order to get at what we have really spent. I am aware that Honourable Members have not clearly understood this point because it was raised in more than one speech. There is nothing out of the ordinary in this transaction. I might go back to the question of stores balances as referred to by the Inchcape Committee in which we were strenuously urged to reduce our stores balances. Now, it will be understood that these stores balances consist very largely of serviceable railway stores, waiting to be used in railway works, waiting to be put into the lines, into the bridges and into workshops and so on. If during this year we are successful in reducing our stores balances by 4 crores it means that 4 crores worth of materials have been put into our works and therefore added to the actual outlay on these works. That is not, therefore, an unsatisfactory feature but a satisfactory feature. The only unsatisfactory feature is that it might have been a larger figure. If I could say that we were reducing our stores balance by 10 crores, I should be more pleased.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Does it mean that if we had not these 4 crores of stores in hand we would have to spend the same amount in ordering stores to put everything in order?

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: That is correct. That is to say, we had our stores available for these works to that extent and therefore we were able to use them. That means a definite reduction of the amount of stores in hand and it comes to our credit in the capital grant. That is the practical interpretation of it.

The Honourable Mr. Bell said that he did not think that our explanations in the Administration Report regarding the short spending were altogether satisfactory. I can only tell him that we have been through an immense amount of revision work during the last two years and I maintain, to use an expression which I used in the Administration Report, that much of the money not spent has been wisely saved. That is to say, when the 30 crore grant was given, it would have been possible for an unscientific and uneconomical management to have rushed into works and gone ahead with them regardless of their probable return. We have during the last two years thoroughly overhauled all the projects on which it was proposed to spend money and that has inevitably caused the slowing down of the rate at which works could be carried out. The Honourable Mr. Bell, while expressing appreciation of the amount which we are spending on improving facilities and remodelling our marshalling yards regretted that we could not do more for the marshalling yards in the coalfields. Well, Sir, this particular Budget perhaps does not show a very large expenditure under such a description, but I must explain that during the last few years—I think I am right in saying that during the last eight years—we have spent altogether something like 9 crores in

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improving facilities in the coalfields. The first practical step which was necessary there to improve matters—matters as perhaps Honourable Members will remember were in a serious state about the year 1912-13—was to improve the coal marshalling yards in the coalfields, where the coal wagons are dealt with at first after coming in from the collieries. That stage has been strenuously dealt with and a very large improvement has been made in those marshalling yards in the collieries. Following on that, we had to make improvement in the routes leading to and from the coalfields and further still to the large marshalling yards which govern these routes themselves. The process of improving those routes will be found dealt with in the Budget in the provision that has been made for doubling the Grand Chord of the East Indian Railway and certain sections of the Bengal Nagpur Railway. Further, we have just completed a few months ago a very large marshalling yard at Mogal Sarai, which, although some 200 miles from the coalfields themselves, is a governing factor in dealing with the transportation of coal wagons at the coalfields. These perhaps are technical matters, but I wish to explain that we have been carrying out a definite scheme for a good many years past now of steady improvement in the coalfields and we can point to results already achieved, because, during the last few months, the loading of coal wagons has, as the Honourable Mr. Bell probably knows, been at a higher level than ever before in the history of the coal industry. That, I think, is one definite result from the money which has been spent for the benefit of the coal industry.

With regard to the unsatisfactory position which our Budget reveals in workshop facilities, that is to say, we are faced with a large expenditure, the Honourable Mr. Bell made a criticism that this should have been remedied before. I am quite prepared to admit that a great deal might have been done before. But under the old financial system it was impossible for my predecessors to obtain the necessary funds for this purpose. That is one factor. The other factor is that whatever had been done 10 years ago would have had to be entirely revised now as a result of experience and development in workshop organisation which has taken place since the war. I make no excuse for the necessity for wholesale revision of workshop organisation because, as I have shown in the Budget memorandum and in my speech in this House, there is ample justification for a complete revision of our arrangements even at the cost of a good many crores of rupees.

Now, Sir, I am not going to enlarge on the subject of what I have briefly noted down as the subject of interference with Agents. The Honourable the Railway Member will deal with that matter later. But I should like just to mention that the whole key-note of the organisation which we have devised for the work of the Railway Board and our relations with the Agents is decentralisation and again decentralisation. That is the key-note of all our work, the key-note of the changes we have made in our headquarters organisation and in the organisation of the Railways themselves, in the course of making changes of that kind in a transition period such as we are going through now, there must be a considerable amount of what perhaps a man down below calls interference. Starting with the premise that our object is decentralisation and that we are only working towards decentralisation, I am not prepared to abate the amount of interference which the introduction of such a decentralisation scheme involves. We propose to put it through and the people below, if they do not like it to start with,

will find out the benefits of it sooner or later. I constantly meet every Agent of every Railway and during the last year I have visited the headquarters of every Railway and discussed matters freely with the Agents. I have a half yearly meeting of the Agents here at headquarters and the first question I always put to the Agents at that meeting is "Now, gentlemen, I want to know what your complaints are. I give you a free hand to tell me exactly what you want done and how you would like me to revise my methods." I sit down and I listen to the 15 of them giving their complaints. Sir, on the last occasion when I asked this question there was hardly a complaint from one of them. That is my answer to the Honourable Mr. Bell.

Now, Sir, I come to a matter which the Honourable Mr. Bell and the Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary have referred to, and the Honourable Sir Arthur Froom has also added to the discussion, namely, the old subject of the Howrah Bridge. As an old Calcutta man, one cannot help smiling of course when this question comes up, because it is an ancient subject which has been discussed for a great many years. I shall not go into details of the Howrah Bridge controversy. The Honourable Mr. Bell says that the public of Calcutta have been perplexed by the number of opinions that have been given to them. They have also been faced with an enormous expenditure which they cannot meet and therefore the bridge remains as it is. As regards the opinions I modestly say as a member of the Engineers Committee which has given the only real technical opinion of value, that there is only one solution of this problem. That solution I penned myself for the Committee. I do not mean to say that it was my idea, but I penned the report, a considerable number of years ago, and so far Calcutta has not had the courage to carry out the only practical scheme possible. Calcutta says that it is faced with this enormous expenditure. Calcutta is unable to find funds for this bridge amounting probably at the outside to 6 crores, while Bombay has spent—I do not know how many crores—and is now spending—I do not know how many crores—in possibly unremunerative development. Bombay has had the faith to come forward with this large expenditure in the face of the risk of its being unremunerative while Calcutta sits down and waits, because it cannot face this expenditure of 6 crores, for a vital necessity to her traffic in the heart of the city. My only message to Calcutta in addition to what I have already said is, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" I deny that I have made any threat to Calcutta. It will be far from me to threaten a powerful city like Calcutta.

THE HONOURABLE DR. SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY: And a poor city.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: I made no threat to Calcutta. I have only said that if this disability to Calcutta continues the Railways will have to take measures of their own to provide adequate terminal facilities for the public. What those measures are I am unable to say at the moment, because, as I have indicated, we are about to make a special investigation of the problem. But I may say that Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary was not far wrong when he suggested that the Railways will probably build a bridge of their own a few miles up the river. I do not know how Calcutta will then deal with the problem of the Howrah Bridge. But Sir Arthur Froom put his finger on the spot when he said he sat in his carriage on the Howrah Bridge and wondered whether he could catch his train. That is the whole crux of the matter. We have our terminal station at Howrah dealing with the whole of the goods traffic

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on that side of Calcutta and the whole of the passenger traffic and that bridge makes it almost impossible to work the traffic economically. Bullock carts wait there for hours on end and lines of them, a mile long, wait and wait and wait to get across the bridge owing to the congestion, and I think Calcutta ought not to put up with that disability to one of its trunk routes for traffic. We shall do our best to assist Calcutta but our assistance will not go to the extent of providing financial relief for the cost of the Howrah Bridge. I think, Sir, that I need not refer to this matter any further. I wish entirely to disabuse the representatives here from Calcutta and this Honourable Council of any idea that I was holding out a threat. I merely stated the facts, I merely stated our intentions, and if the Honourable Mr. Bell will only read the words of my speech he will see that I did not hold out any threat of any kind except perhaps a kindly one.

The Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy was very kindly appreciative of our efforts towards the standardisation of rolling stock and locomotives and he mentioned the subject of provision of open wagons for collieries. That is a matter, of course, connected to some extent with standardisation, but I should like to tell him that the question of providing better supplies of open wagons to collieries is under consideration and we shall have to take special steps, if they are possible, to provide those collieries which need open wagons owing to their having screening plants, with regular supplies of open wagons. I imagine this is one of the matters which the present Coal Committee is dealing with and we shall have their recommendations before long.

The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas referred to a matter connected with the depreciation fund. That is a somewhat complicated one, but I think I can clear up his difficulty. He asked why we had made no provision for interest on the depreciation fund. I think perhaps he had in his mind the idea that if we were starting a depreciation fund on the basis of the cost of the wasting assets we should do that on a sinking fund basis, that is to say, allow for the interest to be added to the depreciation fund as it went on. We have not adopted that system. We have adopted the simpler system for the purpose of our accounts of contributing every year a proper proportion of the original cost of the wasting assets. Thus,

THE HONOURABLE MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: What I wanted to know was this. The difference between the appropriation to depreciation and appropriation from depreciation is Rs. 125 lakhs—I am speaking from memory. Interest will be earned on that. You take 1,075 lakhs to depreciation on a certain basis from which you draw Rs. 950 lakhs this year. The balance of Rs. 125 lakhs will earn interest. That is not taken into consideration.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: I see the Honourable Member's point. The balance will certainly earn interest when we get it. At present we are making only estimates. We shall certainly go more fully into this matter of depreciation fund, but we should not like to credit it with interest that has not yet been earned on any possible saving which has not yet accrued. The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas also referred to the question of the provision we are making for coaching stock. In that connection I can perhaps answer the remarks made by certain other Honourable Members. We are providing as shown in the budget memorandum for, I think, 67 upper class stock and 755 lower class stock. The

lower class stock include third class stock. Now, we are going into that matter again and what we have provided for in the Budget this year represents what we consider to be essential. In the matter of provision of additional rolling stock we are very much handicapped at the present time by the capacity of our workshops to build coaching stock, and, as I have already explained, we are making some progress in improving the workshops, but it must take some time before they are capable of dealing with a large outturn of rolling stock. The necessity for providing a certain number of upper class stock as well as lower class stock arises partly out of the fact that we have obligations to run on each train at least one upper class coach. I do not say that that is a definite obligation that we should run one on every train, but as a matter of practice we have to, and I am sure Honourable Members of this House would be seriously annoyed with us if we did not provide at least one upper class coach on each train. A train normally consists of 10 or 11 coaches and therefore to preserve the proper proportion we must have somewhere in the neighbourhood of 10 per cent. of upper class stock to lower class stock. That is a very rough calculation. The requirements as we actually put them down are the requirements of individual lines added together. But that is the explanation why we have provided 67 upper class stock against 755 lower class stock. I think I need not go into any further details over that matter except that I should like to say that at present I am having a special investigation made of the possibility of revising certain of our workshop facilities on a temporary basis in order to enable us to construct coaching stock at a more rapid rate. If it is possible to do so, I hope that we may in the coming year be able to have a certain number more of lower class stock. We have arrangements in hand at the present moment in regard to this, and if it is possible to do so without seriously handicapping the necessary repairs to existing stock, for the two things are interdependent, we hope to be able to go forward a little faster than is actually shown in the Budget during the coming year.

The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas referred to the tribute paid by His Excellency the Governor of Bombay to the firm of Tatas for their enterprise in having started hydro-electric schemes in Bombay. I should like to associate myself, of course, with that tribute and to explain that when I was in Bombay I did not actually mention myself the dependence of electric traction on the hydro-electric enterprises of Tatas because it appeared to me to be so obvious to every one that it did not need to be specially noticed. We do, of course, feel very grateful to the firm of Tatas for having started hydro-electric schemes and we sincerely hope that they will push on with them and enable us to get the necessary power in time for the opening of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway suburban traffic when that is ready to be opened.

The Honourable Lala Ram Saran Das mentioned several matters with regard to practical railway working, but I think I will not follow him through them all. One matter which is of interest is that he recognises the value of provision of more *coupe* compartments in all classes of stock. That is a policy which we are gradually carrying out. Of course, it would not be a paying or a satisfactory proposition to call all our coaches into the shops at once and try to put *coupes* into them. It is a gradual process and is being carried out. *Coupes* are being provided not only in upper class stock but also in the third class stock as well. Several railways have already started with this and I hope they will prove satisfactory. My Honourable

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friend also said that we were charging too high rates for the hiring of tourist cars. I do not understand how this has been arrived at by him, because if we were charging too high rates we should find our tourist cars standing idle and no one travelling in them. The facts are exactly opposite. The demand for these tourist cars is increasing steadily and we are now building several more to meet this demand. I am afraid I cannot agree that we are making too high charges for them.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA RAM SARAN DAS: On a point of explanation, Sir. What I meant was that the rates were considerably raised during the last two years and the demand which the Honourable Mr. Hindley puts forward is either on behalf of Government officials or of globe-trotters.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: I do not know about Government officials. As for globe-trotters they pay us their fares and if they can afford to pay I do not know why we should not charge them.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur also referred to the necessity for better policing of running trains and he mentioned that he thought that two travelling constables were not sufficient to go with each train. This is the first time I have heard that two police constables habitually travel with every train. It may be so in the country to which the Honourable Rai Bahadur belongs and it must be obvious to other Honourable Members that this is perhaps a peculiarity of the locality which he inhabits. I have certainly not seen in other parts of India the necessity for carrying two police constables in every train nor have I ever heard a demand that this number should be doubled or trebled.

I should now like to make a few remarks about the Chandausi School which one or two members have mentioned. I have endeavoured to give in the Budget memorandum an idea of what we are trying to do at Chandausi. The school, I hope, will be opened in the course of the next few days. The Principal is at the moment in Delhi on a visit here to the Railway Board and we are making progress. We are meeting various difficulties and the school will be started. There seems to be perhaps some misapprehension as to the scope of the school in spite of the amount of publicity that we have tried to give it. What we are doing is this. The major portion of the organisation of this school will be for the training of the subordinate staff on the railways in their existing duties regarding running trains. They will be brought in in batches for training at the school lasting for ten days or a fortnight, and gradually the staff of the State Railways will have to go through the school either at Chandausi or at Asansol primarily with the object of improving their efficiency and giving them opportunities of understanding their work and of improving themselves generally. In addition to that, we have classes for officers, mainly junior officers, engaged in transportation work, who will similarly be instructed in all the aspects of train working and transportation work generally. The school is fitted up with models and we have there reproduced in a half exactly the same conditions as station masters, signal men and others have to work under at their own stations. A track runs round the room and the model train will run round it and the students will be posted as station masters or assistant station masters and will have to go through a course of training in the work they have to do, with the train control, the train instruments and everything working. That will apply primarily to

the subordinate stag and to the officers on the State Railways. In addition to that Chandausi has a further function, that it will undertake the training of the probationary traffic officers who are engaged in practical training on our Railways. They will undergo courses at Chandausi coupled with courses of practical training on the Railways. These are the men who were appointed last year as probationers and are undergoing their practical training and our recruitment and training scheme for the Traffic Department will be based on the Chandausi School. We do not propose, we never have proposed, to take in large numbers of young lads for training there in the hope that one or two of them will turn out to be traffic officers and the rest sent away without jobs. What we do is we select our men, appoint them as probationers and then give them training. That is the scheme we have in hand.

Now, Sir, there are only one or two more remarks to be made regarding the speeches of Honourable Members. The Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary has referred to the delay in constructing the Howrah-Vishenpur Chord. He is quite correct in saying that it does not appear at the moment as a project on which we are about to spend money. Now the history of that Chord as far as I know is this. It was to be part of a more direct route from the Bengal Nagpur coalfields to the docks. It was to cut across from Vishenpur to a point just above Howrah, at Bally and from there to cross the river and come down on the other side of the river to the docks. It was coupled with the scheme known as the Burdwan-Howrah Chord which is a similar chord from Burdwan to the same point—Bally. Both of those lines were intended to combine and form one line across the river Hooghly in the neighbourhood of Bally and come down to the docks, and it was intended to afford a shorter route from the coalfields to the docks. It depended for its completion on the building of the Bally Bridge and that bridge we have not yet seen our way to build, but we are now at the moment hoping to get a move on with that bridge and commence construction. At the same time the Howrah-Vishenpur Chord in so far as it affects through traffic is not a necessity of that scheme and it must probably wait until the Bengal Nagpur Railway can tackle it. The position of the Bengal Nagpur Railway is this: that they have been for the last few years spending a great deal of money on developing their railway for carrying mineral traffic, particularly in the neighbourhood of Tatanagar. They have spent large sums of money in connection with the traffic expected from Tatas and also in connection with the traffic expected from the other iron and steel industries in the neighbourhood of Asansol. Until that traffic materialises to the full extent and pays its way, all the money that has been spent already on those facilities by the Bengal Nagpur Railway will to some extent, as has been shown in our accounts, have to be unremunerative or not fully remunerative, and it is a matter for grave consideration whether a railway in that position should undertake a further extension such as the Howrah-Vishenpur Chord which cannot in itself be definitely remunerative for some years. That is the position.

THE HONOURABLE SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY: You can complete the system and make it remunerative.

THE HONOURABLE MR. C. D. M. HINDLEY: We have to make very careful estimates. Our view of the matter is that having regard to all the circumstances at the moment it would not be a remunerative proposition to start construction at once for the Howrah-Vishenpur Chord. The project

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will not be lost sight of and we shall take it up again at a favourable opportunity. With regard to the question of a central station for Calcutta I mentioned in my speech that we hope to have a full investigation made as to the best method of improving terminal facilities in Calcutta and that investigation will also cover facilities for passenger traffic and goods traffic in order to arrive at the best solution of this problem. As regards the central station for Delhi we are providing the first and early stages of a very large scheme of development which was laid out in connection with the building of the new capital. Those stages will be ready to go on with as necessity for them arises and as traffic from New Delhi grows. But the policy we have adopted at the moment, it is a good policy I think, is not to be too previous with providing large facilities for traffic which does not yet exist. There is no intention to stop where we are at present in the matter of development of facilities for Raisina. We are providing a small station at Ajmiri Gate, which will eventually be developed into a large station to meet the needs of the new city, but there will be no justification for abandoning the present main station at Delhi which has carried the traffic for many years and can still carry it for many years to come. There will be no justification for abandoning that station at present and building an entirely new station at Raisina. The present main station is, I believe, in the centre of gravity of Delhi and deals with a very large number of the population. As and when the traffic at Raisina in New Delhi increases, we shall provide the necessary facilities for it.

Then the Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary mentioned certain complaints which he had been made aware of in regard to the service of the East Indian Railway staff who have been now transferred to State management. I am not aware precisely of the complaints to which he refers, but I understand that a petition on the subject has been received, and of course it will be looked into. The essence of the arrangement under which the staff of the East Indian Railway was transferred was that they carried with them their own terms and conditions of service. There may be differences between their terms and conditions of service and those of Government railway service, but I am not prepared to say that they are differences which will affect their interests adversely. In any case, the matter will be very carefully considered.

The Honourable Mr. Natesan referred to the necessity of improving the Madras suburban traffic facilities. He asked me whether we were or whether we were not going to double the line from Madras to Tambaram. The position is that we had under consideration a definite proposal for doubling that line, but it was deferred while the question of electrification was being examined because with the scheme of electrification it was necessary to reconsider all the details of the proposed doubling scheme. The recommendation that has been made by the Consulting Engineers to whom this was referred is that two lines should be added to the existing line, making three in all. And there are certain good reasons for supposing that that would be in the long run perhaps the most economical method. That is to say, two new lines will be added alongside of the old line and the two new lines will be electrified. That of course would give very considerable facilities. At the moment we are awaiting the detailed estimates for this proposal, because we have to take a long view of this matter, we have to consider which will be the best method of dealing with it, whether we are to double the line and then electrify it or whether we

should put down two new electrified lines alongside of the old one and thus give additional facilities. The matter, I hope, will not be long delayed, because we are expecting the detailed estimates very shortly. But I think the Honourable Mr. Natesan must have started his speech before he had looked at the pink book in his hands, because the pink book of the South Indian Railway Budget shows very clearly that we have made a commencement on this work of improving the suburban lines on the South Indian Railway. We have clearly said there that this doubling or increasing the capacity of the line will necessitate the acquisition of additional land which will cost 7.3 lakhs, and we have made a provision in the Budget for the expenditure of 7.5 lakhs to cover the acquisition of the land. But the Honourable Mr. Natesan knows better than I do, how long it takes to acquire land in the Madras Presidency. If he can satisfy me that we are going to get that land in time to enable us to spend some money during the next budget year, I shall be very glad indeed, and I shall endeavour to place the money at the disposal of the South Indian Railway. But I am not very optimistic. The acquisition of land, particularly in the neighbourhood of Madras, is not a quick process, nor is it a cheap process. I hope that I have satisfied the Honourable Member that we are not sleeping over this matter. If others sleep, it is not our fault.

The Honourable Mr. Natesan, I am glad to see, has paid a visit to the Perambur workshops and has been able to endorse what I have said about their being antiquated. I am very glad, indeed, to find that the Railway Advisory Committee in Madras has been taken round on this practical excursion, and I hope that the Agents of other Railways will do the same with regard to their Advisory Committees. I should like to say that we acknowledge, that we feel very appreciative indeed of the work which has been done by these Advisory Committees, and when they take the form of practical support such as the Honourable Mr. Natesan has given us, I must say that we feel very glad that the matter was pushed through and that those Advisory Committees were formed.

There is one subject, Sir, which I notice I have not mentioned. The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das said that there was a fear that the introduction of the divisional system on the North Western Railway would mean that Indian officers were not perhaps going to take the same part in railway management as they had done in the past. I don't understand why he should have brought in a matter of that sort into the consideration of practical measures such as that of introducing the divisional system. All that we are doing there is to re-arrange the duties of officers on a rather more clear basis of personal responsibility in which the Divisional Superintendent will be personally responsible for all the affairs in his division. We are there carrying out the same principle of decentralisation as we are doing with regard to Agents. If the Honourable Lala Ram Saran Das fears that Indian officers will not be selected for the post of Divisional Superintendents, which I suppose is what he means by his speech, I should like to inform him that an Indian officer is at present occupying one of those posts.

Now, Sir, I only wish once more to express my appreciation of the kind atmosphere I have encountered in this House and to assure Honourable Members here that it is a very great pleasure to be able to come up and explain these matters on a practical basis.

THE HONOURABLE RAJA PRAMADA NATH RAY (East Bengal: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I have listened with great interest to what the Chief Commissioner for Railways has said about the various points that were raised by different Members in this House, and some of the points that I wanted to raise have been already referred to by him. Still I shall make a few remarks, with your permission.

Sir, it is a matter of great satisfaction that the current year has been a prosperous one for the Railway Administration, and I join with the other Members of this House in congratulating the Honourable Member for Railways. In view of this prosperity I hope it will not be quite out of place to ask the Railway Administration to devote some portions of the windfall that they had for the amelioration of the legitimate grievances of the third class passengers, either in the shape of reductions in fares, or if that be not possible, by raising the free allowance of luggage from 15 seers to $\frac{1}{2}$ a maund. It has been said that the reduction of even $\frac{1}{2}$ a pie per mile would cost the Railway Administration $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores a year; as long as the Railways were under the company management, the question of profit and loss might have been the sole consideration, but the position is different now under the Government management, and it is expected that Government would not put too much stress on the question of profits alone, but also consider the fact that when public money has been spent on Railways from their very inception, the public have naturally a right to expect some sort of amelioration of their legitimate grievances specially in a year when the Railway Administration is putting forth what is called a prosperity budget. If in a year like this nothing is done in this direction, it would give the public an impression that the Government are unwilling to do anything for the benefit of the people. We have just heard that the Railway Administration wishes to have a bridge of its own to divert the trains to Sealdah which will be then, I take it, the central station for Calcutta. I am sure the Calcutta people will welcome such a change for various reasons, and I believe it will also to a certain extent no doubt lessen the importance of the Howrah Bridge and a smaller bridge probably will be necessary the construction of which will be within the competence perhaps of the local authorities there. The people of Bengal are grateful to the Railway Administration for taking up the work of the conversion of the metre gauge to broad gauge between Parbatipur and Siliguri as it has been one of the crying wants of the province inasmuch as all classes of people from the highest to the lowest who have to go up to Darjeeling, the summer capital of Bengal, are being greatly inconvenienced since last year when the Parbatipur section of the broad gauge was opened for passenger traffic. I hope it will be possible to accelerate the work and bring the project to completion within a very reasonable time and as early as possible.

There is, however, another great want, although not of the province as a whole, but of an important section, and that is the construction of a branch line connecting Nanchal-Rajshahi-Issurdi. It will not only open up a whole tract of rice-producing district, but will also have the advantage of connecting a district headquarter which is one of the three biggest educational centres in Bengal. Besides it will serve as a protective work as it will be along the banks of the Ganges and meet the main line near the Hardinge Bridge. It will be seen that at the present moment there are very few district headquarters which are not served by the Railways, and I believe that there is no such headquarters in Bengal at least.

except Pabna and Rajshahi, the latter of which is 28 miles from the nearest railway station and the former is 16 miles. I therefore hope that the earliest opportunity may be taken to give effect to this long-standing project.

Sir, the Government are, I believe, aware that the town of Pabna in Bengal is gradually being eroded by the strong currents of the Padma or the Lower Ganges, and therefore stands badly in need of embankments and other protective works. This town not being very far from the Hardinge Bridge has to bear the brunt of the current which is much stronger now than what it was before the bridge was constructed. As in pre-bridge days there was no obstruction to the natural flow of water the erosion was much less. In the circumstances, I hope it will be possible for the Railway Administration to consider whether it should not come to the aid of the Local Government in its attempt to save the town by protective works, although I believe the Local Government is doing all that could be done in the matter. I understand that this contingency was to a certain extent foreseen when the construction of the bridge was decided upon. It is however a matter for the experts to investigate and decide.

Another matter which I hope will attract the attention of the Railway Administration is the inconvenience of the passengers of all classes owing to the island platforms and the overhead bridges not being covered and as a rule very badly lighted.

Sir, I am sorry to have brought some of the provincial grievances before this House, but as the Central Railway Administration can only deal with these I had no choice in the matter.

Sir, with these remarks I beg to resume my seat. I wish all good luck to the Railway Administration and hope that the Government will consider that at least some sort of consideration might be shown to the third class passengers.

THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN (United Provinces West: Muhammadan): Sir, I don't wish to enter into the intricacies of the policies of the Railway Administration, neither do I wish to waste the time of the Council by ceremonial and formal congratulations, but I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to a few things which strike my mind.

As far as the Budget is concerned and the speech of the Honourable Mr. Hindley is concerned, there is one point which is not quite clear to my mind. In the current year, he says, that by an extra expenditure of two crores and 14 lakhs he is going to have a gross income of five crores more. Then, Sir, when he is making a budget estimate for 1925 the gross expenditure from 86 crores 77 lakhs rises to 91 crores and the income is going from 98 crores to 101 crores. That is, the expenditure is rising to 4 crores and 23 lakhs, while the extra income which he estimates in the coming year is only 3 crores. I don't consider the advisability of paying this extra expenditure in order to gain this about half the income of the expenditure. At least this is not quite clear from the speech which the Honourable Member made the other day.

Then, Sir, in the Demands on No. 7, I have seen that the demands for 1925-26 are to be 8 crores 40 lakhs and 79 thousand rupees. They say that this whole sum will not be spent and they only think of

[Mr. Yamin Khan.]

spending about 6 crores 46 lakhs and 70 thousand rupees. In this House, Sir, to-day, I have heard most interesting speeches about improvements to the Howrah Bridge, about Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and other places, and the peculiar locality inhabited by my Honourable friend, Lal Ram Saran Das, and many other places. But I have heard nothing about the improvement of my province. The Honourable Member in charge of Railways is asking for Rs. 8,40,79,000 and by the Budget estimate he wants to spend only Rs. 6,46,00,000. I would suggest to him that the remaining portion might liberally be given to the most ignored province of mine, the United Provinces.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: You have got a bigger mileage than any other province.

THE HONOURABLE MR. YAMIN KHAN: My province is the biggest in India. Sir, if I remember correctly, on the 14th of October, 1923, an address was presented to His Excellency Sir William Marris at Etah by the citizens of the city. I happened to be present on the occasion. In that address a demand was put forward for the introduction of a new line. The headquarters of the district lie about 18 miles from the railway. There is a huge demand from the commercial point of view and from the traffic point of view for this new line. They have put up a very good case in that address. They have put up a scheme for a branch line starting from Aligarh passing through Sikandra Rao and going as far as Etah Town and then going to Mainpuri. In this line they will have about 4 or 5 big towns on a line of about 50 miles. Besides affording export facilities for grains it is greatly needed in that locality. I had put a question a few days ago about this and I got the reply that this scheme would not be paying. But the reply was based on a different scheme which was calculated some time ago for joining Etah Town with Kas Ganj on the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway. That scheme of joining Kas Ganj to Etah Town may not be paying, but a branch line from Aligarh to Etah Town and to Mainpuri would certainly be a paying scheme.

Then, Sir, demands have been constantly made by the people of Bijnor district and other districts lying away from the railways. They put forward schemes for joining Bijnor from Meerut. Then there was a scheme of having a branch line to Bijnor from Nagina and there were several other schemes. But every time the reply came that it will not bring in an interest of more than 4 per cent. At that time you had to spend a larger capital than what you would have to spend in normal times. I do not mean to say that even if you are losing you must start a scheme. If the Government are going to borrow the money at 6 per cent. and to invest it in a concern which will give 4 or 4½ per cent., of course that will be a mad adventure to start such a scheme at once. But if you have got money in your hand, if you have got Rs. 8 crores and you are spending only 6 crores as you say in the Budget, you have got a surplus of 2 crores and this can safely be invested in all these schemes that may bring only 4½ per cent. I am not sure that the time has not changed and that the capital amount which you would have had to spend two years ago has not considerably gone down now. Prices have gone down and you can now spend on the same scheme 33 per cent. less than what you would have had to spend two years ago. In 1919 and 1920 the price of steel

was very high. I only draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to the fact that he may not ignore my province and that he should investigate the problems which have been constantly before the Government for the improvement of branch lines. Another branch line which is mainly concerned with commerce and trade is the line which joins Shadara and Saharanpur. On this line many towns are situated and many places where there is a lot of sugar trade. But they have to come by a different route. If this branch line is taken from Baghput as far as Meerut, that will also join the North Western Railway, and on the other side of the river, the whole produce which remains without being exported or which does not arrive in proper time in the grain market or in the sugar market will be carried in time and a lot of time will be saved, and there will be an ample quantity in hand in both the places, Baghput and Meerut Mundy. These are only certain instances which I remembered offhand and I have put them before the Government.

There are, Sir, certain minor details which of course as an ordinary passenger I see and to which I would like to draw the attention of Government. We find that there is a search light used on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. I do not notice the searchlight on the engines of all passenger trains, but I notice them on the mail trains and probably the fast passenger trains on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. I would suggest that a searchlight at the head of the engine and one on the rear of the train should be used in order to avoid collisions. A searchlight would have been useful at Amroha when one engine and two carriages went down into the stream and they have not been dug out up to this time although three years have passed. A searchlight would be useful in avoiding dangers arising from broken bridges or on account of floods. We find in the North Western and East Indian Railways that there is no shed over the bridge which connects the main and the island platforms like what we have on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. At Bareilly and Moradabad on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway there are sheds over the bridges as well as on the platforms up to the entrance to those bridges. When there is no shed people have to pass through the bridges with great difficulty on hot summer days, on rainy days and on chilly days during the winter. When the railways are now having surpluses I do not see why these comforts should be neglected. I suggest that speedy measures ought to be taken to remedy these defects.

Another point I wish to draw the attention of the Council to is that though there are waiting halls at junction stations for third class passengers they are not properly looked after and do not provide all the conveniences that are required. There are no waiting rooms provided for the intermediate class passengers. The waiting halls for the third class passengers require improvement, and at junctions where passengers have to change from one train to another waiting room for the intermediate class passengers should be provided. I have seen Indian ladies travelling in the intermediate class waiting for 2 or 3 hours on the platform in extreme weather for want of a proper waiting room on the station premises.

Another point that strikes me is this, that all the foreign purchases should be made on the rupee basis and not on the £ basis. When they are made on the £ basis exchange fluctuations cause a great deal of loss to the Indian finances. On a few occasions exchange may be favourable to India, but on most of them it is not and therefore causes a great deal of loss to the Indian revenue.

[Mr. Yamin Khan.]

These are some of the points to which I wish to draw the attention at the Railway Administration.

THE HONOURABLE MR. R. P. KARANDIKAR: (Bombay: Non-Muhammadan): In view of what has fallen from several Honourable Members I propose myself to be very short. I for one was opposed to the separation of the Railway Budget from the General Budget. I have been assured from time to time since then that it is for the benefit of a proper consideration of the whole question that the Railway Budget should be separate, and to-day I have been reminded by my Honourable friend Mr. Natesan that I was one of those who were wrong. I do not think I shall be very long in being wrong, but I do think that the separation of the Railway Budget has a tendency to oust the jurisdiction of Members who have a right to look into it. I am reminded of what has fallen from my Honourable friend Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi who very naturally resented that this House was not consulted on the point and that a sort of treaty was made with the Assembly there.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOY: My complaint was regarding the details of the specific proposals which were embodied in a special Resolution and placed before the Assembly—detailed proposals which were not even brought to the knowledge of this House.

THE HONOURABLE MR. R. P. KARANDIKAR: I for one think that I cannot call for the tune if I do not pay the piper. We do not sanction any money whatever. We have merely the right to criticise and offer certain remarks and I feel as if I am in the Bombay Legislative Council of 1911-12 when we had the right to pass remarks on the Budget but never to vote. We do the same thing here. But I do really feel that our remarks will be more appropriately conceived as coming from disinterested quarters. They will have more weight and it is in that sense that I rise to offer a few remarks.

This Budget which is offered for our consideration here has all the charm of novelty and no wonder that it may contain some defects. But after all it is an honest real endeavour to place us in possession of whatever is necessary to consider in connection with the railway business generally. I am only concerned with one or two aspects of the question, though I have no doubt a mind to air a grievance—a local grievance it may be considering the whole extent of India—connected with the district from which I come. I am inclined to call attention to the line that passes by the name of Southern Mahratta country line—the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. Those that chalked out the line I fear had only the map of India before them or an enlarged map of the locality through which the railway was to pass. It has avoided almost all important towns so much so that in these days of motor driving those principal towns are connected by motor service and that is, I fancy, in a manner responsible for the shortage which you find in the income of the railways concerned both from the second and first class passengers. As a matter of fact, 96 passengers out of 100 of these were third class passengers. At any rate it is this fact which accounts for the decline in the realisation of what was expected from first and second class passengers. I want to congratulate the Honourable Mr. Hindley and the Honourable the Mover. I do hope I shall have an opportunity of welcoming the Honourable Mr. Hindley when he is passing through the Satara district in spite of the fact that

Satara is ten miles from the nearest railway station and then congratulating him upon the excellent way in which he has brought out this Budget. I really look forward to an opportunity when the Honourable Mr. Hindley may find it convenient to travel over that line to see for himself personally how the carriage trucks are, the residential quarters of ill-paid station masters and what magnificent arrangements are made for third class or for the matter of that second class passengers. I would like him to see the dirty rejected carriages standing on this line. These are economic ways of dealing with Railways. In the course of a grave budget discussion I dare say that some time may be devoted for consideration of the grievances of railway passengers. I have no chance of knowing whether it would be made a subject of discussion here although the grievance of third class passengers has in fact been the real grievance. Looking up the Railway Act of 1890 I was reminded that those grievances are standing grievances. Those that took part in framing law in 1890 wanted to voice the grievances of those people but they had no chance. I have no doubt that with the separation of the Railway Budget greater regard will be paid to the conveniences of third class railway passengers.

As I said there are one or two topics that are depicted in this very admirable record that has been furnished to us. There is complete accord between the Honourable Mr. Hindley and the Honourable the Railway Member at least in one particular, and that is in regard to branch line terms. I am inclined to think that greater attention has to be paid to this question of the new policy in regard to branch and feeder lines. It may be thought that I am airing local grievances but I do have a grievance on that point. For years and years the Satara people have been ventilating this grievance before successive Governors and they were told that the time was coming when their grievances will be remedied. A bridge too has been constructed with a view to connect Satara city with the Koregan station which is about 10 miles away. There is another project which is also in view of joining the Konkon through the Western Ghats. These are feeder lines. But I have a different aspect of this subject before me. I look upon them as educative means. I have gathered from the replies given to me that the Railway Board consists of very eminent people who have had large experience of railway matters, persons who could get to the position of Agents. They must have a clearer notion of what these feeder lines are. They may not run on commercial lines. A Government resolution recently issued refers to the lines on which these feeder and branch lines have to be constructed. I think that that Resolution is capable of being reconsidered. I feel that, unless you have a feeder line, you cannot let people have that intimate knowledge of the working of the lines. District and Local Boards have certain enactments in regard to their own lines. These feeder lines have an educative element. It is there that you get intimate knowledge of the Railways. I do not look upon them as a sort of commercial proposition. It is from this point of view that I welcome this departure.

It is stated in a paragraph dealing with the training of staff :

“ This is a matter which has given the Railway Board very anxious consideration. We are now elaborating proposals for training railway staff in their current duties with a view to improving their efficiency and giving them an opportunity of rising to higher posts. This is a task which railways in other countries have not had to undertake.”

So far as I am aware, says the Honourable Mr. Hindley, no comprehensive scheme such as is now contemplated has been put in force in any other country. I wish the railways all success in this matter. It is thus that

[Mr. R. P. Karandikar.]

people will realise what new sciences are. His Excellency the Governor of Bombay said that India is full of old knowledge and that it has learnt quite a lot from the new sciences. That is a welcome departure. I am still considering whether the separation of the Railway Budget from the General Budget is a good thing, because I apprehend just as the military Budget goes off, the Railway Budget also might go off. I therefore trust great consideration will be given to the whole scheme.

THE HONOURABLE SARDAR CHARANJIT SINGH (Punjab: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I welcome this first Railway Budget which has been presented to this House since the separation of the railway finance from the general finance. The question of separating the railway finance from the general finance, I believe, has been under the consideration of the Government for a very long time, in fact it has been under the consideration of Government since Lord Curzon's time, and I am glad effect has now been given to the proposal. Sir, it is only right and proper that railway development should be conducted on commercial rather than on departmental lines, and I have no doubt that we shall get solid advantages from this procedure.

The Budget itself is an exceptionally good one, and I should like to congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member on it. The general finances will get a fixed sum of 560 lakhs and the reserve fund will be a gainer by 410 lakhs. Great credit is due to the Railway Board for this, and I am sure a large portion of that credit is due to the Honourable Sir Charles Innes, himself. As the Honourable Mr. Hindley pointed out the other day, one great feature about this is that it gives a promise of continuity for future improvements. As you know, Sir, it is hopeless to expect good administration without continuity. The total length of open lines at the present moment is 38,000 miles which, taking into consideration the size of India and its vast population, is not very much, but I am glad to find from the Budget that there will be an addition of 2,138 miles more before long.

Now regarding decentralisation, there is one sentence in the speech of the Honourable Mr. Hindley. He said that "if we fail in our task of maintaining the railways on a solvent footing while developing and improving them to the utmost extent possible, it will be because we are forced to deal with details at headquarters". Perhaps it implies, Sir, that the recommendations of the Acworth and the Inchcape Committees have not been so far fully carried out. If so, I would suggest that steps may be taken to carry them out as soon as possible so that the possibility of the danger which has been hinted at in the Honourable Mr. Hindley's speech may be effectively removed.

THE HONOURABLE HAJI CHOWDHURI ISMAIL KHAN (West Bengal: Muhammadan): Sir, I think the House is by this time aware that I intended to move a Resolution recommending the Government to take steps for improving the amenities of the third and intermediate class passengers and to take steps for the reduction of third and intermediate class fares as well. Owing to certain circumstances, before I could move the Resolution the Railway Budget has been presented. I take this opportunity of drawing the attention of the Government to the pitiable conditions of the third class passengers. I do admit that Government's attention has been drawn to this very important question, but I regret that the care and attention which this subject demands have not been paid to it.

Sir, the Honourable Mr. Hindley in presenting the Railway Budget has provided only 30 lacs for the improvement of the amenities of the lower class passengers, which is too trifling in comparison with the vastness of the subject. India is a vast country with thousands of miles of railways, with thousands of stations, and the provision of 30 lacs for erecting sheds, erecting raised platforms, better water supply arrangement, booking facilities and provision of refreshment rooms, is like a drop in the ocean. In past years the question of providing better facilities and conveniences to lower class passengers was totally neglected; even now the Government are coming forward with half-hearted measures. I would rather suggest that every railway station having refreshment rooms for the upper classes should also be provided with such rooms for lower class passengers. I think there is no gain-saying the fact that it is the third class passengers who bring the bulk of the income derived by Railways from passenger traffic. From the statement supplied by the Honourable Sir Charles Innes in the other House, it is conclusively proved that during the years 1921-22, 1922-23 and 1923-24, the number of first and second class passengers are decreasing and there has been a steady fall of income from them, whereas there is a steady increase in the number of third class passengers and an increase in the income from them as well. Now I come to the question of the proportion of passengers and the carriages of the two higher classes and the third class. Sir, I take only one year, *i.e.*, 1921. From all the available sources and materials I gathered that in that year over the Great Indian Peninsula Railway the average number of first class passengers is 4 in each train, while the number of first class carriages in terms of four wheelers, is 2 or in other words one carriage for every two passengers. Now let us see the space allowed for third class passengers. In each train on an average there used to be 8 carriages accommodating 224 passengers or in other words 15 passengers in each carriage. Now in coming to the budget proposals for this year we find that the number of first and second class passengers are decreasing whereas the third class passengers have considerably increased. That being so what is the justification of the Government in proposing to build another 67 four wheelers of first and second class carriages? I admit that they have provided for the construction of 755 third class coaching vehicles, but considering the number of third class passengers that are to be carried, I think that new vehicles will only be sufficient for carrying the increased traffic, thus leaving the former overcrowding at the stage where it was before. Further, I think the cost of building and furnishing a first class vehicle will be nearly 5 or 6 times the cost of a third class vehicle, though of course nothing is contained in the Honourable Member's speech as to the respective cost of the two classes of vehicles. Sir, even estimating in the lowest figure if the cost of a first class vehicle be twice the cost of a third class, then Government are spending approximately one-fifth of the budgeted sum for building coaching vehicles of the upper class, though the passenger traffic of the third class has increased during the years 1921-24, to the extent of 22 millions and the number of first and second class passengers have decreased to the extent of nearly 2½ millions during the same period. In this connection I may bring to the notice of the Railway Board that the refreshment rooms and the dining cars which are provided for passengers at present are totally unsuitable for the orthodox section of the Indian travelling public. I venture to say that the food supplied by the caterers and contractors consists of articles prohibited by the religion of either the Mussalmans or my Hindu friends. In order to avoid these difficulties the Railway Board should take immediate steps for providing separate Mussalman and Hindu refreshment rooms. I would

[Haji Chawdhuri Ismail Khan.]

further suggest that instructions be immediately conveyed to the contractors and caterers of dining cars not to use any prohibited article of food.

I believe that I have been able sufficiently to prove that the sum of 30 lakhs budgeted is too small for providing innumerable amenities to third class passengers, who have so long been totally neglected. I have also proved, I think, that the construction of 755 new coaching vehicles for the third class passengers is, compared with the enormity of the question of overcrowding, too small to cope with the problem. In the circumstances, I would appeal to Government to spend another crore of rupees, from the proposed reserve sum of 410 lakhs, for the construction of a larger number of third class coaching vehicles and for the increase of amenities for them. I hope Government and this House will see their way to support my proposals.

Sir, I come from the Backergunge District in East Bengal and it is a matter of great regret that the Backergunge District has not got any railways and the people of the said district have to travel a journey of 212 miles from Barisal to Sealdah in 18 hours which causes a great inconvenience to the travelling public of the said district, while the said journey by railway will not take more than 6 or 7 hours. In this connection this fact may be specially noted that, though a survey has been undertaken on certain occasions, the Railway authorities have not so far done anything in this direction. There is at present a network of railways throughout India but the only solitary district, the above-named district, lies quite forsaken and the people are experiencing a lot of inconvenience on account of the absence of railways. Sir, it will not be out of place for me to suggest that measures may be adopted to establish a railway system in the Backergunge District connecting the various towns of principal importance.

THE HONOURABLE SIR DINSHAW WACHA (Bombay: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I don't know what I should say for myself—whether I am a parochial politician or a parochial patriot. I am conscious that I am neither the one nor the other. Embracing this opportunity of to-day when we are on the eve of taking a new departure in matters of railway administration, I consider that by far the wisest thing we should do is to take a broad imperial view of this new departure. Of course, my friend, Mr. Karandikar, holds a different opinion from the general body of the Members here by saying that this is not an opportunity for the separation of railway finance from general finance. That may be his opinion; but if he has been a student of railway finance, as he most probably is, he will perhaps agree with me, that after all this separation of railway finance from the general revenue is no new thing at all. The only new feature of it is this that we are belated in doing that which should have been done from the very first, that is, when India began to have its railway construction. At that time there was no money in the country and there was no enterprise. All the money needed to make a modest start had to be borrowed, and it was owing to that fact that, of course, the Government had to guarantee people who put their money in Indian railways for interest. That being so, of course, necessarily the general revenue had to be considered in the matter and that was the reason why for so long the separation that might have taken place at the very beginning was held in abeyance. We have only been able to separate the general revenue from railway finance

at this time of the day. Well, Sir, I have been a student of railway finance—an humble student I should say. But I am free to confess that I don't pretend to know much of the technicalities and details of the practical working of Railways as these engineers here on the front bench. But I do say this, that I myself some 15 years ago wrote a tract on railway finance when the Railway Committee was formed in England in 1907 and Sir James Mackay, now Lord Inchcape, and Lord Rothschild and others were members of that Committee. I criticised the financial recommendations made by the Committee on their report, and I wish to draw your attention to two broad facts, namely, that guaranteed railways were, in the first instance, an absolute necessity and that railways must be built in India for India's better interests from all points of view. They however from the financial point proved very unsatisfactory. They have cost the tax-payer crores on crores which could only be paid from the general revenues. I pointed out in my brochure that the time had come for discontinuing the practice of merging railway finance in general revenues for more than one solid reason. What were they? The same that 15 years later the Acworth Committee pointed out in their report. One of the greatest evils of the old method had been most instrumental in famishing the Railways for adequate rolling stock. That evil was greatly in evidence during the great war. The development of railways might have been infinitely better and greatly expedited had the separation now brought to a head been an accomplished fact somewhere in 1910. Thus we are entering on a new departure in railway finance fifteen years too late, all the same, better late than never. And so far I also join with my Honourable colleagues here in appreciating the step that the Government have now so wisely taken in this matter and cordially congratulate that authority. The Government have taken the right step and in the right direction. Let me, Sir, recall to the minds of this House the fact that it is now 80 years since Indian Railways were first started. That was in the year 1845. I was born a year earlier—I was born in 1844. So the Railways and I are coeval in point of age. I remember, when a boy of 9 years, going to Byculla to see the first inauguration ceremony of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the train running to Thana, a tiny affair with tiny carriages conveying a party of Government officials and some citizens. The distance then travelled was only 19 miles! The East Indian Railway soon followed suit. Now contrast the humble beginning of these two big railways and realise the gigantic progress of these two earliest railways to-day! There was first the guaranteed railways. Ten or fifteen years' experience informed the Government and the public that these were huge financial losses and the guaranteed interest a burden on the tax-payers. All the same it was unavoidable. But then without guarantee no Railways in India would have come into existence till perhaps 1880 or even later. But the interval afforded all the experience how the railways can be made successful. Even in England where the Railways were started in 1825 (and this year England is going to celebrate their centenary) they were acquiring valuable experience which stood them in good stead as years rolled on. Experience came and knowledge came by the practical working of the Railways. So that 25 years later it was fully realised that the Railways constructed in India till then were all very expensive besides entailing an annual burden by way of guaranteed interest. The 5½ feet broad gauge railway cost fully 1·30 lakhs per mile which was exceedingly heavy. So it happened that during the Viceroyalty of Sir John

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Lawrence and of Lord Mayo there were two distinguished servants of the Crown who started the campaign known as the "battle of the gauges". Those were Sir John Strachey who was a financier and civilian and the other Sir Richard Strachey, his brother (called Castor and Pollux) who was a great Public Works Engineer. Sir John's and their economic conscience (and I think it was a very good conscience) prompted them to think of another railway scheme whereby Railways could be constructed more cheaply and without a guarantee of the State. Why cannot India construct narrow gauge railways which might be every way cheaper, cheaper from the point of construction and cheaper from the point of view of the taxpayer, whereby the cost of construction might be considerably reduced? By a reduction of capital outlay every year loans borrowed will be *pro tanto* less. So the battle of the gauges began in right earnest—to build a broad gauge railway at a cost of 1·30 lakhs or a metre gauge at $\frac{2}{3}$ of a lakh per mile only. The broad gauge was 5½ feet and the metre gauge was 4½ feet. Very well, the battle was vigorously waged between the protagonists and antagonists for ten years or so until Sir Richard Strachey was able to win the day. Metre gauge railways began to be built. But a few years more proved the disadvantage of their construction. These railways were not equal to the conveyance of the volume of traffic offering. Moreover, the greatest inconvenience was experienced on account of break of gauge where the broad gauge railway had to be changed for a metre one. So a Committee sat in 1879 to reconsider the future construction of railways and how capital was to be raised. So in 1880 it was recommended that the guarantee of the East Indian Railway should cease in 25 years when the State should acquire it, and the policy of a moderate broad gauge all through was determined upon. In the meantime, financial arrangements were made for debentures and so on. So that, practically speaking, it was after 1880 that the first practical and permanent step was taken to make our Indian Railways paying and gradually relieving the burden of the guaranteed interest. They could only be made to pay if the cost of construction was low and there was no guaranteed interest to be paid in future. It may be said, therefore, that from the year 1845 when railways began to be built and worked to somewhere about 1904 every one of the Indian Railways was losing except the East Indian and the Rajputana-Indore Railways. We lost on an average during these 50 or 55 years something like 1½ crores per annum. Gradually, it was found out that if our growing commerce and industries were to extend and develop, the Railways should prove to be the greatest benefactors of the country and its people. It was recognised that if India was to develop its commerce and industries we should cheapen and popularise our Railways. I must acknowledge that the Government took the right view from those days, particularly after the date of the report of the Welby Commission in 1901. The late Mr. Gokhale and myself together with Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee were witnesses before that Commission, and we gave our evidence on Railways strongly urging how Railways can be made more popular and paying and advising at the same time that railways should not be constructed at a breathless pace involving a heavy burden on the tax-payers. Railways turned the corner from the year 1904 when they first began to show a net gain on the capital outlay. Before that year there was no net gain to speak of on the capital whatever. Of course, the net receipts over working expenses gave a profit averaging

about 5 per cent. But after deducting the annual interest and other charges there was a net gain on the capital of some 400 crores and upwards. That being so, the next important step that had to be taken was necessarily the popularisation of the Railways and making them really a financial success and giving relief to the tax-payers. This is really the origin of to-day's epoch-making departure in the matter of railway finance, namely, the separation of the Railway Budget from the general revenues. The Acworth Committee has done the greatest service to India by strongly urging this recommendation, and I believe it is not only the Acworth Committee. The merchants of Bengal, those who trade in jute, tea and coal, and the merchants of Bombay who are the greatest manufacturers of cotton and other big merchants of different presidencies and provinces had combined to see that their trades and industries were flourishing and they have been greatly instrumental in the new departure by the generous support they gave so far to the recommendations of the Acworth Committee. Every unit of the mercantile community knows that it is by means of cheap extended railway communications say, by a net work of railways, that India can extend and develop its commerce and industries and bring prosperity to its people. Unless commerce flourishes there can be no revenue, and if there be no revenue to speak of from this source you are nowhere. The Railways are our real benefactors. Mistakes have been made in the past, partly from inexperience and partly from insufficient knowledge, apart from the method of raising the needed capital. We are all making mistakes. All civilised Governments have made mistakes in railway matters. The United States have made mistakes in their railways which they were the first and foremost to correct. I think it is somewhat unfair and unjustifiable to criticise and even reproach the Government in the way some latter-day gentlemen have done in their conceit and ignorance. I congratulate the Government that on the whole we are now entering on a new sphere of railway finance. The broad features of that finance and what we are about to determine upon in this first Budget have been lucidly explained in the speeches of the Honourable Mr. Hindley and the Honourable Sir Charles Innes. Both are very lucid speakers and Sir Charles is a very vigorous debater too. That being so, what we have on this occasion to do is to welcome this new departure which is prolific of the largest good to the country. By all means urge grievances. Let each province urge its own. And let the merchants agitate for their own grievances as to the reduction of railway rates and rebates and damages. We are now taking a new departure. Let us loyally support the Government and encourage them by suggesting ways and means whereby the Railways can be made financially successful and highly popular. We must not grudge if the Government are able to get $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. as interest on the capital outlay and something more for depreciation. That of course will come back to the tax-payer. The more the revenue from the Railways, the larger will be the ultimate benefit to the tax-payers. The general revenues will also benefit more and there will be greater prosperity in the country. There will be more economic prosperity. We are all talking of the comparative poverty of India. The poverty of India is no doubt partly due to physical causes, partly to political causes, and partly to the wrong economic policy in the past. But if the Railways are developed on the right lines, then, I repeat, our economic prosperity will be greater and will be maintained. The larger the mileage of paying railway, the greater the inter-provincial connection and the greater

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the prosperity of the people. Of course, railway rates must be reduced, in order to lighten the burden on the commercial and industrial classes who chiefly contribute to railway revenue. If we are to be a great manufacturing, industrial and commercial country, if we are to be "compact" like the United States and independent of all foreign countries for our food and clothing and many other things—then I say that India has a magnificent future before it. If these Railways are developed on the right lines as they are being done now, then the glory will all be our own. We all have grievances. But let us take heart. Let us rejoice in this new departure. Let us thank those who have been able to start this new ship of railway finance. I would also congratulate both Mr. Hindley and Sir Charles Innes because they have been the pioneers and the instruments of this new policy of Government. But above all let us never be parochial in railway matters. Let us think "imperially". With these observations I resume my seat.

THE HONOURABLE RAJA SIR RAMPAL SINGH (United Provinces Central: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, at the outset I desire to associate myself wholeheartedly with the strong protest made by my friend Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy against the slight which we have suffered in not being consulted on the question of separation of railway finance from general finance and also upon the convention. Sir, the Honourable the Chief Commissioner has said in his speech that he is very much gratified with the calm atmosphere that reigns in this House. It might be on account of that calmness and sobriety which always prevails here that this House might have been neglected at the time when this question was being discussed in the Assembly. I take this opportunity not only to congratulate but also to thank the Honourable the Chief Commissioner as well as the Commerce Member for the very successful and satisfactory working of the Railways in India during the year which is about to close. The account they have given of their stewardship and administration during the year is well worthy of praise. The lucid and clear statement presented to the House the other day had enabled me, a layman, to have a clear insight into the complicated figures with which it abounds. The separation of railway finance from the general Budget was wisely accepted by the Assembly and adopted. It has not only facilitated their task but has also put the working of the Railways on a firm and solid footing. By that reform a continuity of policy has been assured, the chances of wastage minimised and further they can at any moment know where they stand.

I yield to none in my sympathy and solicitude for the third class passengers, and it is my duty to press their claims for better accommodation, better conveniences and better treatment. At the same time I appreciate that great reform has taken place in that direction and I know that Government are always very solicitous of providing good comforts to the third class passengers. Without yielding in my sympathy for them to any one I may point out that if the Government be pleased to decrease the fares and provide only wagons for transport of these passengers, I think a very large number of passengers would travel in the wagons. I very strongly urge that some relief should be afforded to these third class passengers in the matter of fares, but I am afraid there may be too much spirit of commercialism in the department when this question may arise and no relief will be given to the third class passengers in order simply to earn good profits.

Sir, my Honourable colleagues have pressed for certain extensions of Railways in their own provinces. I simply want to point out that there is a small town in my own district which is called Dulmau and which is 18 miles from Rae Bareilly. There was a train service from Rae Bareilly through Dulmau to Cawnpore before the war. During the war the necessity arose to send rails to Mesopotamia and they were taken out and despatched to Mesopotamia. It is a wonder that up to this time those rails have not been put up again and the people are still deprived of their train service to Dulmau. It is a place where at least 10 lakhs of people assemble almost every three months and now they have to go by a round-about way and have to travel about twenty-four miles more to reach Dulmau. The stations are there, the bridges are there, the fencing is there, everything is in order, but there are no rails and therefore there is no train service. I simply wish to point out that with a very small outlay the train service can be reopened between Rae Bareilly and Cawnpore and it will prove very profitable and at the same time will add to the convenience of the people.

In my journeys I often wonder how it is that the land lying on both sides of the railroad often lies vacant and no trees or anything of the kind are grown on it. I know that it may not have struck the experts but I wish to tell the House that if the Railway Department takes upon itself to plant trees by the side of the railroads it will be very profitable to the State and at the same time add trees to the country.

THE HONOURABLE SIR CHARLES INNES (Commerce Member): Sir, the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas referred to the fact that the Chief Commissioner in this Council and I in another place had made two different speeches in introducing the Railway Budget and he said that the two speeches were complementary to one another. That is perfectly true. The Honourable Mr. Hindley dealt more with technical matters and I dealt with matters of a more general character. I may remark parenthetically that I think the Honourable the Chief Commissioner has the better of the bargain. He stands up as the railway expert and explains to this Council all the great benefits the Railways are conferring upon the country. I in another place have to fight for my life on various controversial matters. But, Sir, I am referring to this remark of the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas, because I wish to explain that my speech this evening is complementary to what Mr. Hindley has already said: in fact, it will be merely a short appendix, because I think that Mr. Hindley has dealt with most of the points which have been raised in to-day's debate.

The first point I wish to take up is a remark made by my Honourable friend, Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy which was endorsed by several Honourable Members of this Council. Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy complained that we had not placed the Resolution relating to the separation of railway finance from the general finance before this Council, and he stated that the Government had cast a slur upon the Council of State. Well, Sir, I hope that the Honourable Member will remove that impression from his mind once and for all. I can assure him and this Council that nothing was further from the thought of myself or the Government that it should show any disrespect whatsoever to this Council. I go further. I have said before, and I will say it again, that in a matter of this kind, in a matter which affects both business and financial interests this Council, composed as it is, is in a better position to give Government advice than the Legislative Assembly. If we did not consult the Council of State

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it was because we thought that we had already got the approval of the Council of State to the principle of the scheme of separation. We had consulted four members of the Council of State on the Central Advisory Council, and during the last budget debate almost every speaker I think in this Council referred to the question of separation and, as Sir Basil Blackett put it, every one but one referred to it with approval. The Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy also referred to it and I should like, Sir, with your permission, to read out what the Honourable Member said :

“ Sir, I am glad that the recommendation of the Inchcape Committee in this direction is to be put into operation at an early date. I am glad that in anticipation of the sanction of the Assembly the Honourable the Finance Member has endeavoured to introduce the system into the current year's budget.”

Then he went on to say that he hoped that the Council would give its unqualified support to this “just and businesslike suggestion”. We thought, Sir, that we had the approval of the Council of State to the general principles of the scheme, and I must confess that I thought that the actual details of the scheme were more for the body which has the power over the purse. If I was wrong I here and now offer my apology to this Honourable Council and I should like to assure my Honourable friend again that we had no intention whatsoever of showing disrespect to this Council.

There are one or two other points to which I wish to refer. The first is this rather contentious matter of branch line policy. I wish first to correct what I think is a misapprehension on the part of my friend Sir Arthur Froom. From his speech I gathered that he considered that lines constructed on these branch line terms were worked by small companies and he was prepared to say that 20 years ago the Railway Board or the Railway Department of the Government would not have managed those lines so well as these small companies, but, Sir, I think that the Honourable Member is making a mistake. Most of these branch lines were worked and have always been worked by the parent line for the branch line company and the branch line company is merely what I may call a financing house. This question, I should like the Council to remember, is purely a practical question. Our branch line terms are out of date. Nobody would come forward to finance the construction of a branch line upon the terms contained in our existing branch line terms. If we are to have use made of those branch line terms we shall have to revise them in the direction of very much greater liberality. We shall have to offer not a guarantee of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. but probably a guarantee of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. or even 6 per cent., and we do not think it right to do that. For the moment we are in a position to put up the money ourselves for the construction of these lines and we are perfectly satisfied that by putting up the money ourselves we shall get the money cheaper than if we got the money through the agency of a branch line company; and therefore we think that we are on the right lines for the moment. The time may come, as the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy pointed out, when Government will not find it possible to raise all the money that may be required for railway construction in India. If that time does come then we shall certainly be prepared to reconsider the matter. We are not putting forward our policy as a policy which is to be fixed like the laws of the Medes and the Persians for ever and ever. All we claim for it is that that is the policy which is best suited to

the circumstances of the moment, and it is always a policy which can be reviewed from time to time in the light of the experience gained.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi also said that he could not understand why we were laying an obligation on Local Governments to put up guarantees for lines which they require. He pointed out quite truly that Railways are a Central subject and ought to be financed from central revenues. But, Sir, just let me remind him of past history in this matter. Our records are full of applications from Local Governments asking us to consider particular lines in particular districts. In many cases those lines cannot be justified as business propositions. It cannot be shown that those lines will be remunerative. Consequently, the Government of India have not been able to take up those lines, and Local Governments have always complained that they have had no means of getting those lines constructed in spite of the fact that the lines, though they may not be remunerative, may be very urgently required for administrative or other reasons. Now the advantage of this suggestion which we have made to Local Governments is that we offer them a way out of that difficulty. If any Local Government has got a line in its province which it may not be able to justify as a business proposition but which it desires to construct for other reasons, then, if the Local Government is prepared to guarantee say the interest on our money, we, on our part, agree to construct that line. It seems to me that it is a simple and businesslike way out of a real difficulty, and Local Governments have already shown that they appreciate the offer that we have made them. They all approve in general terms of this new policy of ours. We have already begun constructing two lines on this basis and, as I have said before, we have got other applications from Local Governments under consideration now.

The next point of general interest that was raised was that of the question of decentralisation. I have very little to say on this point because it has been already dealt with by my Honourable friend on my right. Mr. Hindley has explained to you the policy which we in the Railway Board and in the Railway Department are trying to work up to, and I think that he has been able to satisfy the Honourable Sir Arthur Froom and the Honourable Mr. Bell that, as far as the Railway Department and the Railway Board are concerned, we are working upon lines which they as business men approve of. But it does raise a much more difficult question and that is the question to which some of my Honourable friends here present referred to-night. I should like to assure the Honourable Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary and Mr. Ram Saran Das that we do not object in the Railway Department, and we have never objected, to what they call healthy criticism in the Legislative Assembly. That has never been our objection and I think it is sufficient answer to statements of that kind to point to this Budget which we have placed before this House and the Legislative Assembly. We are inviting criticism by putting this Budget before you. But what we do object to and what we deprecate is questions, Resolutions and the like which are likely to injure the discipline and the proper working of our Railways. In the other place we have had questions after questions inquiring why A has been passed over when B is senior to him, inquiring whether it was a fact that two booking clerk girls at Howrah station were rude to a passenger. That was followed up by a further question as to whether they were punished, followed by a further question as to what the punishment was. That is the sort of questions that we deprecate. We do not deprecate it because we resent the Legislature taking up questions of that kind, but because we see that,

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if the Legislature does take that line, it must inevitably tend to paralyse the initiative and efficiency of railway administration throughout, and that is the sole point that we have been trying to make in making our protest against questions of this kind.

I very much appreciate the remarks of my Honourable friend Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi on the question of Indianisation. He pointed out quite truly that it is a very difficult problem and it is a matter on which progress must be slow and that for two reasons. In the first place, as he said, we must maintain our standards of efficiency and, in the second place, we must remember that we have in the Railway Department now a number of officers whose legitimate claims to promotion cannot be overlooked. This is a question for the solution of which you must look to the future, and I do not think that either in the Legislative Assembly or in this place any one can quarrel from the Indianisation point of view with the policy which we have adopted. As regards the superior posts we announced that we are prepared to adopt the recommendations of the Lee Commission which means Indianisation at the rate of 75 per cent. of the total posts.

THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI DADABHOI: Is it for the total or the engineering service only?

THE HONOURABLE SIR CHARLES INNES: All posts. In a generation, and what is a generation in the history of a nation, you will have the superior ranks of your Railways practically Indianised throughout and, when there is that prospect before the people of India, I do not think that it is right that we should be accused of going too slow at the moment. You must remember that my friend Mr. Hindley and I are responsible for the efficient management of the Indian Railways, and efficient management of the Railways does not merely mean good dividends. It means also the safety of the public, and the safety of the travelling public is no light responsibility. We always have got to bear these things in mind, and that is why I welcome so much the Honourable Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi's reference to the necessity of maintaining the standards of efficiency. I think myself, Sir, that occasionally Honourable Members are somewhat impatient. For instance, my Honourable friend Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das referred to the fact that, though this Council passed a Resolution in 1923 about the appointment of Indians as Traffic Inspectors on the North Western Railway, nothing has been done about it. Well, Sir, what are the facts? No permanent appointment has been made even by promotion to the class of Traffic Inspectors since February 1923 as no permanent vacancy has occurred, the cadre having been reduced by 4 posts, but out of ten temporary vacancies five have been given to Indians.

Then, Sir, the only other point, that I wish to refer to is the question of the reduction of third class fares. Here again, I must ask the Council to have patience. The Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas suggested in the course of his speech that the amount of our contribution to general revenues was too high. He suggested that because we had agreed to too high a contribution, therefore we were prevented from doing all that we should have liked to do for the improvement of our services and the reduction of fares. Well, Sir, it is a matter of opinion whether or not

our contribution was just high enough or whether it was too high, but we agreed to that contribution, because we were perfectly satisfied that, high though it was, it would pay us. And if you will only give us time, then I am perfectly sure that you will find that we shall not only keep your Railways in a prosperous condition, but, as time goes on, we shall be able to reduce both freights and fares. We realise that what we ought to aim at is exactly the same as any business man ought to aim at, namely, the largest possible turnover with a small margin of profit instead of a small turnover and a large profit. That, I am quite sure, is what we have got to aim at, but we cannot reduce these fares at present.

As I said the other day, the reduction of half a pie per mile in your third class fares would cost us $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores of rupees. Now supposing having made that reduction, we went back to the same rate of increase as we used to have before the war, namely, an increase of 30 million passengers per year—the average distance a third class passenger travels is 34 miles a year—then all that we should gain by this increase of 30 million passengers a year will be comparatively a few lakhs. At any rate it would take us a long time before we could make up these $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores. In any case, it will be no use making this reduction unless we can carry the increased traffic which we cannot do at the present time. That is our present difficulty. That is what we are working at in the Railway Board. That is all I have got to say.

I thank this House very much for their kindly references to the Honourable Mr. Hindley and to myself and for the welcome they have given to this Budget. I myself have no fears at all for the future of Indian Railways. I believe that, as regards dividends this year, we can stand comparison even now with any other country in the world. But, Sir, now the Indian Legislature has definitely agreed to the proposition that we should treat the Railways as a commercial proposition on a commercial basis. If the Indian Legislature will stand by that proposition, and if they will trust the Railway Board and the Government, then, Sir, I am perfectly sure that, as time goes on, we shall make your Railways a more and more efficient instrument of trade and commerce in India.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 25th, February, 1925.